

ESAY

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS

The Slogans

one day
at a
time

FIRST THINGS FIRST

THIS TOO
SHALL PASS

EASY DOES IT
BUT DO IT

HOW TO USE
THEM IN OUR
DAILY LIVES

August 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

Copyright © 2022 All rights reserved.

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

ESSAY
"Aha!" Moments

Dear ESSAY readers,

The Slogans are snippets of wisdom designed to be short and memorable enough to open our forgetful and stubborn minds as we trudge the road of recovery. They are little lozenges of wisdom and are sure to inspire us whenever we are doubtful and agitated. A member shared: "My initial, contemptuous reaction to the Slogans served as a timely reminder of how closed my mind really was. I particularly bristled at *Keep It Simple* but now know that my best days in recovery are when I keep things as simple as possible."

Some of them may have originally come from the language of the Oxford Group Movement, but it could also be that they were originals from Bill and Dr. Bob and the early members. We do know, however, that many Slogans commonly heard have been around since the early days of the Fellowship. In December of 1958 Ruth Hock (non-alcoholic), who was AA's first secretary, wrote in response to a question concerning different Slogans:

"Bill [W.] and I first worked together in January 1936 when he had been sober just a little over one year and at that time *Easy Does It*, *Live and Let Live*, and *First Things First*, were part of the daily conversation. They were also used in the very first drafts of the book, but probably only Bill himself could tell you where he picked them up."

Be sure to check out our brand-new video, "There, but for the Grace of God, Go I", the FIRST in our NEW series, ESSAY Magazine's "AHA! Moments." This new series will feature an original video each issue of the ESSAY Magazine. Consisting of SA Stories of Discovery, brought to life with sound effects, character voices and music, "AHA! Moments" will all be enhanced using visual media. Reviewers for this month's video have said: "Wow, it's chilling, truthful, powerful and hits the nail right on its head." "Hard-hitting and riveting!" "Very sobering video which left me feeling very grateful." "An excellent work with a jolting message." "WOW!! Very powerful!" This month's video can be viewed by clicking on this link or typing it into your browser: <https://vimeo.com/731486866>

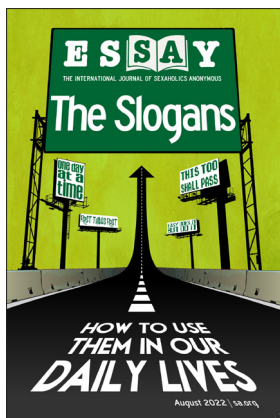
We hope that you enjoy the various shares on the Slogans in this ESSAY edition and that one or two of them may further open your mind and continue to enhance your recovery.

In fellowship,
THE EDITORIAL TEAM
essay@sa.org

August 2022

“Some “A.A. saws” were also used as long ago as the late 1930’s: “First Things First,” “Easy Does It,” “Live and Let Live.” Because these appear in the first edition of the Big Book (at the end of the chapter on “The Family Afterward”) it’s probable that the use of the slogans originated with Bill and that he brought them with him from Vermont—old saws with new teeth.”

Pass It On 220



On the cover: How can these tiny and cryptic aphorisms be used as signposts on the Road of Happy Destiny?

ON THE COVER: The Slogans *How to Use Them in Our Daily Lives*

The Slogans Are Quick Reference guides to Sanity.....16

The Slogans saved this fellow’s life and are still inspiring him today to *Keep It Simple* (TEXAS, USA)

No Fighting on the Life Boat Please.....18

He learned the hard way to practice rigorous tolerance towards the members who are different from him (ANONYMOUS)

Live and Let Live.....19

Whereas he used to try to impress others in his disease, today he lets go of that compulsion and lets God runs their and his lives (DUBAI, UAE)

Doing the Next Right Thing.....E18

How about always doing that what is right ... when no one is watching? (NEW YORK, USA)

One Day at a Time.....20

This old-timer testifies that her worst day today is truly better than the best day in her insanity (TENNESSEE, USA)

First Things First.....21

Having healthy priorities has given him a life he absolutely loves (NEWCASTLE, AUSTRALIA)

PRACTICAL TOOLS

There Is a God, and I’m Not Him.....8

His resentment showed him some dark places where his ego had been hiding, and taught him more humility (GERMANY)

Poem “The Slogans”.....10

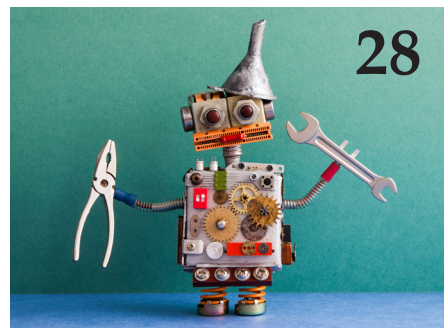
Each Slogan is full of life and has what to offer (NEW JERSEY, USA)

Cultivate and Attitude of Gratitude.....11

She works diligently on reprogramming her negativity into positivity and gratitude (WARSAW, POLAND)

Singing the Slogans.....14

Two Dutch fellows enjoy the practical tool of making recovery music (THE NETHERLANDS)



28



16

SA STORIES

I Am As Sick As My Secrets.....22

God saved his life twice, once as a cyclist and today as a recovering sexaholic (USA)

An Addict Alone Is in Bad Company.....24

He got out of his trauma bubble by making phones calls, and found closeness to God (ONTARIO, CANADA)



24

STEPS & TRADITIONS

It Works If You Work It So Work Because You’re Worth It.....26

Where once he was afraid and hesitant to attend an SA meeting, today he truly believes that the SA program works for him (THE PHILIPPINES)

Sober Is Not Well.....28

Recovery is more about emotional sobriety than mere sexual sobriety (IRAQ)

SA CFC

Words to Live By.....30

A share on useful tools to stay out of the prison of our own mind on a daily basis (GEORGIA, USA)

WORLD WIDE NEWS

SA Costa Rica Fell In Love with the SA Sobriety Definition.....32

The Costa Rican fellowship started off in 2013 and feels safe in His hands (SAN JOSÉ, COSTA RICA)

“We Were Home”.....33

Armenia is hosting the EMER Convention in October and hopes to see us all to celebrate our Solution’s maxim “We Were home” (ARMENIA)

2022 SA Worldwide Membership Census...35

A new, online Form to gather data about existing meetings will soon be available through our Delegates, Region, and Intergroup (RAC)



33

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

SA Purpose.....	2
Responsibility Declaration.....	2
Statement of Principle.....	2
Editors’ Corner.....	3
Dear ESSAY.....	6
Worldwide Walls of SA.....	7
Literature News.....	13
Discussion Topic.....	17
New Meetings.....	32
Finance Report.....	32
Coming In October.....	35

“E” pages are online Essay only

Dear ESSAY

Doing It, Like the Camel, Just For Today



DEAR ESSAY, THANK

you for the June edition on Emotional Sobriety. The little camel on my golden necklace reminds me how to live up to emotional sobriety in the following poem an old-timer recited when he saw it:

*A camel each day goes
twice on his knees*

*He carries his load with
the greatest of ease*

*He goes through the
desert with his head held
high*

*And stays this day
completely dry.*

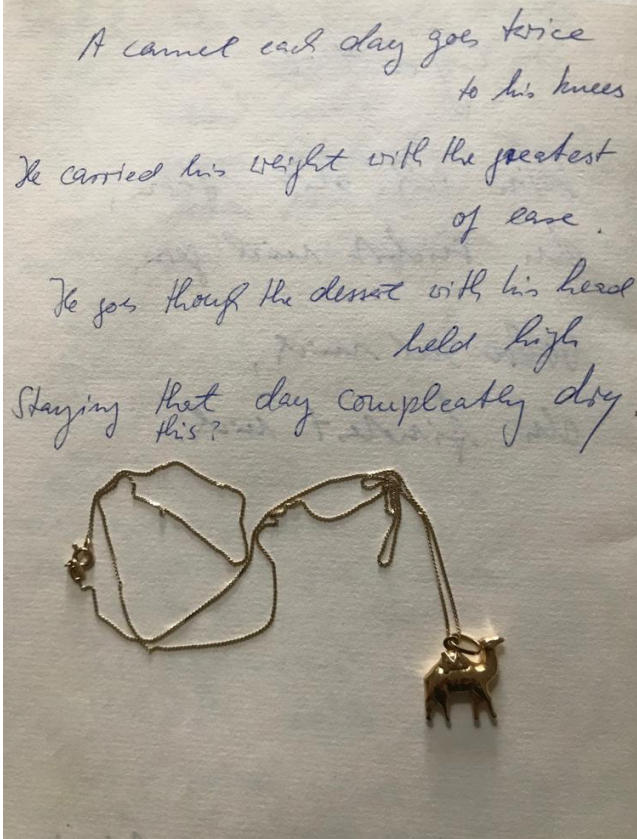
So, it's an AA Animal Symbol, I didn't know it! It's a metaphor for humility and patience when he carries his load

of problems and traits, which the sickness brings with it, in a manner of balance and with dignity. He stays serene and dry, ... he has also the tools of the program packed. My load is still problems of all sorts, but sober I can handle them. I did the Steps as sincere and thorough as I was able to with another wise camel and the outcome is the basis for more carrying through, and there is more coming every day to unpack ... and work on and with my

Higher Power and you all towards emotional and mental sobriety.

"We have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body." (AA xiii) I thank God and SA for my sexual sobriety that started on Dec 29, 2009. Like the camel, I am now facing more oasis of wonder in a balanced and guided life. And like the camel, I only have to do it Just For Today. God bless you all on our journey!

ELAINE P., Munich, Germany



World Wide Walls Of SA

SA Meetings Can Be Held Just About Anywhere ...



Bonner Gruppe (since 1987!)
Bonn, Germany



Isaac L. Marlee
Toronto, Canada



First English-speaking meeting
Safed, Israel



Tottenham meeting
London, UK



Cedarhurst Clubhouse
Cedarhurst, USA



There Is A God, And I'm Not Him

After coming home from an SA convention, his sponsor guided him back from the dark underworld of self into the Kingdom of God.

When I returned from a local SA convention yesterday, I felt reasonably happy, connected and peaceful—though not fully. The presence of one fellow had disturbed my serenity to such an extent that I had been struggling with obsessing about him and his behavior throughout the whole weekend. Even more, when I had heard of his registering for the event three months ago, I had already been in fear and disturbed. Upon coming home, I wrote an inventory on it in order to share it with my sponsor in the evening.

The inventory brought to light that I had been judging him for showing off, sucking attention, wanting to do

and be special, trying to give a better-than-the-others share, wanting to be the leader, wanting to be the old-timer ... whereas these character defects

My sponsor told me how I can consciously choose to be in the Kingdom of God, which is the place in me where God is King.

were in fact mine! The countervailing virtues of these would be humility,

modesty, anonymity, seeking God, looking to serve, being just another bozo on the bus.

In sharing it with my sponsor it became even more obvious how I had acted out those character defects at the weekend, by trying to give unrivaled shares while at the same time keeping an innocent poker face and by interrupting the meeting or Saturday evening talent show with loud, "fun-

I thank God for this new opportunity to grow into a more humble and giving servant instead of a dry drunk who acts out his disease under the disguise of service.

ny" comments and remarks. I saw that I had been focused on taking instead of giving; on being noticed instead of being unassuming; on wanting to be listened to rather than listening to those in need.

I had been acting from a place of self-reliance instead of God-reliance; ego instead of love. I realized that, had I been focused on giving and anonymity, I wouldn't have cared about the presence of the other fellow. I wouldn't have been disturbed after the convention but fully in peace and joy. I had been disturbed by his presence because in my mind he had been a rival to my being the number one, while, had I given up my desire to be the number one, his presence would have lost its power over me as

an imagined rival.

My sponsor told me how I can consciously choose to be in the Kingdom of God, *which is the place in me where God is King*. If not, I am again in the kingdom of self, the dark place of taking from others in order to try to fill myself. He also reminded me of a practical tool I can use for any event which promises to be challenging:

- First, before going to the challenging place, visualizing the venue and people that I will meet there, and sending love to the place and people.
- Second, right before entering, asking God to help me be exactly the way He wants me to be

I was gratefully reminded of the Slogan, *There is a God, and I'm not Him*. I thank God for choreographing this whole chain of events and for my sponsor to help me unravel this jumble of distorted motives and projections. I thank Him for this new opportunity to grow into a more humble and giving servant instead of a dry drunk who acts out his disease under the disguise of service.

ANONYMOUS, Germany



POEM "THE SLOGANS"

Keep Coming Back, is what they tell me every week;
You might think they tell me this mostly tongue in cheek.
But they did not, I assure you, the Slogans are for real;
They express where we are, how we're doing, how we feel.
Each Slogan is full of life, each one has what to offer;
To the newcomer, the old-timer, the believer, and the scoffer.
First things First, It's a Simple Program just remember to Think think think;
One Day At a Time, we Let Go and Let God, and, Just for Today, don't take a drink.
You're powerless, so Let It Go, Trust in God, let it be;
Take the Actions, Surrender the Results, and forever say, Let It Begin with Me.
It Works If You Work It, don't sit back and twiddle your thumb;
Work the Steps, Work the Steps, and the miracles will come.
Stay Teachable, Get a Sponsor, it will keep your life from going south;
Especially when you Take the Cotton Out of Your Ears, and Stick It in Your Mouth.
Experience, Strength, and Hope, is our sponsorship nuts and bolts;
And Insanity Means Doing the Same Thing and Expecting Different Results.
Your Best Thinking Got You Here, so stop judging the other guy;
Live and Let Live - Stop Playing God! - There But for the Grace of God Go I.
I can't list every Slogan, but To Thine Own Self Be True;
If you are Honest, Openminded and Willing, you'll find the ones that work for you.
When all is said and done, there is room for everyone;
To have a Spiritual Awakening, and get your fair share of the fun.
Don't give up, if you struggle, you might not get it right away;
Everyone has ups and downs, we all have bumps along the way.
Persistence and perseverance are my keys to stay on track;
Which is why my group urges me weekly, most importantly: Keep Coming Back!

SHIM F., *New Jersey, USA*



The Slogans

Poor Me ... Poor Me ... Pour Me Another Drink

Cultivate An Attitude Of Gratitude



This Polish lady describes how she works on reprogramming her default negativity and complaining into positivity and gratitude.

My sponsor and members from my English-speaking home group suggested that I list the things I am grateful for in sobriety. They probably couldn't bear my complaining any longer, which might be why they suggested it. My sponsor asked me to cultivate gratitude because by nature, I am so sarcastic, fault-finding, sticking in the victim-role etc. People who are grateful don't have to *Cultivate an Attitude of Gratitude*. It's exactly those who don't have it by nature, like me, who have to cultivate and train themselves by hard work.

Thank you for almost four years of SA sobriety—and six years of SA recovery, in particular for:

- Contacts with the fellowship, a sense of belonging, which is so dear to me.
- Patience with my strong emotions, my resentments, and my very strong victim attitude.
- Enduring my being late without comments (generally).
- Members who accompany me in difficult situations in life (disability, death of my father, my cancer and

difficult treatment, loss of ability to work, periodic severe pain, periodic waves of depression, moving out of the house and separating from my parents with whom I was co-addicted). People were there for me during my hard time. I was not alone.

- For the man from SA who held my hand while I awoke from a tumor surgery and brought me flowers.

- For those who were with me for tea in the pub when I found out that my cancer was malignant and that there was a high risk that I would die quickly. In this hour in the pub for tea and for their presence for me. I wasn't able to talk, I was shocked, but they were there. I was not alone with the death experience.

- For a quick-coming-death experience in sobriety. It turned out that I would rather survive and stay alive, which was not the most probable version at the beginning. Quick death was most probable. Thanks to this experience, I stopped procrastinating. It's a colossal change, I was a master of procrastination. I don't put my life off until later, or don't do it so often.

- For the courage to leave my job and

profession, which completely did not match my psyche, abilities and sensitivity, and which damaged me. People usually do not understand this decision, but I understand it. I am deeply happy to have had such a possibility of changing my professional life.

- For the money from an inheritance, especially for the fact that it came so late in my life and recovery. I was able to use it wisely. If I had gotten them earlier, I would have used them in a completely different way and I would probably hurt myself. I got them when I grew up on the program and knew how to use them to support me, not to hurt me.

- For the whole package of love and patience for myself, whereas before I treated myself cruelly and rigidly. Now I can often be my own best friend. I can be more patient and gentle with myself. And consequently—I can be more gentle with others.

- For my English-language meeting “Bozos on the Bus”, where I find a lot of love in practice, and for the meetings of the Polish community, especially for “Zbawiciel,” “Rakowiecka,” and “Narutowicza,” where I had companions and understanding in the pain of early sobriety, and in the discipline of recovery (discipline is necessary at the beginning). I wouldn’t be able to do it without you.

- For men and women from my local fellowship, who moved and transported my belongings when I moved, who did shopping with me or for me, who moved my furniture in the apartment, who drilled holes in the walls for hammocks, who cleaned my basement, who cleaned my carpets, who delivered a three-meter (three-yard) tree trunk to my flat on the eighth floor (it was too long to

travel by elevator), who brought me a pulse oximeter during Covid, and crutches when I sprained my leg, who borrowed books for me, or just came to me sometimes for a cup of tea and chat, or invited me to their houses.

- For phone calls, social contact, conscious contact and praying.

- For English-Polish translators, for the Polish version of the White Book, Step into action and other books in Polish, announcements about con-

Thank you for the whole package of love and patience for myself, whereas before I treated myself cruelly and rigidly. Now I can often be my own best friend.

ventions, and so on. They do a great service and usually for free.

- For the Polish-English interpreters, translating for me when I needed to communicate.

- For English-English translators who translate difficult English into easy English. This is a very difficult version of the translation, and there are at least five people who systematically do something like this for me. I am extremely grateful for them, it gives me the feeling of being part of the group. You can not imagine how hurtful it is to lack the ability to communicate because I lack fluency in the language—how much it excludes me. Our disease already separates

me from people, which is harmful enough, I definitely do not need another reason to feel separated and excluded.

- For the members who organized workshops, some of which were crucial for my recovery and changed my life.

- For a new understanding of my Higher Power, and being so close (we even can have a quarrel!). My God is so much present in my life today.

- For my favorite prayers: the Set Aside prayer and the 11th Step prayer.

- For 14 meetings a week in my city (yes, we have two face-to-face meetings a day in Warsaw).

- For seven face-to-face meetings available by walking by foot from the flat where I live (know that Warsaw is a big city!). I am lucky to live in a good place.

- For an incredibly beautiful view and marvelous sunsets visible from my apartment.

- For supportive neighbors and a quiet neighborhood.

- For my cat’s purring love and good health.

- For the ability to see and hear, for

two legs and being able to walk. For having both hands working properly. For the fact that doctors did not cut out much of my body while treating my cancer and I didn’t have to be severely damaged during treatment. It didn’t look like that in the beginning of the treatment. The most probable version was massive, destructive surgery. It was not necessary, thank God.

- For the public health care in Poland. For an invalidity pension. It is small, but better than nothing.

- For a very good delivery system for food and stuff. I do not need to go to the store, I don’t like big stores.

- For a book for creatively blocked artists to work on the blockages inside me—maybe it will be possible to live without them one day.

- For the opportunity to be an artist—so far I am not very successful, but I mean that I can try it, I have time, I have the right circumstances for it.

- For the fact that God usually builds on my weakness, not my achievements. That I don’t have to deserve His cooperation and love. It’s just enough to be present and open.

LILIAN T., Warsaw, Poland



THE SA HOME GROUP

What is an SA home group? What does it mean that the home group is a spiritual entity? Do I have to join a home group? What is my role in the group? Find out about issues SA home groups commonly face and how to deal with them. Learn from the experiences of others with running healthy group business meetings and serving their home group.

Does my home group have a subscription to the print version of the ESSAY? Do we use ESSAY materials in our meeting?

Find this inspiring and insightful pamphlet to help you and your home group on the SA Store: <https://tinyurl.com/5n945edk>



Singing the Slogans

Read how two Dutch fellows have fellowship and fun in making recovery music, and share their joy with others



Sing the Slogans and Learn Them by Heart

In 2018 an SA/S-Anon couple traveled around our region with their workshop “Slogans Save Lives.” They shared how they use both Slogans and Traditions for their everyday recovery, both individually and as a couple. Music and humor gave the workshop a light touch. We sang some [recovery songs](#) that were handed out on paper.

More and more I’ve come to see the value of Slogans. They are simple and spot on, whereas I tend to complicate things. They are little capsules of experience, strength and hope. Rhyme, rhythm, and alliteration make them easy to remember. I enjoy turning them into songs. They make great titles too.

Two sheets of Slogans that my former sponsor gave me came in handy when the motto of the 2019 Madrid International Convention turned out to be “Living The Slogans.” In my song “Living The Slogans,”* the verses consist solely of Slogans.

Easy Does It

In “My Trigger to Pray,”** the vers-

es describe how it used to be when my ego was in charge; the chorus puts forward the challenge of turning a “trigger to hate” into a “trigger to pray.” Once, when I was wavering in my sobriety, I happened across John Lennon’s “Run For Your Life”, and felt I could turn it into the voice of my ego trying to keep its hold on me as I try to recover, and out came “Run For The Wild Elephant.”***

Let Go and Let God

At the recent online “Supporting Women in SA” event, we sang “Living the Slogans” together. With unmuted microphones *Let Go, Let God* sounded from many homes all over the region; it was a great moment of unity and joy.

In another song called “Let Go and Let God,”**** we set these concise, alliterating words to a swing rhythm. It was recorded at the Nashville, Jan 2020 International Convention entertainment night.

Some songs quote from our literature —“Trudging The Road Of Happy Destiny”, “The Eighteen Wheeler”, “Just For Today”, and “The Promises.” In other songs, we set program prayers

to music—“The Serenity Prayer”, “The Eleventh Step Prayer”, and “The Seventh Step Prayer”—a great way to learn them by heart! “The SA Serenade” is a song of praise for program and fellowship used for celebrating sobriety anniversaries.

This Is a “We” Program

Marcel and I played together for the first time at a Dutch recovery day in 2017. He had only just picked up the bass guitar and was practicing until he had blisters on his fingers. Since then we haven’t stopped sharing this great form of fellowship and have built up quite a repertoire.

Slogans that really fire my imagination are *Easy Does It, Keep It Simple, and Progress Not Perfection*.

We meet quite a lot of fellow musicians at national and international events. At the “Walk to Freedom” workshop which celebrated “2022—Year of CFC”, a CFC servant, from his home in the US, joined in song with me and Marcel in the Netherlands, and together we solved the problem of internet sound asynchronicity by playing in turns.

... Love Can’t Wait to Give

Singing chants with a few great fellows at a recent Dutch-speaking Convention, I was overwhelmed and moved to tears. *Surprised by Joy*, the tears refreshed me because, for a period up until then, I had been suffering from a poor connection with my Higher Power.

We’ve had the pleasure of playing with singer-guitarists, percussionists—from castanets to cajón—and lately with a fabulous fiddler, who joined us with a minimum of rehearsing!

With *An Attitude Of Gratitude*,**** I thank my HP, sponsor, groups, sponsors, and check-in partners for sharing their recovery with me. I thank my buddy Marcel for his enduring enthusiasm and sense of fun; I thank all you fellows for playing, singing & swinging along; I thank that Trustee who advocated that music be played at events and finally, I thank y’all for listening.

This Is a “We” Program: recovery songs are a joint effort and a shared joy.

MARCEL S., Amsterdam, the Netherlands
BEN V., Leiden, the Netherlands

A Bouquet of Our Recovery Songs

- * **Living the Slogans:** <https://tinyurl.com/3697ukyw>
✓ Lyrics: <https://tinyurl.com/3z7ua8vw>
- ** **My Trigger to Pray:** <https://tinyurl.com/33h6djpf>
✓ Lyrics: <https://tinyurl.com/4zk4vumd>
- *** **Run for the Wild Elephant:** <https://tinyurl.com/34kevmd9>
✓ Lyrics: <https://tinyurl.com/3f69r62n>
- **** **Let Go and Let God:** <https://tinyurl.com/44czpzdw>
✓ Lyrics: <https://tinyurl.com/y9tf4msn>
- ***** **An Attitude of Gratitude:** <https://tinyurl.com/mvdn6r4w>
✓ Lyrics: <https://tinyurl.com/3n8jmn4z>

According to Tradition Six, displaying these links does not imply that ESSAY endorses their content, or entities associated with them.

THE SLOGANS ARE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDES TO SANITY



The Slogans have saved this member's life and are still inspiring him today to *Keep It Simple*.

I have a fond history with the Slogans—you might say that they have saved my life. In early AA recovery, my home group was “old school,” no sharing in meetings until you had one year of sobriety. (We could ask questions.) So I was bored, same old shares, so I read the walls: The 12 Steps, The 12 Traditions, and SLOGANS! I came to enjoy meditating on them, applying them to the most important person in the room—ME. My best thinking got me here, so what about *think THINK think*? I was a bundle of nerves—so no way to *Easy Does It!* I deserved to be in prison, so I still really like: *But for the Grace of God*. Even today I'm not as recovered as I would like to be, but I can *Act As If* I am sober or *Fake It 'Till I Make It*. It is *Spiritual Progress Rather Than Spiritual Perfection*, thank God.

It took 25 years of sobriety in AA before I hit bottom in my lusting addiction and was directed to SA. You might say that I *Keep Coming Back* and I *Didn't Quit Before the Miracle Happened*. Wow, I think God was *Doing For Me*

In early AA recovery, my home group was “old school,” no sharing in meetings until you had one year of recovery.

What I Could Not Do For Myself. I love Higher Power Surprises! I have had some outstanding sponsors who have shown me that

I Cannot Keep It Unless I Give It Away. I can Live and Let Live, Let Go and Let God, but I shall Try to Carry the Message to Other Suffering Sexaholics. For me, Slogans are quick reference guides to sanity.

I am a complicated person with a complex disease, just addiction. And I am clearly a slow learner—it took me to age 62 to drag my feet into SA, confused and denying, but my habit had me whipped. Thank God and SA there was/is a solution and an *Attitude of Gratitude* for me. Today I try to *Keep It Simple*.

There are a few references in SA literature to Slogans. Our *Step Into Action* book has a list in the Appendix A of 14 Slogans. The Index to *The Real Connection*, our book of Meditations, has a list of 26 readings using or referring to a Slogan or Slogans.

I like some Slogans from other fellowships like S-Anon, like *The 3 Cs: didn't Cause it, can't Control it, can't Cure it*; and they use *Awareness, Acceptance and Action*. That's the

beauty of Slogans—they don't have to be Conference Approved, just approved, loved in my Experience, Strength and Hope—I *Use It or Lose It*.

I once searched the AA website for

I am a complicated person with a complex disease, just addiction. Thank God there was/is a solution and an *Attitude of Gratitude* for me.

Slogans, that was fun—lots of them. I recently did an internet search of Recovery Slogans and found 86! How many times have you heard, said or even modified *Keep Coming Back*?

GENE T., Texas, USA



DISCUSSION TOPIC

(How) Do I use the Slogans in my daily life?

In the well-filled recovery toolbox which we got passed on from AA, we not only find Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, but also SLOGANS. We all know some of them. In many 12-Step meeting rooms the walls are even decorated with posters containing one or more Slogans.

Gene tells us here his fond history with the Slogans and their positive influence on his

early recovery as well as current life.

Which role did the Slogans play in your early recovery? Did your sponsor or home group teach them to you? How do you use the Slogans in your recovery today?

Which are your favorite Slogans? What do they mean to you? How do you use them? Are there any moments in your recovery that a Slogan kept you sober or

emotionally in balance?

Do you pass the Slogans on to your sponsees or home group members? What could you or your home group do to make them more known to the members of your local fellowship?

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



No Fighting on the Life Boat Please

Hi, I am writing this story for all the members who are not part of the crowd in SA. I want you to know that you're welcome too in SA. There is a place for everyone in SA.

Over the years I've met members who are a little different to me; they believe differently; their point of view is different to almost everyone in their local fellowship. Some have said that because of this, they feel isolated in their fellowship because their beliefs aren't those of the mainstream group's.

There was a time when I felt different from everyone in the group too. I felt I didn't fit in so I know what it's like to feel like an outsider. Yet, if this is you today, I want you to know that you are loved and supported.

Some people don't believe in God. For a big believer in God like me, I found this puzzling. I was a fanatic about God and was very judgmental of members who didn't believe like me. A member of a meeting that I attend said he had a lot of problems with God. But instead of trying to understand him, I was harsh

in my opinion towards him. It's embarrassing to admit this today but I just couldn't understand how anyone could not believe in God. I came to see that it is true that *We, the Most Tolerated, Sometimes Become the Most Intolerant*.

But when a close friend made me aware of my bad behavior towards the unbeliever, I apologized to him and we had a beautiful heart-to-heart conversation. It made me wake up to myself. I'm glad my friend pulled me up and helped me to see the error of my ways. I must do my best to make everyone feel safe at meetings no matter what they believe or don't believe in.

From someone who has made a lot of mistakes, please think about the members who may be a little different from you: we have all paid a heavy price for our seat in the rooms.

I had to learn it the hard way that *It Takes Rigorous Honesty to Come Into the Program, and Rigorous Tolerance to Stay in the Program*. Or, as one AA old-timer who I know coins it, *No Fighting on the Life Boat Please*.

ANONYMOUS

used to love philosophy and intellectuality, hiding behind wise quotes so that I would impress women, get them to lust after me, and impress men so that I would be accepted. This all derives from low self-esteem of course. I spent a great deal of money and time collecting books—religious, spiritual, highbrow, and I used anything I could from these to manipulate others, to make them feel that I was essential to them.

Under the spell of lust, I did not care about the other person's age or marital status. I just wanted connection with the

opposite sex, whether physically or virtually through social media. I used to walk the streets for tens of kilometers with my fancy outfits wanting to be lusted after or to lust after others.

I remember one day in the street a woman ran away from me because of the way I was staring at her.

After three years in the program, relapsing now and then, I hit rock-bottom and finally got sober. At this stage, I decided to work the program hard, listening to my sponsor's suggestions as if they were orders.

There was one particular Slogan that helped me stay sober a day at a time since Nov 12, 2018. It was *Live and Let Live*.

In trying to live by this Slogan I

would close my eyes in an elevator for example, when a woman might enter, and I would keep to myself so that she would feel safe, undisturbed by me.

Living by this Slogan, I would look away from couples and from women as I walked the street, often crossing to the other side of the road so that they would feel undisturbed.

I closed all social media applications to keep myself from making contact with women. For their sake, their peace of mind, I deleted all numbers of female phone contacts, including females in other fellowships and female relatives, except those

very close to me like my three aunts.

I stopped asking my friend about his partner and stopped trying to find out who his future partner might be.

I did all these things so that I would let each person live peacefully, joyfully, and safely—undisturbed

by my lust. As a consequence I too "Live" sober, a day at a time, free from lust.

I'm not perfect. I do make mistakes. But by promptly admitting them and by promptly bringing to the light with another member any lustful thoughts or motives I might have, I continue to live in the light of the SA program, *One Day At a Time*.

MINA S., Dubai, UAE



Live and Let Live..

Doing The Next Right Thing

When No One Is Watching

UN NOTICED

This fellow tweaked a well-known AA saying and invented an acronym that is foundational to his ongoing recovery.

For my addled brain with the memory of a goldfish, the Slogans are pithy, easy to remember and, when I receive the willingness, actionable. There are so many that come to mind, such as *One Day At A Time*, *Good Orderly Direction*, *Let Go and Let God*, and *Go Easy On Yourself*. However, there are two Slogans that have become foundational to my recovery and intertwined in my increasingly 12-Step way of living. The first is *Doing the Next Right Thing* with the added twist of *Particularly, When No One Is Watching*. The second I cobbled together following years of meetings, listening to speakers in both SA and AA, doing the Steps, working with my sponsor/sponsees and general fellowship which I call the G.A.S.H. principle.

Prior to entering SA in March 2014, my ego was running amok, while drama and complexity ruled me like

an iron and increasingly clenched fist. I lost all ability to listen to that inner voice, that intuition, that truth, that message from my Higher Power. Even though I knew right from wrong, good from bad, safe from risky, I was so governed by my addiction I couldn't do the next right thing. Everything seemed overwhelming, I was rudderless, my moral compass spinning uncontrollably and I crossed many physical, emotional and spiritual boundaries. My life was completely upside down and I was increasingly closed off. I was truly "apart from" as the White Book so eloquently describes.

However, through the grace of the SA program, I am focused on *Doing the Next Right Thing*, particularly *When No One Is Watching*. Such a principle keeps me in the moment, present. I can surrender those two dangerous days, aka yesterday and tomorrow. It simplifies my life

tremendously. It reduces the pressure to have everything figured out, and puts me back on God's time and not mine. It also helps me be a better sponsor, husband, father, brother and human being. The "twist" also helps reduce my self-centered, self-absorbed tendencies, deflates my ego and elevates my humility while helping me strive for recovery in all my affairs. All pretext and false ideals are set aside and the "look at me" need has

For my addled brain with the memory of a goldfish, the Slogans are pithy, easy to remember and when I receive the willingness, actionable.

evaporated, thankfully—particularly for those around me I suspect. Even my dog seems more at peace.

The second core Slogan for me I have dubbed the G.A.S.H. principle. The G stands for Gratitude. It is my antidote to Resentment and Rage, and their close character defect cousins anger, envy and fear. When I focus on what I have rather than what I don't, the glass becomes half full, and I lack for nothing material. Love and tolerance become my critical codes. Today, I can't go five minutes without thinking about all the things I can be grateful for, including the ever so slight or seemingly small things in life. The A stands for Acceptance and is an offset to Anxiety. When I struggle, there is definitely something in me that is amiss, just as the prayer suggests. I

spent the better part of four decades violating this tenet, fighting anything and everyone, all to no avail. The sooner I accept all is as it should be, the faster the solution can work its magic. The S stands for Surrender. Surrender is the potion that negates my control freak blind spot, my need to have a say on everything, solve everyone else's problems, or judge all but myself. When I surrender, unity with my fellows, family, and HP deepens. Finally, the H stands for Humility. At first, the focus on seeing myself as is—both good and bad—was my recipe for easing the risk of humiliation. But over the years, I have refined this to help offset my ego.

By no means do I have it all figured out—if you spent five minutes in my cranium you would run for the hills. However and amazingly, my thinking has never been so lucid. The drama gauge is quiet, my life is gloriously dull and my spiritual connection with my HP is rocketing into the fourth dimension as promised by Bill W. in the 1930s. For me, these twin Slogans continue to edge me deeper into recovery over sobriety. I am not cured or immune to lust, but lust is at a low ebb, thankfully, and acting out isn't the first or last thought of the day.

BILL K., *New York, USA*



The Sickness
is in the
Secrets



By Jimmy M.

One Day At a Time

Sober since 1993, her feelings of despair, guilt, and shame have given way to gratitude and acceptance.



For me, recovery means that my worst day today is better than my best day in my insanity. What does that mean? It doesn't sound rational.

By the time I came into SA, I was desperate. I wanted more than anything to stop acting out. I had promised myself I wouldn't have another affair or other acting out behavior. I had worn a path into church, praying God would help me stop because I was desperate, full of guilt and shame.

After years of insanity, I began to see a therapist who suggested I go to SA. I was horrified. I didn't want anyone else to know the horrible things I'd done. But that first SA meeting was the beginning of a new life.

I thought recovery was about stopping having sex. Instead, it was about

letting go of lust and developing the ability to have healthy intimacy. I didn't know intimacy was two people communicating honestly and lovingly.

I've learned to become aware of my surroundings. Nature became, and still is, my touchstone. When the craziness in my head starts, I take three deep breaths and look outside. Seeing a cloud, a flower or animal reminds me my Higher Power is with me all the time.

Thankfully recovery is *One Day At a Time*, as the photo above of a Belgian sponsee's embroidery work and her cat "Milton" illustrate so well. Living in the moment and focusing on gratitude is what my life is like today. I'm not saying every day is perfect and that's okay. Today I choose sobriety.

PRISCILLA C., Tennessee, USA 

FIRST THINGS FIRST



I have a wonderful wife and three kids. I love stories. I love surfing. I am a long-time volunteer who contributes to the community. I absolutely love life and live it to the fullest. But it wasn't always this way. For over fifteen years I was in the grip of lust and porn addiction, never knowing real happiness as I spent my time taking from life rather than giving.

I would get hold of pornography anyway I could. I could never be alone on the internet without searching for porn. It got to the stage where it began to affect my mental health and my relationships with those closest to me. I was always trying to put on a happy face, but I was really coming apart, ruled by this addiction. I needed help. I had no peace mentally, emotionally or spiritually.

My wife and a close friend encouraged me

to check out SA. By this stage I was desperate and it didn't take long to convince me to give it a go. I went along to my first meeting not knowing what to expect. What I found was the beginning of a new life. The people in that room were real and honest and taking responsibility for their recovery. There was nothing fake about them. The thing that impressed me the most was how honest they were and how hard they were working to be free of this addiction. I was encouraged and wanted the freedom from addiction they had.

I started to learn from the people in the group, these men who were honest and real. They told me that the most important thing to do was to admit that I was powerless over lust and that my life had become unmanageable. There was no judgment or shaming amongst these people. They shared

their powerlessness and unmanageability and showed me just how much we all have in common. They explained the Steps to me and showed me what taking responsibility looked like.

I began to work the Steps, taking heart at the freedom on offer and became sober. Life is not perfect, it is not rosy, but I came to experience reality, to live life on life's terms, and it is very freeing. I have a good sense of perspective today.

The Slogan that inspires me most is *First Things First* as it inspires me to have healthy priorities: this program of recovery; people to be accountable to; placing practical filters on my computer and devices; taking exercise. I am enjoying a second chance at life. I am under new management today.

CALVIN, Newcastle, Australia 



An ugly cycling accident made him realize that it was high time to surrender to the program of action and start opening up, especially about the things he didn't want to talk about.

Before coming into SA, I didn't believe that lust was a big deal for me. I had masturbated all my life, sometimes using pornography. I was acting out with other men four to six times a month. I was living what I thought was a successful double life—on one hand a successful educator, father, husband, and church leader, and on the other a committed sex addict. I could lean into the stressors of career, family or church, and seem to others to be wise and a courageous leader. But later, I would relieve the emotional pressure by acting out sexually. Except for the burdensome guilt and shame, the pattern seemed to be working.

I realized in September 2017 that I could no longer live with the tension between my true self and my addict. The addict was growing stronger and stronger. If I didn't do something, the addict would consume any good that

remained. So, I disclosed my double life to my wife and two sons, started an aggressive sex therapy program and began attending SA meetings.

My therapist said I needed to “dry out,” no sex for at least ninety days. I lasted almost four months. It was negative sobriety, each of those days, and it was based solely on fear: fear that I would lose my wife, my sons, my grandson, my friends, and my reputation. I wanted sex badly, but I feared that one slip would result in a loss of everything that was important to me. My lack of true surrender and continuing resentments toward others took me spiraling back down into regular masturbation.

For nearly two years, I thought I could handle masturbating once in a while, believing I was regulating my sexual appetite appropriately. The downside was that I had to reset my sobriety date and report it at SA meetings; I was attending three meetings a week by now. To appease my

ego, I often said, “Grateful to be here today,” instead of giving the date on which I had last masturbated. I was disgruntled with SA for taking such a hardline on sobriety. What I didn't realize at the time was that my behavior was fanning the coals of a smoldering lust addiction.

I received a wake up call from my Higher Power on Friday, March 13th. I had a freak cycling accident and broke three vertebrae in my neck. C1 was completely broken in two places, and doctors reported that I should have been dead or at least paralyzed from the neck down. The weeks that followed the accident provided a lot of time to think as I was pretty much immobilized.

What was God doing? Why was I still alive? What would my life be like if I was paralyzed from the neck down? Two months after the accident, I realized that the things I needed to do to manage the pain and recover from my biking accident were just a fraction of what I needed to do to get sober. So I decided that, in addition to physical recovery, I'd double down on addiction recovery. I started 90 meetings in 90 days, arranged Step work meetings with my sponsor and started making phone calls to other members.

I hate phone calls. I'm uncomfortable with the long pauses. I don't want to share honestly about how lust is such a big part of my life. I'm embarrassed to admit how I objectify my own body. I dislike starting the conversation with that one thing that I don't want to talk about. But, I make calls anyway. I put in my calendar the names of men I'm going to call that week. At the present, I call several on a weekly basis. Now, a few of them beat me to the punch and call me before I have a chance to call them. *I'm As Sick As My Secrets.* Talking to

other sexaholics helps me maintain a positive sobriety.

God saved my life on that March 13 and continues to save my life day by day as I walk the path of recovery. Positive sobriety is my compass. The longer my stretch of sobriety, the more fine-tuned my lusting detector

To appease my ego, I often said, “Grateful to be here today,” instead of giving the date on which I had last masturbated.

becomes. I begin to feel what is really going on inside. I can see the comfort and joy in others and begin to experience them for myself.

The section on Withdrawal in the White Book talks about sobriety this way: “Sobriety involves a new and unfamiliar way of life, like driving in a foreign country without knowing the language or customs. Only this is a whole new *inner* terrain. Without the drug, we begin to feel what's really going on inside. It takes time to adjust to all this, and the support of others in the fellowship is vital. Journeying this new road together helps take the fear out of withdrawal. We see that others who have gone before us have discovered that sex is truly optional, *once they surrendered lust and the expectation of sex.* And their comfort and joy are genuine; they are neither abnormal nor deprived.” (SA 31)

I am grateful to God that he has saved my life twice, once as a cyclist and now as a recovering sexaholic.

TIM K., USA



An Addict Alone Is in Bad Company



In order to get out of the trauma bubble he found himself in, he started making phone calls and found the priceless gift of newfound peace and closeness to God.

I was just reading in the ESSAY and felt moved to write about an experience that I had a couple of years ago. An experience and healing that would not have taken place without being a member of SA.

To understand what took place I have to tell you a little about my story. As a young boy my father was always away with work. I needed a father, and an uncle took on that role for me, though at a price. He started to molest and sexually abuse me. I enjoyed the attention at first though I knew something was not right about it. At the age of six my father moved home for good. Not knowing how to relate to him, I tried to make him love me by doing something that my uncle had me do to him. His response was immediate and definitive, he threw me across the room into my bedroom and slammed the door leaving me

alone, utterly rejected and dejected, my little heart crushed. A week or so after that my uncle came to visit me in the night. When in my pain I rejected his advances, he sat in the corner of my room and, looking all

I had to find a Higher Power who loved me in spite of—or maybe because of my sex addiction.

dejected, he slowly started to play with himself. Having just experienced that rejection myself I could not take it and went over to comfort him. That night his abuse of me took on a whole new form.

In my teens this abuse ended, but I would carry the effects for many years. When I was thinking of going into the seminary, the first two spiritual leaders I talked to made sexual advances and I found myself powerless to say no. When I became sexually active in my early twenties after leaving the seminary, I found that I could not say no to any man who wanted sex with me. Then, when I was trying to give up sex altogether at a time when I was living in a multi-bed dormitory, I found that, whenever I heard anything in the night that sounded like it could be someone masturbating, I felt compelled to offer them my body to pleasure themselves with. This

When the dust settled, I was different. I noticed I could work on a computer without any thought of using it to get porn.

was problematic as I was living in a traditional Christian setting.

That was thirty years ago. Through the grace and power of God I have not had sex with another person since that time. But neither have I been able to open my heart to another man either. When pornography started to take over my life I came to SA. Slowly I learned to open my heart to God. First, I had to find a Higher Power who loved me in spite of—or maybe because of my sex addiction. But still recovery eluded me. There was a wall or road-block inside my heart.

But a couple of years ago this thing happened. A friend was having a

mental health crisis. I had to drive him to an appointment. His pain was so tangible yet I could not break into it to meet him there. He would not meet my eyes or even say more than “Hi.” As we were driving, I kept on pleading with God to help him and saying to God that I would do anything to help him. After repeating this with all my heart for five to ten minutes a thought came to me, one that I have for most of my life locked away behind barriers of fear and pain: “I could do that thing my uncle had me do to cheer him up.” I was both surprised and repulsed by the thought. We got to our destination and I told my friend that if he needed anything just let me know.

I remembered the Slogan *An Addict Alone Is in Bad Company*, so I started making phone calls to surrender it. I had to repeat that for a couple of days before I found peace again. When the dust settled, I was different. I noticed I could work on a computer without any thought of using it to get porn. My prayer life was different. I seemed closer to God. As I look back on what happened, it is as if my care, concern, and love of my friend pushed past the road-block in my heart with its big sign above, “DANGER. DO NOT ENTER.” I had been so afraid to totally open up my heart to anyone for fear of what might happen, and so I was also closed to God.

Another one of my fears was that I would not be able to say “NO” if I was ever asked for sex. As it says in the 10th step, “If we are tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame.” (AA 84-85) And, “we find that this happens automatically.” How freeing it is to see how natural and automatic the sense of repulsion is in me. I’m so grateful for this program and for all I have learned doing the Steps.

PETER G., Ontario, Canada



This Philippines member will keep on coming back because he truly believes the SA recovery program works if he works it.



This is one of the program Slogans that stuck in my mind after I attended my first SA virtual meeting here in the Philippines. I was afraid and hesitant to attend an SA meeting because I was in denial and doubtful that I was a sex addict, but forced myself to join that meeting as I was afraid to lose my wife and kids. That first SA meeting in February of 2021 was quite memorable to me. When I heard the sharing among the members, I immediately identified. It was the first time that I heard that lust is the core of my sex addiction.

I consistently attended the SA Philippines virtual meetings and became more interested in following what the White Book is saying. By the grace of God, I found my sponsor when I attended the SA Asia Pacific Unity Conference in April last year. I was excited that finally, I can work the program with a sponsor. I am thankful that he is quite patient in explaining how the program is helping him with

his own sobriety and recovery. I am forever grateful to my sponsor as he has put forward my understanding of how to live the principles of SA.

What helped me the most during my early sobriety was when my sponsor pointed me to the eighteen guides on overcoming lust and temptation (*Sexaholics Anonymous* 158-167). I read through these every day and when I was done reading it, I read it again

I am grateful to my sponsor as he has put forward my understanding of how to live the principles of SA.

until I came to understand what it means and how it works.

Working the program has been more effective and easier to understand if I follow the guidance of my sponsor. He did not just guide me through

our book *Sexaholics Anonymous*, but he also introduced me to reading and learning from *Alcoholics Anonymous* as well as *The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions*. He invited me to join the Step study meeting of SA Taipei every Saturday morning using the book *Step Into Action*. The more I learned and actually worked on it, I've come to see that a Power greater than myself is gradually restoring me to sanity.

Giving away my First Step inventory at a meeting was also memorable to me. Afterwards, I felt relieved and accepted by my fellow sexaholics. When I reached Steps 4-7, what "surrendering my character defects" meant became clearer to me. Working Steps 8-11, I came to know what true humility is. In Step 12, I am patiently praying to God that I may be able to find and help another sick person like me who is in desperate need of help.

Using the benefits of technology, I

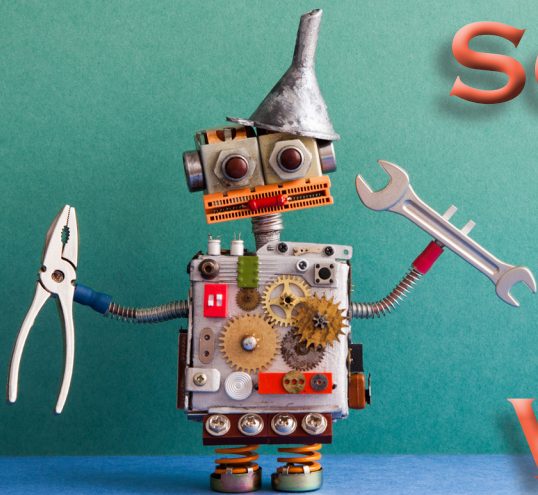
was able to attend other virtual SA meetings in the Asia Pacific region. One thing I enjoy in attending SA Singapore meetings is when we do our sharing and reading from the ESSAY.

At the end of an SA meeting we say *It works if you work it, so work it because you're worth it*. I'd say it really worked when I started following the Steps, taking directions from my sponsor, reaching out to my DSR partners and other SA members across the world, also participating in the meeting and doing service for the good of SA.

I am still in early sobriety and recovery, being sexually sober for over 15 months, but I truly believe the SA program works for me. I will keep on coming back because the SA recovery program works if I work it. I know God is working with me through the people I meet who have helped me work the program.

SHERWIN C., Philippines





SOBER IS NOT WELL

Ameer shares how by working the tools of the program real miracles have happened and he has become a better version of himself.

According to Tradition Three, I simply need to stop all my addictive thoughts and behavior in order to be part of this happy clan! However, as I grow in recovery, I feel it is more about emotional sobriety than mere sexual sobriety.

Time and again, my disease wants to settle for sexual abstinence as the end-game. It is easy to be drawn into all kinds of emotional maelstroms by still active defects of character: resentment, fear, selfishness, and dishonesty. The idea that I am fine, except for my sexual acting out, is cunning, baffling, and powerful! *Sober Is Not Well*, says the Slogan. My defects were formed before my sexually addictive behaviors; the behaviors soothed the discomfort of the defects; when I stop the acting out, those old defects come raging to the fore again and need to be addressed.

“Those who do not recover are those who cannot or will not give themselves completely to this simple program” of recovery. (AA 58) But recovery from what? From a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. In my understanding, the hopeless

Through service, sponsoring, helping others, and continuous inventory taking, I have become a better version of myself.

state of the body is the self-destructive behavior, but the hopeless state of the mind is not only the obsession,

but all kinds of personal defects that form my beliefs, ideas, and attitudes.

The program asks me to be loving, caring, helpful, of maximum service, humble, honest, and unselfish! But how can I be all of these if I go about my days dragging resentments, fears, selfishness, and dishonesty after me? Recovery will slip between my fingers like water in the hand unless I work to overcome these defects. Just like stopping my destructive sexual behavior, I need to sort out my mentally destructive behavior!

Fortunately, the program gives me the tools to become a better person: through service, sponsoring, helping others, and continuous inventory taking, I have become a better version of myself. For example, I found myself always resenting my wife. After doing some Step work on it, I came to see that I am codependent on her. I went to work on my codependency and my powerlessness over our relationship. I have accepted God’s will in my life and continuously cleaned house, surrendering codependency as it arises. Consequently, I am now living free of codependency on my wife, a day at a time. It is a miracle! I am also doing a lot of indirect living amends to her and to my children. My love for them has grown and matured. I see my wife as a beautiful person and see my children as a precious part of me. I feel more human, more normal than ever around them.

The miracles do not stop there. My work is a major source of resentment and fear where financial insecurity and selfishness drive all kinds of mood swings throughout a given day. I have faced many situations where I had to stop and pray for a sick person at work and ask God to help me to show them love, kindness, and understanding. And God has helped

me. With consistent effort, working my program, I am developing greater serenity around people who would have driven me mad with rage. Actually, some people have commented on this uncharacteristic ability of mine, lately acquired, of remaining calm in contentious situations.

Learning how to be unselfish, loving and honest is an amazing growth journey. I have been searching for a long time for a way to live a moral

Actually, some people have commented on this uncharacteristic ability of mine, of remaining calm in contentious situations.

way of life. This program of recovery shows me how to do it by simply working Steps 10 and 11 rigorously every day. These Steps are built on the solid foundations of Steps 1, 2, and 3, and the deep cleansing effect of Steps 4 through 9; and I am carrying the message to anyone who may need it by showing them how I’ve applied these principles in my personal life which fulfills my obligations to the 12th Step! What joy!

And just like the Steps do the internal work on me, I have the Traditions to help me to understand how to live and work with others. I have an improving connection with a loving God now which helps me carry the message of recovery to everyone.

AMEER M., Iraq

I wanted to share some *Words to Live By* that have proven useful to me to stay out of the prison of my own mind on a daily basis.

Easy Does It - Keep calm. I try to relax my senses and muscles, and not react to negative emotions.

Stay on the Beam - I need to remember the principles of the SA program instead of being distracted by emotional reactions.

One Day At a Time - I need to get just through today and not worry about the dead past or the imagined future. All I have control of is what I do today.

Avoid Resentment - Resentment leads to fear and anger, and gives rise to thoughts of lust. I need to ask myself, "Where was I wrong? What

I was born in New York City in 1942, and now live in Atlanta, Georgia. I have been a sexaholic for as long as I can remember. I joined SA on July 20, 2012, and have been sexually sober from then to now. I am retired today, and have two grownup daughters.

I have done a lot of service since the very beginning. I started sponsoring friends in prison and became the chair of the southeast region CFC in 2014. Currently I am the chair of my region, chairman of the SA CFC, and delegate to the GDA.

WORDS TO LIVE BY



was *my* negative thinking?"

Live Each Day to Its Fullest - I choose to be glad and happy for what my HP has given me and thank Him for my blessings of life and knowledge of the SA Program.

Read Each Day - Reading is important to healthy living. When I read, it exercises the mind. A healthy mind gives me a healthy body and spirit.

Pray Each Day - Prayer and reflection help clear my mind. Each day I thank my HP for what He has given me.

Surrender, Surrender, Surrender - I practice this in every situation. Surrendering what I cannot control. Surrendering negative thoughts to my HP.

Hope For the Best - I try to be optimistic always. There is nothing to be gained by having negative thoughts.

Look Through. Do Not Attach To - I don't allow myself to stare at objects or persons who create lust or fear in me. I look away and pray for them.

My HP Is My Guide - I take time to listen to my HP and ask for his guidance. I meditate and ask my HP what I should do. I try to listen for His word in meditation.

Look For Good - I need to look for the best in myself and other people; to always think good about others, and in consequence I experience that they see good in me.

Do Not Be Distracted - As I go through my day, I do not allow myself to stray from what I plan to do, or to be distracted by other people or events. I practice staying focused on the objective.

When I Speak, I Think That My Mother Is Watching - When someone says something to me, I try not to answer them right away, but to wait for ten seconds formulating my answer.

If I cannot say something kind or positive, I better say nothing.

Ask For Forgiveness - I ask my HP each night for forgiveness for my negative thoughts. I make amends to whomever I have harmed.

Do the Right Thing - I strive towards always doing the right thing. If I cannot, I need to pray for that person or event, even if it is painful.

Take a Daily Inventory Every Night - I go over all the events which have happened to me that day. I thank my HP for my blessings, and ask Him to take away my negative feelings.

Choose Friends Wisely - I need to stick with the winners; to choose companionship with positive thinkers; to connect with people who are positive and up-beat.

Exercise the Body - A healthy body makes for a clear and positive mind. Light exercise each day lifts the spirit and creates positive thinking.

The last three come from the experience of the friends in prison I have worked with over the years:

Do Not Count the Days But the Blessings - Do not dwell on the length of your confinement but instead focus on what good you can do each day.

Write Notes to People on the Outside - Communicate with friends and relatives with brief notes. Do not wait for them to write. Take the initiative.

Read the Newspaper, Even If It Is a Week Old - Stay connected and up-to-date with the outside world. Do not become isolated. Join self-help programs in prison.

I hope they may be helpful to our friends in prison as well as to anyone in our fellowship.

PAUL Z., Georgia, USA



SA Costa Rica Fell in Love With the SA Sobriety Definition



At the end of 2013, at a meeting of another S-fellowship, we came across an SA article entitled, “The Addict and His Fear of Death” (ESSAY, Spring 1999). It impressed us a lot. We found out more about SA and fell in love with SA’s Sobriety Definition. In October of that same year, SA Costa Rica was born.

Our first meeting took place over the phone with the guidance of our good friend Jim D. from the USA. Nine years have passed since. Many have arrived and many have left, but the group has grown strong. Currently, we have three face-to-face meetings and a virtual meeting; some members are already past a year’s sobriety and we have an active website through which we take inquiries with a phone number specifically dedicated to that purpose.

We have experienced the joy of having strong sober members accompany us virtually, as well as in person, even taking us through a face-to-face Step workshop.

With great joy we learned that there are fellow-members in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama. It would be fabulous if, before the end of this decade, we had a new region—the Central American Region!

What is our future? We have no idea and we don’t mind about that because we trust that our destinies are safe in the hands of a Higher Power. SA Costa Rica and SA in the rest of the world are in His hands!

JAVIER V., *San José, Costa Rica*



SAICO Financial June 2022

- Revenues	\$208,056
- Expenses	\$223,342
- Net Income	(\$15,285)
- Prudent Reserves	\$159,706

New Groups August 2022

- Nottingham, England, UK
- Huntersville, North-Carolina, USA
- Tallahassee, Florida, USA
- Wasilla, Alaska, USA
- Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA
- Boise, Idaho, USA



EMER returns to face to face convention—in Armenia

Seventh-century Khor Virap monastery against the backdrop of biblical Mount Ararat and surrounded by green pasture land and vineyards.

Following a three-year break due to the pandemic, the Europe and Middle East Region will hold its annual Regional Convention face-to-face from October 7 to 9, 2022 in the Republic of Armenia, located at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and the Middle East. We plan on having S-Anon participation as well.

A mountainous ancient land with lush natural beauty and stunning architecture, Armenia is one of the newest countries to enter into the SA family. Meetings have begun in this country of three million people, and the White Book will be published in Armenian by early August.

The Convention theme is “We Were Home.” (SA 205) Roy K., the founder of SA, was of Armenian descent, and his parents, survivors of the Armenian Genocide, immigrated to the US and raised a family under difficult circumstances. Roy’s story is “A Personal Story” at the beginning of the White Book. In a sense, the SA fellowship is “coming home” to Armenia, where Roy’s roots were from and where his journey really began.

Armenia is part of the Southeast Europe Intergroup, along with Croatia, Greece, Hungary and Romania. The Intergroup is one of 15 that are part of the sprawling EMER Region.

The Convention will unite SA members who are splintered worldwide by external circumstances. Because of Armenia’s open visa regime, members from North and South America, Western and Eastern Europe, the Russian-Speaking world, and the Middle and Far East are able to obtain a visa easily and many do not need a visa at all. Armenia is a safe, low-risk country to visit, and SA members have started registering for the Convention from around the globe.

The organizers expect the Convention to sell out and urge those interested in attending to register early at the website <https://emerconference.regfox.com/emer-convention-armenia>. Registration closes September 15.

For Russian, Belarussian, and Iranian members, other arrangements are being made known to the fellowships there through Whatsapp and Telegram groups.

The Convention requests that the Intergroups of EMER translate this article into your native languages and distribute it through your networks.

The Convention sessions will be conducted in English, Russian and Persian.

For questions, email seeuropesa@gmail.com. We hope to see you in Armenia!

2022 SA WORLDWIDE MEMBERSHIP CENSUS

Help the Regional Alignment Committee count the number of SA meetings throughout the world



Every ten years, the SA Board of Trustees initiates a census of SA meetings. The primary purpose of this census is to ensure the fair representation of meetings in the General Delegate Assembly (GDA) across the various Regions in our fellowship. It also highlights how the Fellowship has changed and grown since the prior census. The Trustee Committee responsible for the census is the Regional Alignment Committee (RAC).

During the pandemic, the method of gathering data about existing meetings was updated to a simple, single Online Form with the assistance of the Internet Technology Committee (ITC).

The Registration Form, called the “SA Meeting Registration/Update System,” will be available through your Delegates, Region, and Intergroup.

The information, which you will find on page 3 of the form (General Info), will be used for the RAC Census. Each GSR will be able to update their meeting information by using the link provided during the registration process.

Other data entered in this form can be used in a new “Meeting Finder Tool,” which is still under development with SAICO’s webmaster. All of the data entered will be securely stored at SAICO.

If your meeting does not belong to an Intergroup you can contact SAICO directly: saico@sa.org

Please assist your Trusted Servants in completing this census.

FARLEY H., RAC Chairperson

COMING IN OCTOBER



NEXT EDITION *In the October issue, read about the experience of fellowships from around the world on cooperating with professionals.*

Presenting the PI and H&I Committees

How do the SA Public Information Committee and Hospitals & Institutions Committee carry the message?

The Phenomenon of SA Israel

Thanks to their fabulous cooperation with professionals, Israel counts more than 500 members in a tiny country.

Stories of Local Initiatives

Learn how fellows around the world cooperate with professionals.

Working with the Belgian Press

Read about the Belgian fellowship that has a good, long-standing relationship with the written press.

SUBMIT YOUR STORY

December 2022 edition: Fun in Recovery (Stories due Nov 1) Send us your experiences on travel, outdoor activities, arts & hobbies, social entertainment, fun-filled SA activities and sober events.

February 2023 edition: Accepting Outside Help (Stories due Jan 1) The AA Big Book says in a number of places that outside help is often indispensable to getting sober and to enhancing our healing. What is your experience?

April 2023 edition: Celebrating the SA Sobriety Definition (Stories due Mar 1) Tell us about the miracles that have happened in your life since you accepted our common Sobriety Definition.

June 2023 edition: Newcomers—How to Welcome and Keep Them (Stories due May 1) What strategies does your home group have to help new 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.

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.

