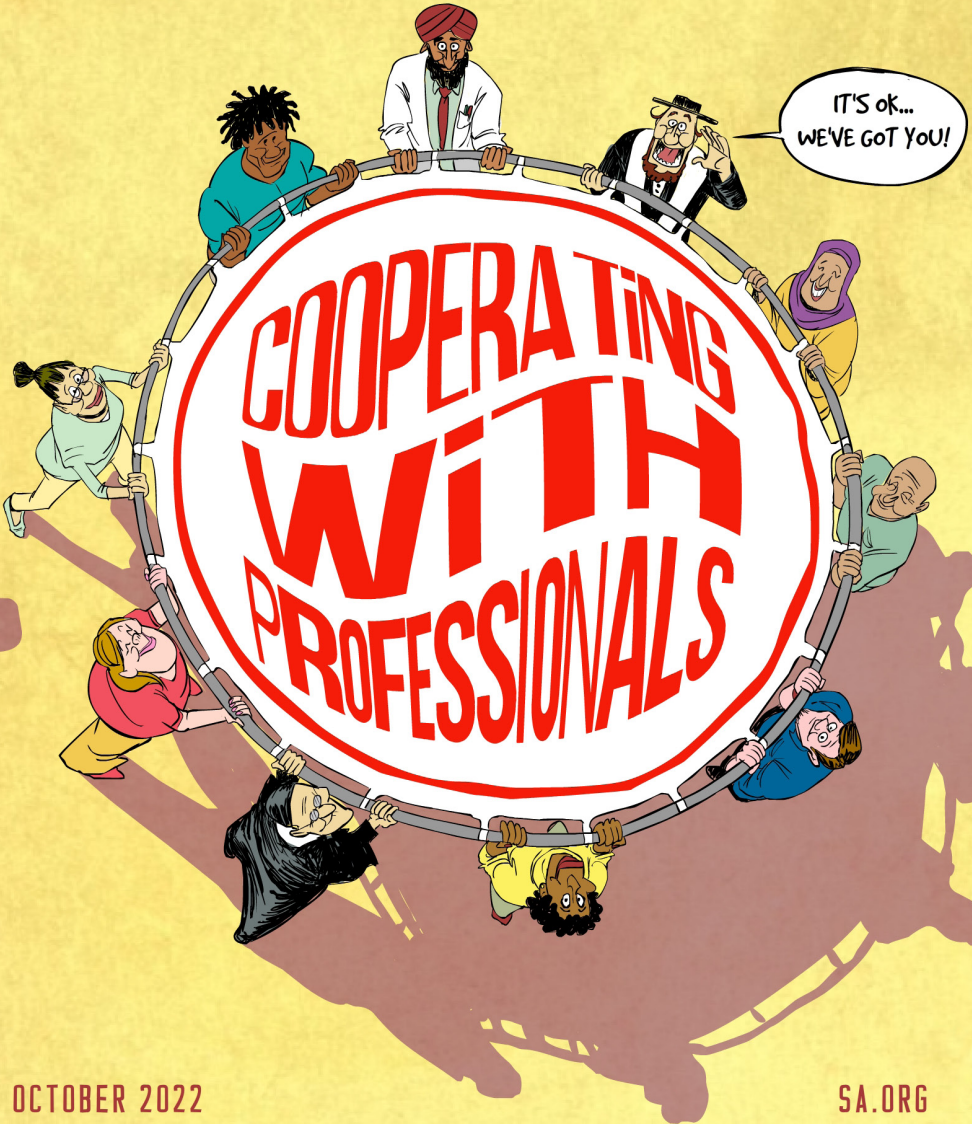


ESSAY

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS



OCTOBER 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

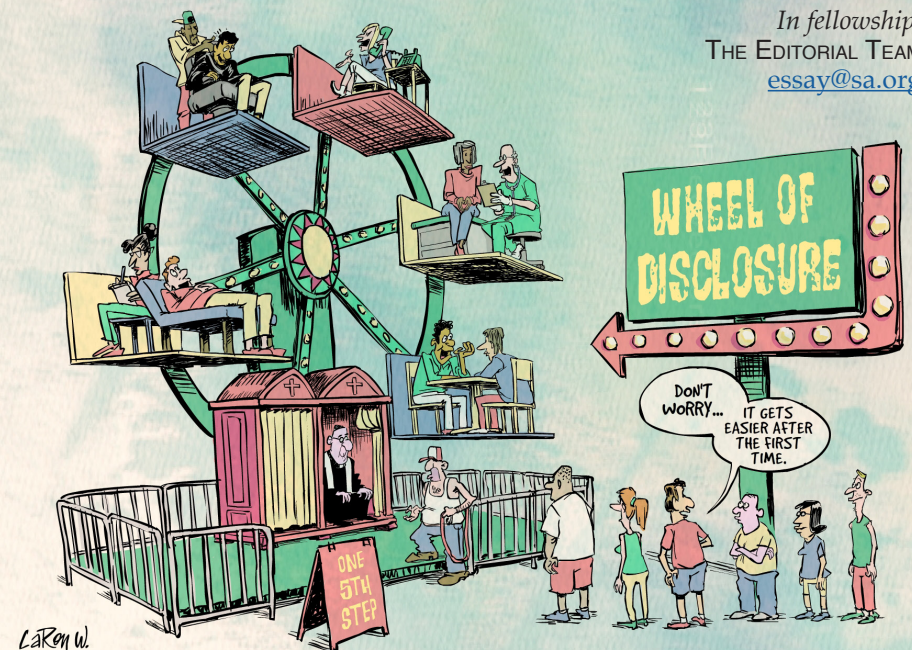
Editors' Corner

A good deal of us came in through professionals of various kinds, whether they were therapists, helpline workers, psychiatrists, life coaches, or clergy members. The AA Big Book gives a clear recommendation not to disregard human health measures: "God has abundantly supplied this world with fine doctors, psychologists, and practitioners of various kinds. Do not hesitate to take your health problems to such persons." (AA 133) On the same page, it adds: "Their services are often indispensable in treating a newcomer and in following his case afterward." In this regard, we see that many of us start making use of their services after being for some time in SA and finding out we need professional help on our underlying traumas and personality disorders.

This makes cooperating with professionals so important to the well-being of our future and current members alike. We can safely do this if we let ourselves be guided by the experience of the Traditions. "While an SA group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied." (AA 564)

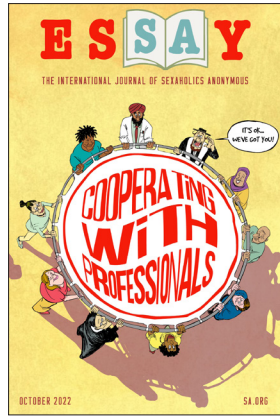
We hope that the shares in this edition may inspire you and your local fellowship to cultivate a grateful and fruitful collaboration with those men and women who "give freely of themselves, that their fellows may enjoy sound minds and bodies." (AA 133)

In fellowship,
THE EDITORIAL TEAM
essay@sa.org



“I now conceive the psychiatrist’s job to be the task of breaking down the patient’s inner resistance so that which is in him will flower, as under the activity of the A.A. program.”

Quote by Dr. Harry M. Tiebout, AA 569



On the cover: The AA Big Book encourages us to “cooperate; never criticize. To be helpful is our only aim.” AA 89

PRACTICAL TOOLS

- Absolute Honesty**.....8
The tools of the program really work for him—even in new situations. (THE PHILIPPINES)
- Poem “I Am a Moth”**.....10
Inspired by the spiritual atmosphere of a morning meeting, he spontaneously penned down this insightful poem. (DELAWARE, USA)
- “Joe Starts a Meeting”**.....11
ESSAY presents its second “Aha!” Moments video, describing how Joe managed to set up a meeting in his home town by reaching out to his local professional community.



ON THE COVER: Cooperating With Professionals

- The SIP Committee Is Looking Forward to Hearing From You**.....12
What is the SIP Committee and how does it carry the message to professionals (TENNESSEE, USA)
- Reaching Out to Professionals Within the Church**.....14
A worldwide network of members is doing outreach to the Catholic Church (L.A., ARMENIA)
- Staying Sober Through Reaching Out**.....16
Hanging up posters, giving out pamphlets, running PI meetings, and giving talks (AUSTRALIA)
- Professionals With Love, Humility and Determination**.....17
This Slovakian pioneer shares about professionals helping them with translating SA literature, and how open meetings have been helpful (SLOVAKIA)
- PSA’s on MY Local TV Stations?!**.....E16
Read all about SA’s first PSA and how you can get it played on your local television station
- Israel’s PI Committee Is Really Making a Difference**.....18
This group shares their outline of how they have done successful PI outreach conferences (ISRAEL)

- Reaching Out With What Has Been So Freely Given to Me**.....20
This former Trustee recounts his service on the SIP Committee, holding open meetings at the Internationals Conventions (TEXAS, USA)
- The More You Know the Freer I Am**.....22
Doing service work with treatment centers, jails, and other organizations has helped him tremendously (TENNESSEE, USA)

- Working With Professionals in the Spirit of the Eleventh Tradition**.....E22
The Belgian fellowship is quite experienced in working with the written press (BELGIUM)



SA STORIES

- The Better Way to Get to Heaven**.....24
God shows him the way forward on the hill of recovery (MARYLAND, USA)

STEPS & TRADITIONS

- The Big Book Is Her Home**.....26
She has found a Higher Power of her own understanding through working the Steps (EGYPT)
- The Twelve Traditions As Inventory Questions**.....28
The Traditions can be a guide in our personal relationships (TAIWAN)

SA CFC

- Gaining Access to the Prison System**.....30
Patient and diligent cooperation with chaplains, wardens and prison psychologists is paramount to carrying the message into the prison system (GEORGIA, USA)

WORLD WIDE NEWS

- The Ongoing Journey of the Nairobi Members**.....32
Several therapists and counselors have sent clients to the church room where the Nairobi members have been meeting for nine years (KENYA)
- Much to Absorb in Scotland**.....33
This UK lady enjoyed fellowship with old-timers and other ladies at the Scottish Convention (UK)
- Of Money and Responsibility**.....34
The Finance Committee asks to increase financial support to SA due to inflation and a deep deficit

34



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.....23
- New Meetings.....31
- Coming In December.....35

“E” pages are online Essay only

Dear ESSAY

I've Got a "World-Famous" Cat!

DEAR ESSAY, THANK you for the wonderful surprise I received in the August edition on The Slogans. On p. 20 I unexpectedly found an article written by my sponsor with a picture of my cat "Milton" and an embroidery work I had sent her when I had been working on it.

I also loved the article "Living the Slogans" from two Dutch fellows about the recovery music they make. I had the privilege to see them perform live twice, which were great experiences as music touches me deeply.


Their song "Living the Slogans" says: *Lust can't wait to take, love can't*



approval and attention. I could tell myself it wasn't just because it had nothing to do with sex. But, for me,

this attitude of taking is lust. Every emotionally dependent relationship—even with fellows, even when sex has nothing to do with them—is lust and I am powerless over them.

I thank God for the ESSAY. It really is my favorite thing to get in the mail.


NATHALIE V., *Belgium* 

Keep It Simple!

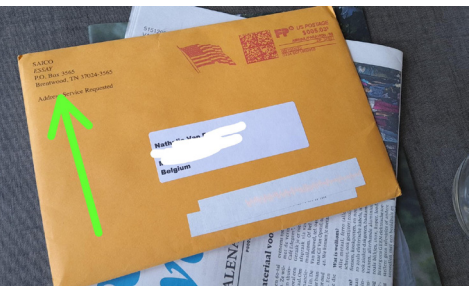
DEAR ESSAY, THE ISSUE on The Slogans reminded me that ours is a simple program for complicated people. I am a very complicated person! And I complicate the program as well.

So, when I'm completely lost and don't know what I should do, I use this most simple prayer: "GOD, PLEASE HELP ME."

I have used it many times throughout my recovery and it always works. Something changes inside me, and the door to recovery opens again.

CAROLINA M., *Spain* 


wait to give. It hit me really hard. In the last couple of months, I was mostly taking again by feeding my self-importance and asking others for their




World Wide Walls Of SA

SA Meetings Can Be Held Just About Anywhere ...



Better Living center
Nairobi, Kenya 




Alexandria meeting
Alexandria, Egypt 


Share your photos

Send your meeting place to essay@sa.org. Remember to include your name, address, group name, and location of the meeting.



Sunday meeting
Jena, Germany 



Group "Serenity"
Moscow, Russia 



Baton Rouge meeting
Louisiana, USA 



Absolute Honesty With Myself, My Sponsor, and My Higher Power

Recently, this member from the Philippines experienced that the tools really work if he works them—even in new situations.

My job is to take care of large property with an orchard, a garden, and a house. A few weeks ago, I found myself in a situation I have never been in before. People with whom I live and work went on their summer vacation for two months. I was left alone and hardly met anyone in person. I had full access

to the internet. I could watch what I want, and no one would know. For a sex addict like me who in his SA career had many relapses, it would have been a perfect situation to lose himself in the addiction completely.

After sharing about my situation at the SA Zoom meeting, one friend of mine asked me to write down what really helps me to survive. So, I gathered the tools together in six points:

1. Make a reasonable schedule for the day and stick to it as much as possible. What time to wake up, when to have breakfast, lunch and dinner, time for work, rest, prayer, SA program, SA meetings.

2. Make a plan in the evenings of what I want to do the next day at work and how I want to spend my free time. Laziness and empty spaces in my schedule are enemies of sobriety and weapons of lust.

3. Be vigilant for the unexpected. E.g. I got a bill for electricity. I had to pay the very next day after receiving it. Here where I live it meant driving downtown to an appropriate office and losing two hours. I needed to surrender my worries when plans change. A schedule serves me, I don't serve the schedule.

4. Plan free time. I let go of laptop, cell phone and other internet devices as a source of entertainment, but used them only for work and the SA program. After a few days I got used to it. Covering my laptop with a tablecloth helped me a lot (One doesn't miss what one doesn't see).

5. Prayer. Oh man, it was the toughest task to stick to the plans. I had excuses that I had more important things to do, or that I was tired or hungry. But always after 10–15 minutes of silent meditation or some spiritual reading from my faith tradition, I was thankful to God that I did it. The fruits were peace and serenity.

6. Being in real contact with fellows from SA via Zoom meetings. Being visible to others helps me to concentrate on the meeting and participate actively. I do my best to avoid treating a Zoom meeting like a radio station playing somewhere on a table while I do something different. SA meetings are not only for listening or talking, but are also about emotions.

In my recovery, I am reaching out each day to approximately 15 fellows. In the morning while having breakfast I create a text note to one fellow—kind of surrendering how I feel, what's going on in my life, etc., and copy this message to more fellows. On my contact list I have about 100 phone numbers and reach out to every one of them once a week or at least every two weeks. A Chinese proverb says—*If you don't use the path leading to your friend's house, it gets covered by grass and disappears.*

I experienced again during those two months that our tools really work. But there is one condition—HONESTY. To stay sober and recover, I must be absolutely honest with myself and my sponsor. My Higher Power works through other fellows, so if I am honest with my sponsor, I am honest with my God. Without honesty I can use all the tools mentioned above and still relapse. The secrets I keep in my mind don't have to be serious—it may be a

simple thought, memory, temptation or trigger I experienced recently and hide deep inside me like a shameful

A Zoom meeting isn't a radio station playing while I do something different. Meetings are not only for listening or talking but are also about emotions.

treasure. It grows like mold and consumes my desire to be sober. Dishonesty is the character defect which cuts the connection the most.

JACK B., *The Philippines* 

This morning
in the hybrid
Manchester, US
"Not a Glum Lot meeting,"
we read the first story
"I'm a Sexaholic"
from *Member Stories 2007*.

The text from *The Real Connection*
today was entitled "Hidden Desires"
and talked about riding a motorcycle
too close to the edge of the Grand
Canyon. While my fellows were
sharing, I spontaneously penned
down a text.

Given that I was the guy who
didn't do well enough in high school
in just one subject, English, in order to be allowed
to go to a four-year college, these words came from God and belong to Him.
He gave me the privilege of reading it as the last share. I titled it "I am a Moth."

CLAY G., DE, USA



I am a moth

*I am attracted to bright things!
Open flames, camp fires, candles ...
... and all those things I know are bad for me!*

*I have seen my fellows get too close and get badly burned ...
...or even killed!*

But, I am a moth!

*A few days ago I came upon a light bulb.
It did not seem as dangerous as those other things!*

*I came closer ...
... felt its warm glow.
I landed on it!*

*I burned my feet and singed my wing tips ...
... dancing about on that glowing orb!
It was all I could do to fly away!*

One would think I would realize the danger ...

*But I ...
Am A Moth!*



ESSAY

"Aha!" Moments

October 2022: Reaching Out to Professionals

"Joe Starts a Meeting"

Joe was an SA member who lived some distance away from the nearest meeting and hardly ever got a chance to go. He had a few months' sobriety, and his sponsor was very encouraging, giving him lots of advice. So Joe decided to start a meeting nearby. To do that, though, meant that he needed to reach out to professionals—as our White Book writes, *We begin by meeting regularly with other members. If there is no group where we live, we start one ourselves, even if it is meeting with only one other member. Fellowship is that crucial to our recovery.* (SA 63)

In this inspiring episode of "Aha! Moments," we learn that staying sober was so important to one member in particular, that he went out and started an in-person meeting himself. We see how simple the process is, and that almost anyone can do it. It just takes a little effort. With a few phone calls and some in-person follow-ups, Joe sees—in his own life—that this effort has clearly kept him sober. He is witnessing what the AA Big Book refers to when it says, *... and great events will come to pass for you and countless others.* (AA 164)

Be sure to watch this motivating and touching episode of "Aha! Moments" by clicking here: <https://vimeo.com/748537913>

ESSAY makes it easy to carry the message!

- Write an article about your recovery or a report on a local SA event
- Send us your recovery art work (cartoons, drawings, photos, songs, poems)
- Join our team of assistant-editors that edit the selected articles; or help us proofreading the draft of the magazine (native English speakers only)
- For more info: essay@sa.org

Maxey
By Jimmy M.

That guy could
use some
professional help...

Speak for
yourself!



The SIP Committee Is Looking Forward to Hearing From You

The Support for Institutions and Professionals (SIP) Committee (formerly H&I—Hospitals and Institutions) was recently renamed to reflect what we have really functioned as for the past seven years. We abandoned the former name because we now aim to more fully support the mental health community at large.

Our mission: To carry the message of recovery from sexaholism to hospitals, treatment centers, and helping professionals. We facilitate meetings, distribute SA-approved multimedia materials, and serve as a hub to connect local SA groups with the professional community.

One of our functions is to inform helping professionals that we are not competing with them but are an extension of what they do for their clients and members of congregations who struggle with sexual issues. We are here to help them care for their patients, to reinforce and amplify the good work they do, and to foster their patients' recovery.

For the last several years, we would hold meetings during the International Conventions, where we would ask local therapists and clergy to join us. We would hand out literature and educate them about our service.

Now, we ask our members to invite

their therapists and clergy to accompany them to local open meetings. The helping professionals can learn how SA can aid their patients by giving them purpose, strength and hope.

For example, we have a member who has gone through a traumatic experience. The mental health professional is helping him unpack his traumatic past and release the violence of his past—to be free of it. Because of her knowledge of SA, she has encouraged the member to do his step work with a sponsor. She understands the importance of aftercare recovery.

In another case, a member was attending church and making regular confessions. The priest was aware of our fellowship and encouraged the parishioner to go to SA meetings. Although he was at first reluctant to attend them, the priest understood the value of aftercare recovery and encouraged him to get additional help.

We will continue with our new mission to assist health professionals who serve those persons afflicted with sexual addiction. As we keep demonstrating our experience, strength and hope, more health professionals will come to realize how we can help their patients recover, and in turn carry the message to someone else who still suffers.

JIM B., TN, USA



A sample of the letter to professionals we have at your disposal for your local Twelfth Step work with professionals:

SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Letter to Health and Helping Professionals and Spiritual Leaders

Dear Dr. Smith,

Do you have persons whom you help who struggle with sexual addiction? Sexaholics Anonymous (SA) has changed the lives of countless individuals around the world. We are reaching out to you as a health professional or clergy member to share information about our fellowship. Here I quote a section from our brochure which captures the essence of SA and how it may support persons in need.

"In your practice as a helping professional, you may have occasion to counsel someone who is experiencing unmanageability in his/her life due to sexually destructive thinking and/or behavior. Sexaholics Anonymous is a Twelve Step program of recovery for men and women based on the principles of Alcoholic Anonymous. When based on a foundation of sexual sobriety and personal action, the Twelve Steps and Traditions of SA become the beginning of a whole new way of life. Professionals who work with individuals who experience these issues may find SA to be a valuable resource because it complements the work they are doing with their clients. It is not a treatment or therapy of any kind. Meetings are open only to those who want to stop their sexual destructive thinking and behaviors and are seeking help for their own problems through our program of recovery. Those professionals who work with sex addicts, or sexaholics, share a common purpose with Sexaholics Anonymous— to help the sexaholic recover and lead healthy, productive lives."

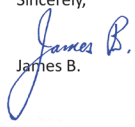
Source: SA as a Resource for the Health & Helping Professional

Included are three brochures which you may find helpful in supporting those you serve and understanding SA:

- 1) SA a Resource for the Health & Helping Professional
- 2) SA to the Newcomer
- 3) Why Stop Lusting?

If you would like to learn more about Sexaholics Anonymous, you can explore the SA website (SA.org) where you can find a list of meeting times and locations to share with those you help. The SA website contains resources such as literature, a directory of meetings around the world, a public service announcement, and an introduction video. If you have any questions about SA or would like to speak with a representative, please contact us at 555-555-5555 and refer to this letter from the Hospitals and Institutions Committee. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,


James B.

Do you want to know more about the committee or are you interested in joining it? Do you have experience in contacting professionals? Please contact one of the SIP members below. We look forward to hearing from you!

- Jim B.: JBurn222@aol.com
- Paul Z.: Zantzinger@aol.com
- Jim D.: jimd.essay@gmail.com

Reaching Out to Professionals Within the Church



A worldwide network of members are dedicated to doing outreach to the Catholic Church and hope to expand their outreach to other religious groups too.

Catholic bishops, priests, and nuns are becoming increasingly aware of SA and supportive of recommending that parishioners with lust addiction contact the program for help. SA fellowships in different countries have been arranging high-level meetings with some 20 bishops, as well as hundreds of priests, brothers, nuns, and seminarians to bring the message of recovery from lust. They have expressed concern about the high degree of lust addiction among parishioners as well as those serving the church.

"Peter's Post," a subcommittee of EMER's Public Information Committee, meets regularly to brainstorm and has established a worldwide network of SA members, including several clergy, dedicated to this outreach.

We recently produced and published a bilingual compilation of member stories in Italian and English called

"Stories of Recovery" that includes stories of recovering priests. The book is being distributed among scores of interested clergy especially in the Vatican but also throughout Italy.

The SA Literature Committee is working on a pamphlet directed to clergy. We hope that more clergy in SA will write their stories of recovery and that SA will consider producing a targeted publication of clergy member stories in recovery.

We hope to expand our outreach to other denominations and religious groups too. We welcome feedback and ideas about collaboration. Please write to emeregion@gmail.com and include "Interest in Peter's Post" in the subject line.

Below you can read the experience with the work of Peter's Post of a Slovakian member, followed by the story of two members in Poland.

L.A., Armenia



they still helped in a substantial way! I was surprised at these meetings by the good spirit and how things were always discussed so calmly and with due consideration and respect, and also by the good cheer and humor.

I asked myself how our Slovakian fellowship could bring an archbishop or bishop on board with the SA message of lust recovery? Fortunately one of our members knows a priest who is very supportive of SA and a good friend of a particular bishop. He was able to set up a meeting with him. The bishop offered to help arrange a meeting with the archbishop but that we would need a letter of recommendation from someone.

Here again that same priest stepped in and helped with writing the letter. Our job was to write a two-page letter about the fellowship and explain the SA purpose and our Twelve Steps.

We had a meeting in November 2021 in which the archbishop turned out to be supportive of SA; after ask-

ing a good many questions he said that he would discuss with his staff how best they could support us in carrying the message.

In May 2022, we invited an SA member from abroad to talk to us about sponsoring the sexaholic in prison. We then had a meeting with the Military Ordinariate of Slovakia, who is the bishop responsible for priests in the army, police, and prisons here and he was very supportive of our carrying the message into prisons. Our fellowship is infused with excitement and energy at the prospect of carrying the message to prisons and have been busy lately translating pamphlets for this purpose.

ŠIMON Š., Slovakia



I was for several years in seminary, preparing to become a Catholic priest. My spiritual director of that time, who knew much about my struggles, as well as one of the lecturers at college, both became bishops a few years later.

When I left the seminary, I fortunately found SA, thanks to a friend from the community of lay people where I lived. Interestingly, the two priests who became bishops were helping in this community.

An SA friend and I talked to one of them, asking to pass on information about our SA fellowship to people who might need SA. We concluded to create an opportunity to share our testimony to more clergy from the area. And so it was that several fellows from our city spoke at meetings of priests from our region, and distributed several hundred flyers and several thousand SA business cards (suitable for distributing, for example, in the confessional).

You can read below the experience of a fellow who took part in one of these Public Information meetings.

GRZEGORZ Z., Poland



I was asked to give my testimony in front of the priests an hour before their regional meeting. Despite a lot of stress and anxiety, I agreed. I did not have time to prepare or to become overly stressed.

I was given a few minutes to share my experience before joining the 12-Step program, as well as my experience in recovery.

We handed out business cards at the exit of the church to the priests "proactively," that is, we approached them ourselves, started a conversation, and handed out a prepared package of flyers and business cards. I am glad that I was able to be useful at that time to my Higher Power and to people who are still suffering.

MIKOŁAJ K., Poland



Staying Sober Through Reaching Out

Five years ago, there were two meetings and sex addiction was a very taboo topic, when I moved to Newcastle, a regional city on the east coast of Australia, and it is still very taboo.

There was recently an issue at a soup kitchen when our meeting was mentioned on one of the TV channels. Because of the incident they won't put our posters up or have our pamphlets available for easy access.

We went to all the effort of getting an international guest speaker to come to our city to run a Public Information meeting. We sent out over 150 invitations to all the clergy and helping professionals we could find. We sent a letter about who we are and some flyers. Hardly anyone turned up, only a Catholic priest and one of his parishioners.

A famous line from AA co-founder Bill W. to his wife was something like this: "Lois, I've been trying to help so many drunks but none of them are sober." Lois looked at Bill and said "But Bill, you are still sober." The point is, I am still sober and my primary purpose is to stay sober and help as many drunks as possible so that's what I do. My job is to take the

actions and let God take care of the results. It has been very tough work, Aussies still freak out when the words "sex addiction" are mentioned.

A talk at the university with a lot of health professionals was a great success. There were lots of questions about our sobriety definition and questions about why masturbation was not sober for us. Most people were happy with our answers.

SA members aren't coming to our meetings in droves. But we continue to forge ahead with our efforts to carry the message.

Recently, we made some business cards and have been dropping them off to priests and counselors. Most people fall over when you mention Sexaholics Anonymous. It's funny watching their expressions to be honest and it only adds to the shame we feel as sexaholics. But someone has to break down the barriers. We also did poster drops at as many of the clinics as we could. You never know whose life you may save by doing this work. If you want to know more, reach out to us at newcastlesagroup@gmail.com.

ANONYMOUS, *Australia*



Professionals With Love, Humility and Determination

I met the first non-sexaholics who helped us at an AA open meeting. They were two young and enthusiastic people who were interested in discovering why certain young people are unable to establish healthy relationships. When they found that pornography was such a significant factor, they eagerly began translating foreign literature, making it available in Slovakian, and doing surveys and producing statistics. They helped us with the first version of the Slovakian SA webpage and brought professionals into our first SA open meeting.

Subsequently, we got in touch with the management of a number of psychiatric hospitals, but the most fruitful cooperation

came largely from general practice doctors and from clergymen. We have sent emails to hundreds of parishes all over Slovakia inviting those who are interested onto online open meetings. Very few priests, however, took part at those open meetings. In the last few years we tried a number of times to get a meeting with the archbishop and finally succeeded, thanks to a particular priest who loves working with young people and who has seen with his own eyes the healing effect of SA on members of his parish.

Open meetings at SA conventions were helpful too. In one case a particular social worker got in touch through our telephone helpline number and subsequently intro-

duced us to a journalist who then went around schools asking students questions about pornography. Thanks to this lady our members were able to share their stories and message of recovery anonymously in newspapers and on TV. Ultimately, these activities changed the attitude of some respected psychiatrists who had been reserved towards SA until then. We also received tremendous help from SA old-timers from abroad who came to our country, ran workshops and spoke at open meetings.

Without the love, humility and determination of these ordinary, decent professionals, we would not be able to carry our message of recovery today.

MARTIN S., *Slovakia*





PSA's on MY Local TV Stations?!

Did you know that SA has produced a 30-second Public Service Announcement and that you can get it played on your local television station? If we've piqued your curiosity, read on!

- ✓ **View the PSA**
 - To watch SA's PSA, go to: vimeo.com/sexaholicsanonymous/sa-publicserviceannouncement. Then, you'll need to do some homework AND some footwork!
- ✓ **Prioritize Your Outreach**
 - Focus on the larger (network) stations, as you'll reach more people there.
- ✓ **Their Point of View**
 - They want to help people in their audience, so you'll want to present SA as a terrific solution for many of their viewers, as well as their family members and friends. Be sure to tell them that, for over 40 years, SA has helped thousands of sexaholics from all over the world get sober from this addiction.
- ✓ **Call and Make an Appointment**
 - Don't just send a mass mailing. This is going to take some effort!
 - There is no single individual or department that controls PSA access for different types of media. The decision-making process differs by media type, from one market to another, and by the size of the media outlet.
 - Generally, however, the media contact you want to reach at larger broadcast (TV and radio) stations, is the Community Affairs, Public Affairs or Public Service Director. At radio stations the decision-makers are

more diffused, and the title may be Program Director, News Director or perhaps even General Manager.

- ✓ **It's Showtime!**
 - Be early, look professional and be "on". (Be your very best "you".) Also, when you visit, be prepared to show them the PSA—either on a laptop or on their office computer.
- ✓ **Share Our Success**
 - Feel free to share with them (briefly) about either your own success story or how SA has specifically helped those you know. Without the graphic details, of course—these folks are "civilians" :-)
- ✓ **Politeness Counts**
 - Be extra grateful as you're leaving and thank them for their time.
- ✓ **Deliver Help**
 - They will probably ask for a hi-resolution ("hi-res") copy of the PSA. This is where SA's Public Information Committee will be a huge help—this can all be done digitally.
- ✓ **Customized Presence**
 - SA's PI Committee can also help to get your local website, phone number and/or email address onto the end of the PSA. All you have to do is ask!
- ✓ **Be Aware!**
 - Don't be a nuisance—no need for lots of follow up calls or visits. If they tell you they'll play our PSA, fantastic.
 - Don't be pushy—media folks are quite busy.

Remember, you're asking for their help and they are not required to give it to you. Worst-case scenario, just smile, thank them for their time and move on to the next station.

PSA's can be a terrific way to help get the word out about our fellowship and your local meetings. They just take some thoughtful planning and professional follow up.



You can also find the PSA and two brilliant videos on sa.org/videos. For more information or help, contact SA's Public Information Committee via SA's Central Office at saico@sa.org

Israel's Public Information Committee Is Really Making a Difference



By creating and nurturing relationships with those outside the SA fellowship in various ways, this Israeli group is making a huge impact.

From the moment I started to take this program seriously and work the Steps with a sponsor who works the Steps with a sponsor of his own (and so on and so forth), it has been crystal clear to me that our main focus and primary purpose is the Twelfth Step—carrying the message.

The obvious areas of Twelfth Step work include—but are not limited to: being a part of the fellowship, sharing responsibly and happily at meetings, making coffee or setting up the chairs and of course, sponsoring others.

I have been blessed and privileged to have many opportunities to partake in another type of Twelfth Step work through my home group's insistence on carrying the message on a wider

level—that of therapists, healthcare professionals, members of the clergy, students, family members of addicts, and the wider public.

Each guest is a potential “ambassador” of the Twelve Step solution to someone who is suffering.

We do so by being the only SA group in Israel (at the moment, hopefully

many more will join us) that has a monthly open meeting. We have seen all types of people visit us: rabbis and priests, college students studying psychology, social work or criminology, researchers, family and friends of members, and therapists!

Ten minutes before the end of our meeting we have time for questions from our guests where they are invited to share and ask questions. Members who are sober and have completed their Fourth Step, answer the questions; after the meeting is over we will stay and entertain our guests until the

last one leaves. Each guest is a potential “ambassador” of the Twelve Step solution to someone who is suffering and more often than not we have seen this connection grow exponentially.

Another area that has privileged me with extensive and fascinating Twelfth Step work was when I served as Chair of Israel's PIC (public information committee). Our committee organized and orchestrated many public outreach conferences through which we were able to spread the SA solution in a more thorough and structured manner—here is how we worked:

- Chose a city and found a venue for the conference
- Picked a date and time that made sense and would maximize attendance (morning or evening? weekend or middle of the week?)
- Built the content and booked the speakers—in our case it usually looked something like this:
 - ✓ Half hour introduction titled “What are the 12 Steps and what is SA”
 - ✓ Half hour personal story titled “What is a sexaholic?” (male member)
 - ✓ Half hour personal story titled “Are there women sexaholics?” (female member)
 - ✓ Break
 - ✓ Half hour family story titled “What about the family?” (S-Anon speaker; in cooperation with S-Anon fellowship)
 - ✓ Half hour for questions and answers
 - ✓ Conference total runtime—three hours
- Made sure the speakers had experience in this type of Twelfth Step work
- Get the word out and manage sign-up (design online and offline flyers, call contacts, send messages and emails etc.)
- Buy coffee and other refreshments for the guests; set up the venue
- Let go and let God

To get to those who couldn't make it to our conferences or would like to have a resource to work with, we also created a Public Information booklet with content on the fellowship, the Twelve-Step solution and answers to frequently asked questions (in both print and PDF versions that we distribute freely anywhere we can).

When creating and nurturing relationships with those outside the SA fellowship, it is very important to keep

the Twelve Traditions in mind: we do not discuss any outside issues, keep anonymity, and adhere to our primary purpose of carrying the message to the sexaholic who still suffers.

Our impact here has been huge and for the privilege of participating in this wonderful process, I am never sufficiently grateful. We can really make a difference and save lives.

MATAN C., Israel





REACHING OUT WITH WHAT HAS BEEN SO FREELY GIVEN TO ME

When I became a Trustee in the summer of 2014, I was new to this level of service, but excited to give my best to whatever I could do to help share our awesome message to the suffering sexaholic. A Trustee committee that I was asked to be the Trustee Liaison (member of the committee and communicator to the Board) was the H&I Committee. “Excellent!” I said. “What is it about?”

I was told a bit about the committee. It was explained that the “committee was recently quite inactive and did not have a Chairperson.” I later learned that an interpretation of that might be, “So you are now the temporary Chairperson, get to work building the committee and replace yourself with a new Chairperson. And by the way, Carl N. might be willing to chair it.”

Carl did become the Chair and an excellent leader. The committee set out to write a Mission Statement. Then for

action, the committee planned, coordinated, and executed Open Meetings at the venues of the two annual International Conventions in places like Chicago, Newark, Irvine, San Diego, Seattle, Atlanta, Detroit, San Antonio etc. We developed a format for those meetings, and usually scheduled them for the Saturday morning of the Convention. We worked hard to contact professionals from those areas by email and telephone, and to mail invitations to them to see and hear our stories and message of recovery from lust addiction. We tried to seduce them with fine pastries, coffee, sodas, and a breakfast offering. With low attendance and frustration we invited regular SA members to attend to help fill the room. (Tried to guard the food until guests were served.)

Addition of the first two SA videos created by the Public Information Committee, was exciting. Look for them at sa.org/videos.

Then Covid hit. Conventions were

SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS


- Compulsive sexual behavior?
- Obsessive sexual thinking?
- Tried to stop lusting but could not?
- **There is a solution!**
- There are meetings right here in North Texas.
- If you'd like a way out, contact us.

SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS

 Website: sa-dfw.com
 Phone: 214-628-4352
 Email: Dallasessay@gmail.com

on hold indefinitely. All the while, some Intergroups continued reaching out to helping professionals in their own ways. Jim B. succeeded Carl as Chair. A new name better describing the committee's function was searched for, and it became the Support for Institutions and Professionals Committee, SIP. Today the committee is active in developing outreach to organizations and professionals that may interface with prospective members who are suffering as we once were, blind and hopeless in lust addiction.

I am still an active member of the SIP Committee. I have recently made local business cards available to groups in our area for members to offer them to their clergy or therapist or parole officer or other helping professionals they may be in contact with. I keep getting requests for them. I hear back stories of response and gratitude. I plan to begin local open meetings for college students studying to be in the helping professions. I enjoy trying to reach out with what has so freely been given to me.

GENE T., TX, USA 


SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Engaging in compulsive sexual behavior?
Obsessive lustful thoughts?
Trying to stop but can't?

There is a solution!
There are meetings right here in the area.

If you'd like a way out, contact us.

Newcastle SA Helpline: 0473631439
 Email: newcastlesagroup@gmail.com
 Website: newcastlesexaholicsanonymous.com

SA.org 

The business card printed on this page is of an example business card that was developed by SA's Public Information Committee. Gene has made these available in the Dallas-FortWorth area, North Texas Intergroup fellowship. The committee also made this poster for your use.

To get any of these customized, simply contact the Public Information Committee: sapublicinfo@gmail.com. You'll be provided hi-res images that you can take to a printer of your choice.



The More You Know About Me The Freer I Am

Doing service work with treatment centers, jails, and other organizations helped him to be at home with himself and others.

“But I don’t want to share that ...” “Then you won’t get well!” That was my sponsor’s response to most of the fears I experience. I cannot get sober in isolation. Nor can I get it if I don’t give it. The SA group I got sober in was very strong in service. That’s where I was introduced to the work of the local Support for Institutions & Professionals Committee—a group of sexaholics that does service work with treatment centers, jails, churches, and other organizations. With a group of SA members we carry the message to staff, clients, or patients.

Now, being a sexaholic in recovery my first thought or feeling isn’t to share my story with

anyone, much less a group of people I don’t even know. So, the first few times I participated, I was terrified. I was six months sober and one of the first institutions I shared at was something called Drug Court. Each one of us got up on a stage with a microphone and shared our story. That was the first time I heard myself say, “Hi, I’m Ryan and I’m a sexaholic. My forms of acting out include chronic masturbation and stealing women’s shoes.” And my voice echoed for what felt like an eternity. Then the most magnificent thing happened, I didn’t die.

Before that evening I told my sponsor of my fear, which was, if I told someone about my

acting out, they would stab me with a knife, or worse, laugh at me. He encouraged me to do it anyway. That’s when I experienced the principle, the more you know about me the freer I am. And after each service opportunity I felt more and more at home with myself and others. This has turned the most horrific events in my life into one of the most beautiful benefits of my life.

One of the other happenings came from the John School. This program was set up by the Nashville Police Dept and was directed at men that had been arrested for solicitation. A “John” is American slang for a prostitute’s client. The person arrest-

ed was ordered to attend an all-day presentation which SA was asked to participate in.

Before Covid, on average there would be three to four SA members that would share their story—what it was like; what happened; what it’s like now. We did our best to carry this message to the sexaholic, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. After sharing our story with the John School staff and participants, we would stay and answer questions, give out SA pamphlets, White Books and have a meeting after the meeting. It was a great reminder of where my sexaholism had gone and how far down the road I could still go.

The SA service structure has been vital in

keeping this outreach possible. Because this is bigger than any one group, it is guided by the Nashville Intergroup. There is a SIP Chairperson that is responsible for organizing each group that visits facilities. Each facility has a point person that schedules the meetings and communicates with the treatment center or organization. This person is also responsible for getting other SA members to participate.

My experience with institutions and professionals has been more attraction rather than promotion. I’ll receive calls from different treatment centers in the Nashville area from time to time and other SA members will be contacted as well. And from that we will visit with

staff and discuss with SA members who participate in SIP to see if we can support whatever is needed.

I am powerless over having a formal approach and or the “right” process. Thankfully those overused assets remind me that I’m a survivor not a savior, and it’s one sexaholic talking to another sexaholic.

A quick conversation with my sponsor brings me back to the solution. After one difficult meeting I called him saying, “I don’t think this is working and I’m not sure I need to continue doing this.” He asked me, “Are you sober?” And I said yes. “Then it’s working. Easy does it.”

RYAN B., TN, USA



DISCUSSION TOPIC

How do I and my local fellowship cooperate with professionals?

Do I share everything I need to share in order to get well?

Have I shared each and every secret? Do I understand it is the vital difference between staying in my disease and getting well?

Do I dare to step out of the comfort zone of my home group and share about my disease and my recovery with the lo-

cal professional community? If not, why not? If yes, do I keep within the well-proven principles of personal anonymity; attraction rather than promotion; giving for free and for fun?

Are my home group and Intergroup strong on service? Do we have a local SIP Committee? Do we try to involve newer members too or has the same in-crowd

been doing this for years?

What can I and my home group improve on carrying the message of recovery after reading this article and the other articles in this edition?

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

Working with Professionals In the Spirit of the Eleventh Tradition



The Belgian fellowship was set up by members who came from AA and Al-Anon and were well experienced in working with the written press.

In Belgium, since our start 14 years ago, we have done presentations for teams of therapists and last-year students of sexology members, held information stands at mental health fairs, distributed posters and business cards, and organized several PI meetings—face-to-face and since Covid, on Zoom.

We also organized a PI meeting specifically for religious members. A couple of members have continued to make contact with prison workers

in order to carry the message to our friends in prison.

Besides this, we have done about fifteen interviews with members of the written press in the past 14 years. Our first members were people who had ample experience in AA and Al-Anon in working with this specific kind of professional. Our country doesn't have the sensation-driven media-culture of some other countries, which makes for a safe and rewarding experience of cooperation, all in the spirit of the Eleventh Tradition.

tion. We don't speak in the name of SA; we speak anonymously from our own experience.

When we get a request from a newspaper or magazine, we carefully look at it at the Intergroup level before deciding anything. If we decide to go ahead, we put forward our conditions to the reporter first: signing an anonymity contract which safeguards 100% anonymity and the guarantee that the text cannot be used for any other purpose; and reading and correcting the article before publication. Most of the time we only get a handful of inquiries; even less newcomers actually come to a meeting.

By the grace of my Higher Power, I was able to participate in two interviews about sex addiction in the past year. The interviews were at the request of a national magazine and newspaper. Both interviews were a blessing to me. I experienced them as very useful and fulfilling twelfth step work.

The first interview I did was with a male member who has some more years of sobriety than me. It felt very safe to me that he was there; I would never have wanted to do this on my own, nor could I have done so. We went to the journalist's house. I was

able to talk about my lust addiction, what it was like, what happened, and how SA allows me to be physically and emotionally sober today. My SA brother did the same and answered the "more difficult" questions, e.g. about the Cleveland Clarification or the Twelve Traditions. The journalist was very friendly and honest. It turned out to be a nice article, and doing this service made me feel valuable, and most of all: it kept me sober.

The second article was for a national newspaper and had a different format: five of us held an open SA meeting in a meeting room at the office of the newspaper with a journalist as an observer. We read from the White Book and shared about it, as we always do. What immediately struck the journalist was how ordinary we were—not freaks, but ordinary teachers, clerks, and other regular people (not aliens, just sick but sober people).

I am very happy for any opportunity to chip in to remove the ignorance of and taboos about lust addiction. Our work with journalists is hopefully opening doors for the still struggling sexaholic who doesn't see a way out yet.

NATHALIE V., Belgium



Our information stand at a mental health fair; the big poster we made says "Want to stop, but can't? There is a solution: Sexaholics Anonymous."

The Better Way To Get To Heaven



In recovery, this fellow is marching slowly but surely up the hill of recovery; as God shows him the way forward.

Shame and inferiority swept over me in waves, leaving me desperate for some glimpse of rescue, as I pondered the weight of that in which I had just indulged. My only way forward was my willpower. I had to be better, and I *would* be better.

This was back in the spring of 2012, after I had spent hours in my apartment bedroom, avoiding my grad school homework by masturbating to explicit videos online. Or was it in the fall of 2016, after I had spent over an hour of my work day tucked away in the office bathroom stall with my cell phone, feeding my insatiable desires? Or perhaps this was the winter of 2008, after I snuck into my college research lab after hours, craving a private space with a computer to surf for all the sexual content I could handle? Heck, maybe I'm even thinking about that summer some years ago, after acting out in my office, seeing just how much my actions were crushing

my wife's spirit and self-esteem.

It was the same cursed thing every time. The rush and elation washing over me like a soothing wind that carried away my resentments, my anxieties, my earthly burdens, and left me soaring up towards the heavens. In those moments, I knew how to fly. But my wings were only a vapor, and as they dissolved into the empty air, I would suddenly come crashing back down in a terrifying, dizzying descent, striking the earth in a mangled heap, pitifully picking myself up and resolving never to let myself be so fooled again. And in a matter of days, I would be back up in the clouds once more. It's not that I forgot about that sudden, precipitous drop. I just forgot how painful it was to hit the ground at terminal velocity.

I was a "good person." Always generous with my time, constantly putting the needs of others before myself, never saying a bad word about anyone, and trying my hardest to make sure nobody had a bad word to

say about me. I excelled academically, succeeded professionally, and set an example spiritually. All of this was hard work. Exhausting, really.

So even though I didn't want to succumb to temptation, even though I hated giving in to my baser desires, it was the *one* thing I had for myself, the *one* place that I could just *be*. My addiction seemed like the lone beam of support keeping me from being crushed under the weight of this impossible task. There was no way I could reach out for help or be honest with the people closest to me. The lies and deception required to uphold this image were just a necessary evil. Without their approval, what *did* I have?

Well, it turns out even my addiction couldn't save me. As my façade finally came crashing down around me, I had to face the fact I possessed a deep, spiritual wretchedness that couldn't be solved by willpower, or by trying my very hardest to be a good person. This agonizing revelation came to me after a long night wandering the streets and sleeping in my car upon being kicked out of the house. Or maybe it was after my wife tearfully exclaimed that she was ashamed to be married to me, ashamed to have made such a poor choice of a husband. Whatever the case, I knew I needed an answer that was beyond me.

As I found my way into these rooms, that answer gradually came into view as I worked the Twelve Steps and heard the testimonies of my fellow program members. Admit your powerlessness, stop feeding the obsession, practice the actions of love, hand your will and the care of your life to God: work the Steps and keep coming back. It was time for me now to decide if I was willing to live in the answer.

This moment felt daunting. Could

I really see a new way of life after 15 years of continual hiding and acting out? It seemed every day held countless opportunities to fail, to come tumbling back down to earth. But I kept going forward, day by day—surrendering my fear, my powerlessness,

I began to see that my flaws and shortcomings didn't make me unlovable, they just made me ... human.

my anger to my Higher Power, the only one who could keep me sober and rescue me from my insanity.

And by that letting go, I began to see that I didn't have to live for the approval of others, that I didn't have to hold tightly to fear and resentment. I began to see that my flaws and shortcomings didn't make me unlovable, they just made me ... human. For the first time in my life, I could connect honestly with people, show them my true self, truly love and be loved. I was free to admit my faults, and free to humbly let God remove them. And I could do all of this without lusting.

I don't do much flying these days. Instead, I am marching up the hill of recovery, as God shows me the path forward. Sometimes I stumble, but there's always a hand to grab on to if I just faithfully reach out for help. The addict in me looks to the sky and desires to take flight just once more. But instead, I keep marching up this hill, slow and steady, for this is by far the better way to get to heaven.

Asa A., MD, USA



The Big Book Is The Home Which She'll Live In For the Rest Of Her Life



Through working the Steps, she found a Higher Power of her own understanding and came to see that surrender is her shield in recovery.

I spent a lot of my life searching for a solution. I used to think that I am drowning in a well, and I must find a solution in that well. After joining SA, I came to learn that I was looking for a solution in the mud of the problem! I am grateful to God that after I have joined the program, I simply did not leave and run away! I had a feeling, which I wasn't sure about, but it said "stay in the program." That feeling kept me going! It has transformed into a vision, and this vision has grown through taking the Steps. What a journey! The Steps are an ever learning classroom—life itself. I am extremely happy to share with you what I have learned from every Step.

Step 1: I have worked with my sponsor. I told myself that I always responded with "yes" to lust, regardless of the consequences! Thus, I decided to try doing my sponsor's suggestions and the program, regardless of how I felt. It simply worked!

Step 2: My sponsor became my temporary Higher Power who helped me see through the darkness in my soul and be restored to sanity. As I progressed in the program, I started

to develop my own understanding for my Higher Power. I am very grateful for my sponsor who did not push me to accept any Higher Power concept. I was helped to find my own understanding through the healing message of the AA Big Book.

Step 3: I became sober enough to understand how crucial it is to know that I must have a Higher Power of my understanding. I wanted to understand it, but this did not happen

without taking this Step. I simply let go, and reached out my arms! My Higher Power picked me up. I have finally found my Higher Power that I spent a lifetime searching for. But apparently, I was looking for it in the wrong places (lust and people). As I practiced surrendering, I started to be able to let go of lust or any thought that I can simply lust like a lady! I simply cannot live normally around lust. Through this Step, I am able to experience not only a happy, joyous, and free life, but also giving unconditional love and receiving respect. I am worthy!

Step 4: Some call it "clean house", and I love to call it: Revival From Tsunami! I had to remove all the wreckage caused by addiction, I had to find and extract my character defects. In the beginning, I saw myself as a victim that deserves justice, which was not the right way to do it at all. This Step is not about pointing fingers—it is about confession which has paved the road to self-acceptance.

Step 5: I was able to talk to my sponsor about the deep rock bottom I hit, and by God's grace I was able to be honest, yet not explicit in a harming way. God has done for me what I was not able to do for myself. I was full of confidence that if I surrender, he'll shield me from lust. Surrender is our shield in recovery!

Steps 6 and 7: I was emotionally attached to my defects, and I cannot stress enough how hard it was to take these simple Steps. I was assuming the right to maintain these "beautiful" defects by labeling them as "I am sensitive, I have feelings." I worked hard with my sponsor to understand my role in these defects. I was able to surrender my defects to God, and God is kind! God has lifted the burden of these defects as I surrendered them.

Every time I surrender them, they become lighter and lighter which helps me to accept and deal with them.

Steps 8 and 9: Amends! These vital steps are designed to set me free in life; to be able to stand free and look the world in the eye. Even though I am a weak addict, God has granted me strong sobriety and recovery. I surrendered to my sponsor for each and every amend. I was taught how to do direct and indirect amends and I am

After joining SA, I came to learn that I was looking for a solution in the mud of the problem!

very grateful for that. I needed to do these amends, they were my ticket to freedom. With God's grace I made all the amends and in return I am a free woman now. I have cleaned my house!

Steps 10 and 11: I have to keep my own house clean, so I practice spot inventories to understand where I am wrong, and how to make amends if needed. If it is hard, I'll pray a lot until I talk to my sponsor, then I share my inventory with absolute fearless honesty. My recovery taught me that I don't need to act like a victim, and I need to be brave by doing amends. So, I simply do them. And I close my day with an honest share with my sponsor highlighting all my controlling defects. Of course, I don't forget my gratitude list!

Step 12: I will serve by helping a newcomer in the meetings or in doing Step work. I have a strong home, finally. That home is the Big Book which I'll live in for the rest of my life!

MERVAT, Egypt





The Twelve Traditions As Inventory Questions

boiled down each Tradition to a word or phrase that best expresses the principle it represents followed by inventory questions to guide my application of the Tradition. As an addict, I need clear instructions or I am not able to discern the difference between “I thought about it” and “I took action.”

The Traditions are a guide I have for relating to others in the program,

including sponsors, sponsees, other members, and the program as a whole. They also guide me in my personal relationships—from program to family and even work, religious affiliation, and other groups with whom I have relationships, like when working with professionals. I prayerfully use the following questions as routine or spot-check inventories for such relationships, which has been very helpful to me.

1. Unity. Is what I am doing and saying helping unite the group (or my relationship) or not? Do I feel and express gratitude for the many ways others make my recovery and my life possible? Do I understand that I could not have the blessings I have without others?

2. Authority and Consensus. In my group or relationship am I or is someone given too much authority? Is the leadership by example, as it should be? Are we praying and inventorying before making decisions that affect others? Can I happily accept the group decision even when it is not my preference? Do I know how to set up a formal group conscience vote?

3. Membership. Am I practicing acceptance of other members based on our shared problem and shared goals? Am I letting political, national, ethnic, social, professional or some other prejudice affect my view of others, my relationships, or my work in the group? Am I doing my part to welcome newcomers? Am I able to let go of judgment when members “go back out” and welcome them back when they “come back in”?

4. Autonomy. Do I let others have their own way to do things so long as it doesn't negatively influence our primary purpose? Do I step forward and offer solutions when HP gives them to me, even if it's a new idea? Do I accept the mistakes of others without trying to “fix” them?

5. Primary Purpose. Do our group activities carry the message of hope and recovery with integrity? In personal relationships, do I have a clear sense of what the purpose of my relationship is?

6. Money, Property, Prestige. Do I avoid making commitments that affect others without their consent? Do I keep my spiritual work free of ego problems caused by money, property, and prestige? Do I realize that my solution is only for those who want it? Are my relationships focused on the spiritual and not physical or social, etc.?

7. Self-Support. Am I contributing financially to the program a responsible amount? Do I balance doing what I can do for myself and getting help when I need it? Do I let others take care of themselves and help only when it's needed? Do I put in the time and effort in recovery and service and let go of the results?

8. No Organization. Do I step up when service is needed? Do I step aside when I have been doing the service and let other people benefit from service? Am I willing to change as change is needed? Am I willing to stop pigeon-holing people (as good or bad, putting them on a pedestal, seeing them as the permanent group chair or treasurer, etc.) and focus instead on taking the actions?

9. Non-Professional. Do I do Twelfth Step work without conditions or expectations? Is my motive moving away from saving myself and toward a love of doing good? Am I developing a sense of unconditional love, working without any expectation for reward or compensation simply because it's right? Do I remember that my professional and personal accolades or lack thereof neither qualify nor disqualify me from my primary spiritual aim of being of maximum service to God and others?

10. Outside Issues. Do we maintain unity and consensus by avoiding topics, problems, and issues which are beyond our primary purpose? Do I check my opinions at the door when in groups or relationships and instead focus on doing only what God directs me to do, on saying only what is loving, kind, pure, and true? Is recovery my personal primary purpose? Am I willing to dialogue without debate without resentment or controversy for the good of everyone?

11. Attraction Rather Than Promotion. Am I leading by example and not by demand or pride? Do I keep the good reputation of the program safe by not associating my personal recovery with the program as a whole? Do I remember that my experiences are just that—my experiences, and that others have a right to their own?

12. Anonymity. Do I ask permission before I share another's story within the program? Do I refrain from identifying program members or sharing their stories to outsiders? Do I keep my own anonymity when possible, knowing that full disclosure and honesty are not always the same? Am I inventorying, praying, sharing about spiritual pride (length of sobriety, and other “accomplishments” in recovery)? Can I do good without taking credit in the program or in life when appropriate? When I feel disappointed by people in the program, am I able to rely on principles instead? Am I developing a faith in and trust in principles as a way to connect with my Higher Power? Am I keeping my groups, my friends, my family safe from me? Safe from my ego?

MIKE M., Taiwan



Gaining Access To the Prison System

Gaining access to the prison system takes patient and diligent cooperation with chaplains, wardens and prison psychologists.

I first heard about prison meetings from a member who started prison contact through the Gideon Society in Georgia. He told me that I would have to take a course in order to qualify to enter prisons. I then heard from a prison chaplain who was running a number of recovery programs that he would be interested in running an SA program too. At the time I was corresponding with a fellow in that same prison and he encouraged me to go ahead and take the course.

When the chaplain invited me, I went ahead and enrolled. The course oriented us onto the rules of the prison and how to handle prisoners' requests. I sent some White Books to the chaplain and he allowed members to meet, discreetly, in a conference room in his office. I was never able to make any of their meetings because they were at 12 noon which clashed with my work,

and then Covid started.

An SA member in South Carolina wrote to me that his brother was in prison and wanted to start a meeting. I contacted the chaplain there and she was very interested. She said I would have to take an orientation course there in South Carolina if I wanted to attend but unfortunately I was unable to do this. Instead, I did try to find an SA group nearby who could send a member. The chaplain was very accommodating and even did a taped interview which was posted on the CFC website. She continued to run SA meetings until 2020 when Covid hit.

In the US, we can obtain information about specific prisons from the internet. There, it gives the address and name of the warden (person in charge). We are currently sending out letters to chaplains and wardens in the federal government system explaining our program. We usually have

greater success with chaplains and prison psychologists. Some wardens, however, are not interested in our services but the information stays in their library and when a new chaplain arrives, he may well contact us.

In several prisons in the US, friends in prison have started running clandestine meetings in the prison yard. They get together and read passages from the White book and share concerns and feelings with each other. These groups are carefully guarded so that members are not terrorized by other inmates. One friend in prison told me about a meeting which he knew was taking place. He tried to join

but was refused for several months until finally he succeeded in being allowed in.

Other groups have had success by working through the Roman Catholic church, especially in Europe. Contact with local parish priests and even bishops have produced positive results. In several cases, SA members have been able to send White Books into the prison system.

When working with friends in prison I always need to guard their safety in order not to compromise their safety or put their lives in danger.

PAUL Z., GA, USA



New SA Groups October 2022

EUROPE

- ◆ Chester, UK

OCEANIA

- ◆ Manawatu, New Zealand

NORTH, CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA

- ◆ Mandeville, Louisiana, USA
- ◆ Hattiesburg, Mississippi, USA
- ◆ Reynoldsburg, Ohio, USA

SA UK Winter Convention

The Exeter, UK group welcomes fellows from far and near to the UK winter convention, which will be held near Exeter, 6-8 January 2023. There are multiple residential and non-residential options available, as well as bursaries. Find all details and the booking page at the convention website: <https://exetersaconvention.weebly.com/>

The convention will be held at a retreat center, on the edge of the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and very close to the Jurassic Coast. The venue is easy to reach by rail, air, and road.

As a group, this is the second convention we have organized: our first was in January 2022, and was a joyous occasion. Although the Exeter group has held recovery days every year since 2013, several group members felt that organizing a convention would be helpful to the culture of sobriety and recovery in the group. Our guiding slogan has been "Keep It Simple," and simple it has indeed (mostly) been. In addition, as a group we all felt that we wanted and needed to get back to face to face meetings as soon as we could after lockdown—and we did. Organizing a convention has been our way to commit to fellowship, each other, and to our shared focus on SA sobriety and recovery. We hope we will meet many fellows who share our excitement for the life this program has given us.

For more info, contact essayexeter@gmail.com.

THE ONGOING JOURNEY OF THE NAIROBI MEMBERS

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our experience of working with therapists, counselors, the church, and others. It has been quite a journey since we Nairobi members began meeting in our venue nine years ago. It is a room at a church; during weekdays, the room is used as a gym. We have a physical meeting on Saturdays, while we meet online during the week. We usually give a small amount of money to the church for allowing us to use their room.

We use SA and AA literature: the White Book, Step into Action, the AA Big Book, and sometimes the 12&12.

For the two years approx of Covid, we could not meet in our room so we had our meetings outside, on church grounds, drawing some benches together. There were times when meeting like this distracted from the focus on recovery.

Beyond Covid, there was the challenge that church service was on the same day as our meetings and this made access to our room difficult.

Many members have joined in the last nine years. Some have stayed with us all that time. We have members sponsoring each other. Sobriety is taking root. Members help out in various service positions.

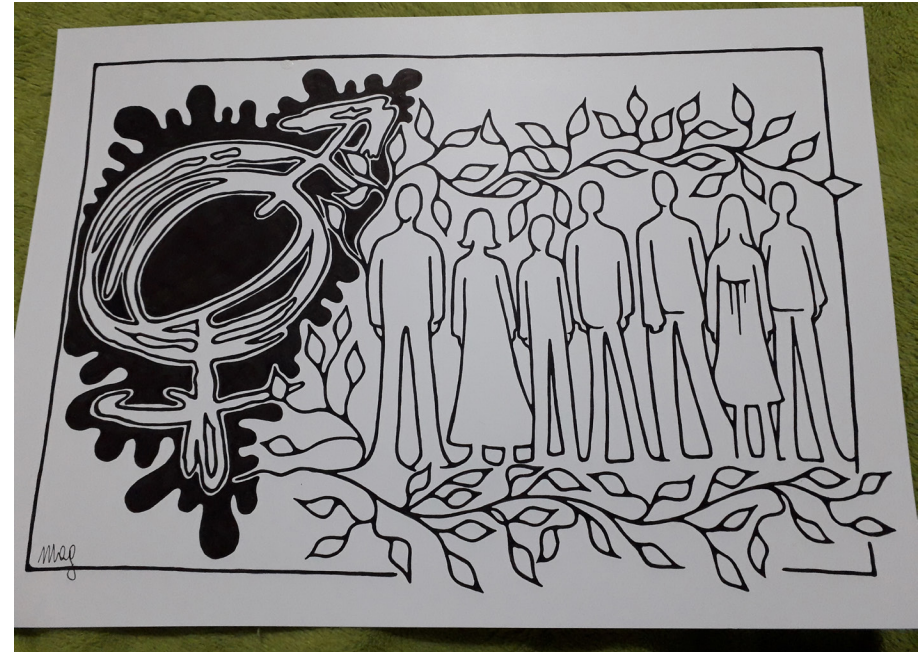
Thank God, one of the staff members in the church has been very supportive in helping us get back to our room. We tried getting a room in other churches but they don't appear to be ready to support the SA message at this time. Several therapists and counselors have sent clients to us and, by working the SA program, they are managing to stay sober.

CAROLYNE K., Kenya



October 2022

She Absorbed Much to Help Her at the Scottish Convention



Last weekend, I attended my first Scottish convention. I appreciated receiving the schedule well in advance, which helped me to feel less afraid of the unknown. After my led orientation walk, I enjoyed fellowship, including with some old-timers, in the coffee room. I met the other women present, and began to feel comfortable. One sister made this amazing drawing which depicts perfectly the love and peace pervading the weekend. I was so grateful I had made the effort to attend.

I checked in at the opening meeting, and they clapped for my sobriety milestone. I had a partial seizure, and walked out to rest partway through. I identified with the guidance that the best convention experiences can be had over the coffee and talking, with the imperative for self-care in recovery. At the evening meeting I had the honor of reading. Sharing for two minutes in the meeting helped me to feel part of, not apart from. Two speakers shared on the topic of "Total Surrender" and said that their Higher Power has to have the first place in their lives, without exception. I met some members I know well from other countries, and some UK trusted servants, and received many hugs, which I appreciated.

We went as a group to Saturday breakfast, then to the first meeting. Excellent personal sharing, around SA's beginnings in England and Ireland, explaining the core SA way of recovery. I really enjoyed a full day of fellowship and meetings and meals; some fellows went for group walks. The Intergroup meeting was extremely interesting, with very helpful PowerPoint information about SA in the UK. I took the evening off from the entertainment, quietly to unwind from the excitement, in my comfortable room.

Sunday morning was brilliant. Some great shares on the essence of recovery in SA, giving me really good tools to take home and use. After lunch, everyone still present went home. I had absorbed much to help me for months to come.

KATHIE S., UK



www.sa.org/essay

Of Money and Responsibility

The Finance Committee asks to increase financial support to SA through our local groups, Intergroups, and directly to SAICO.



In this time of year, Sexaholics Anonymous casts a glance into the future and asks "What do we need to fulfill our primary purpose? How can we best support the ever-growing needs of the fellowship worldwide?" Part of that planning is to create a financial budget for the next year. The coming year appears to be a difficult one due to inflation and greater needs in the fellowship. Under Tradition Eight, we have a marvelous set of trusted volunteers and dedicated staff at SAICO to support all the work we do throughout the world. We can only have that staff with the practice of Tradition Seven by every group.

The Finance Committee considered many scenarios regarding our budget. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic halted in-person meetings and book sales came to a stand-still. These were our primary sources of income. The fellowship responded generously that year and supplied an abundance of funding to SAICO. This gave SA a surplus which we have used for the benefit of the whole Fellowship the following two years. This coming year, we see the opposite. The world has opened up, SA has two face-to-face International Conventions scheduled, and inflation took off. We must compensate our staff sufficiently to keep them above inflation. Travel costs suddenly resume, higher than before because of the International Conventions. These are our two major expenses.

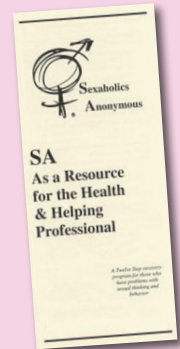
The initial budget plan showed a deep deficit. Finance Committee and the Trustees have cut many expenses. We have halted plans for a new hire; the Trustees are taking personal responsibility for half of their travel. Still, the budget is in a deficit state for 2023.

Remaining excess reserves will carry us through 2023. It is up to the fellowship to fund future years. We rely solely on contributions our members make, personally and through intergroups and regions. In *The Language Of The Heart*, p. 221, Bill W. writes, ... [not taking money from the outside world] leaves us with a responsibility—one that every member ought to understand. We cannot skimp when the treasurer of our group passes the hat. Our groups, our [regions], and [SA] as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and their bills are paid ... when we are generous with the hat we give a token that we are grateful for our blessings and evidence that we are eager to share what we have found with all those who still suffer.

Please consider increasing your contribution to the work of Sexaholics Anonymous. A "dollar in the hat" is no longer sufficient for the good we do. Can we now put "a fiver" in the hat? Direct contributions are always welcomed. It is up to us to decide what kind of future we want for our fellowship.

For more information or questions, please contact me by email: sanorthwestig@gmail.com.

KENT A., Chair Finance Committee 



SA AS A RESOURCE FOR THE HEALTH & HELPING PROFESSIONAL

This powerful and very informative pamphlet tells the professional about the various aspects of Sexaholics Anonymous. It explains the basics of sexaholism and what our fellowship has to offer. It gives an outline on how the program works; why meetings are so important for recovering sexaholics; what happens when one attend his/her first SA meeting; and why we safeguard the principle of anonymity.

You can read about what some health and helping professionals have learned as well as about some common objections to SA.

Find this resourceful and indispensable pamphlet to carry the message to your local professional community on the SA store: sa.org/store

COMING IN DECEMBER



NEXT EDITION

In the December issue, read about members' experiences with outdoor activities, hobbies, social entertainment, and fun-filled SA activities.

The Community of Recovery

An Israeli fellow shares on how he experiences joyful sobriety in his "The Three Legacies" home group.

SA Is Where the Party Is

The Amsterdam members love to hang out with each other outside the meetings.

The Benefits of In-Person Meetings

She burst out into tears at the group's annual Recovery Day, but it were tears of joy.

What Is This "Not a Glum Lot" Meeting?

Read about the history behind the name of the Manchester, MO, US meeting, and a steady member's happy experience.

SUBMIT YOUR STORY

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: Sober Travel (Stories due May 1) Which tricks do you use to staying sober on the road and in the air during the holidays?

August 2023 edition: Newcomers—How to Welcome and Keep Them (Stories due July 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.



DON'T FORGET
TO PRAY!

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.