

# ESSAY

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS



FEBRUARY 2023

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*

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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*

## *The Joy of Service .... Many of us start experiencing*

it for the first time in our lives in the early weeks and months of recovery: first, by coming on time at our home group meetings, then by helping to set up the room, and as soon as we can, by sponsoring others, thereby giving for free and for fun what we have received for free and for fun.

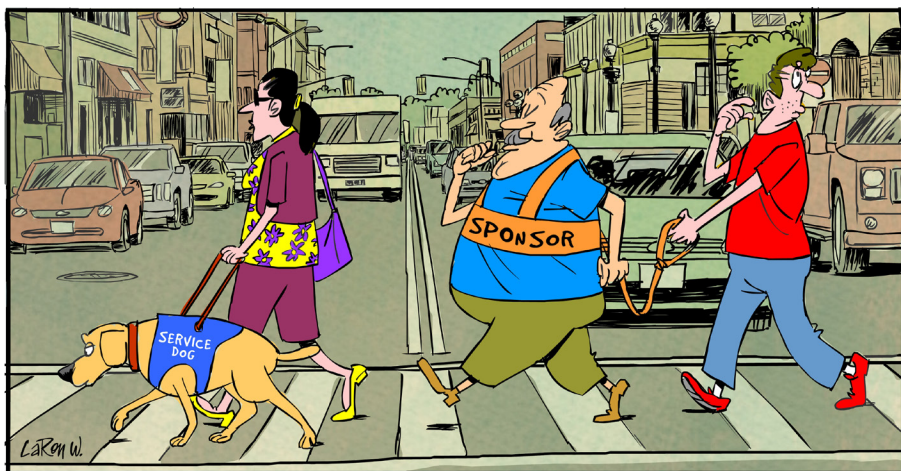
By sponsoring we start feeling useful in a unique way. Our dark past becomes our greatest possession. Sponsoring others helps us to keep walking within the boundaries of a fulfilling and sane life too.

We proceed to helping out at intergroup and regional level, organizing workshops and conventions, translating or proofreading. And then we start doing the same outside the fellowship too: improving our relationships with our children, spouses, parents, colleagues, and friends through service.

In this issue, read how a Costa Rican member experiences the joy of service by helping with the bimonthly translation of the ESSAY into Spanish, how a Dutch fellow got married in sobriety and discovered that giving his time to his family and his work is not depriving the fellowship of service he owes to it. Read how Ameer from Iraq experienced the transformation of his meeting into a solid and healthy SA group.

Accompany a member from Wales on his walks as he finds God in the beauty of nature. Listen to the story of how a Slovakian lady became free of porn which had harmed her for so many years. Find the Regional Alignment Committee (RAC) update on the SA Meeting census and news on the International Convention in July in Cracow, Poland.

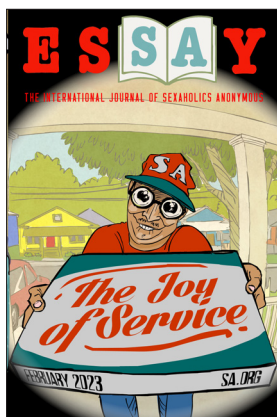
*In fellowship,*  
THE EDITORIAL TEAM  
[essay@sa.org](mailto:essay@sa.org)



# February 2023

*Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us.*

AA 77



*On the cover: Recovering sexaholics from all over the world can testify that service gladly rendered in a spirit of humility and anonymity is the biggest joy in their lives.*

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*"E" pages are online Essay only*

# SA's Growth Depends On You Too!

**S**A continues to fulfill its purpose to be available to the sexaholic who needs it. We have meetings in over 70 countries, as well as lots of online meetings. Any newcomer who needs SA can find a meeting!

**Chat with the Trustees.** Last year, we started holding quarterly Zoom sessions to chat informally with the Trustees. You can meet your trusted servants and find out how they think. Watch for announcements through your regional delegates and intergroups.

**Finances.** SAICO continues to be solvent, but inflation affects us just as everyone else. We ended 2022 with over eight months of reserve funds, in excess of our desired prudent reserve of six months. Our 2023 budget is for a deficit, to be covered by those excess reserves. The budget also assumes that we, the Fellowship, step up to a greater level of contribution than in 2023. We can increase contributions at local levels, which will flow toward intergroups, regions, and SAICO. Or we can contribute directly to SAICO at [sa.org/contribute](https://www.sa.org/contribute). Remember: we accept no outside donations, so our finances depend completely on us.

**International Conventions.** Enjoy your summer holidays in Europe: you can register now for the International Convention in Krakow, Poland, in July 2023! Jerusalem in January 2024 is geared up and ready. Los Angeles in July 2024 is in work, and Dallas has been approved for July 2025. Plan to attend; we can meet SA friends from all over the world! See p. 32-33 or go to <https://www.sa.org/events/> for more information.

**Public Information.** The Public Information Committee (PIC) has been very active recently. They have a strong effort preparing information to better welcome newcomer women. They're also creating more videos for use on [sa.org](https://www.sa.org) and throughout SA.

**Accessibility.** We're looking hard at accessibility issues around SA. The main web site [sa.org](https://www.sa.org) will soon receive modifications to make it more accessible. International and regional conventions are addressing issues for deaf and blind members.

**Meeting Registration.** If your meeting isn't registered in the census, do so today! The census ends this month, and the same registrations will completely rebuild the Meeting Finder on [sa.org](https://www.sa.org). Read more on p. 34.

**Service Work.** This year, four of our eight Trustees are ending their service. If you've got over five years of recovery, consider volunteering for this essential service to keep SA available and active for all. If you're not yet there, then take your recovery to the next level with other service, at your local group, Intergroup, or Region. You can also [contact SAICO](https://www.sa.org) about international work on committees. Talk with your sponsor about what you can do.

ERIC H., Florida, USA  
Trustee Chair



## We Were Home

### DEAR ESSAY, THANK

you for the report on the *We Were Home* Convention in Armenia. During my first month in our fellowship, I was tipped off to attend the *Sunday Easy Does It But Do It* meeting—a literature study meeting with a very nice family atmosphere. That really turned out to be true. The group quickly felt like family.

Every Sunday we were in the meeting with the same people and it felt very nice. Our family was quite international and focused on the Steps and Traditions in order to have healthy meetings. We had fellows from countries



like the USA, Belgium, Spain, Iran, the UK, and many others.

Recently, “our” Iranian fellow attended the convention in Armenia. At home, he has a 3D printer and used it to design his own SA chips! As you can see, they are incredibly beautiful and, above all, very unique. He made one for each member of the group and brought them to the convention.

He gave my chip to a fellow from my country who attended the convention too. The latter gave it to me at a very special moment—right after I had given away my First Step in our local meeting.

I cannot describe how loved and connected that made me feel. I am no longer alone. I am a part of this wonderful fellowship. As the White Book says, “We were making the Real Connection. We were home” (SA 205).

I enjoy the socializing we have with our local fellowship. We go for walks, play frisbee at our local conventions, hold buffets to attract members from other groups, and laugh a lot. I really feel at home in SA—just like my chip says.

NATHALIE V., Antwerp, Belgium



# Worldwide Walls Of SA

# SA Meetings Can Be Held Just About Anywhere ...



*First Things First Meeting  
Lincoln, Nebraska, USA*



*Coffee Shop Meeting  
Bangalore, India*



*Tuesday Night Meeting  
Bryan, Texas, USA*



## Share your photos

Send your meeting place to [essay@sa.org](mailto:essay@sa.org). Remember to include your name, address, group name, and location of the meeting.



*Friday Night Meeting  
Long Beach, California, USA*



# MORNING RITUALS

**Every single day of the year, whether at home or on holiday, this Dutch fellow seeks his Higher Power during a solitary morning walk.**

**E**very morning, my alarm goes off at 5:30 am—365 days per year, whether at home or on holiday. I get up, put on clothes over my pajamas and go outside for a 30-min walk. This is where my morning ritual begins, supporting my daily SA program. This method is about mindset (attention, dedication, focus, and meditation), about breathing, and cold therapy.

Outside I feel my body waking up. I become aware of the “here and now” with my senses: the freshness of the morning, the breeze, the scents in the park, my feet on the ground. I slow my pace and seek my Higher Power. I thank Him for whatever comes to my mind. I acknowledge my powerlessness over lust and so many other things, and do my Third Step prayer. I pray for my sponsees, my family, and the people I expect to meet today.

At home I grab a mat, lie on the floor and do exercises with power breathing for another 30 min. This exercise

has all kinds of positive effects on the health of my body, and increases resistance. It would go too far to describe all the effects here.


After the power breathing, I step into the shower, enjoy the warm water for a while and then turn the tap to cold. I hold that for two minutes. I keep my breathing low, and try to relax my body. Here too, this has positive effects on my body. For example, it is very good for blood circulation, and gives an energy boost. In addition, this exercise has a stress-reducing effect, because it teaches my body to relax during stress. It helps me to feel more comfortable during the day, even in tense situations. And the more I feel at ease during the day, the less reason there is to seek a fix in lust.

I am grateful to my Higher Power for all the help supporting my SA program and my spiritual condition.

ALLARD G., *Zwolle, the Netherlands*







# His Former Drowning Has Become Today's Newcomer's Hope

*He found freedom and happiness, and much more than that, with his other fellows in Iran.*

In active addiction, my slogan was “Being alone in heaven is harder than being with a girl in hell.” In early childhood, I could not imagine a world without girls. I used to be ridiculed for playing with girls instead of boys. Who cared?

As far as I was concerned, I enjoyed playing innocently with girls.

But gradually, that innocent childhood joy turned into a deep and miserable swamp in which I was drowning. Tragic, tragic, tragic. As I grew older, lust would rob that childhood innocence and bring me misery instead; inner joy turned to a rotten shell, attractive on the outside, but foul and tormented on the inside.

I sought comfort rushing from one person's embrace to another's, but my body, heart, and soul ached with pain and emptiness. Worst of all was the spiritual torment, my soul full of pain.

But in my descent toward the abyss, I happened across a little nook one day

which very quickly became a refuge. I found friends there who were wounded the same as me, but they were happy and dancing, and there was a deep light shining in their eyes. It was so strange to see people who had lived in the shadowy grip of lust happy now and dancing free. It turned out to be

**Inner joy turned to a rotten shell, attractive on the outside, but foul and tormented on the inside.**

the sobriety anniversary party of one of the fellows and, for the first time ever, I laughed and danced.

I was amazed at the joy of it; that freedom from the shadows was possible, that joy was possible. The spring

inside me which had run dry for such a long time, began flowing again. In my early recovery days, I had little enthusiasm, no spirit; recovery was just words. But then, miracle of miracles—I was living the joy that night. I was laughing without restraint, without showing off, without anxiety; laughing from the depths of my heart. And there was a new light in my eyes too, the light of hope.

Did you ever enjoy drinking a glass of water? Having a nap in the afternoon? A breeze in the morning or the serenity of a sunlit evening? If you had asked me questions such as these years ago, I would have thought you had lost your mind. But if, today, you ponder simple wonders like these, then I say that you have arrived at wisdom. And, who knows, maybe an element of the happiness that comes from the program is that difference between the knowledge of yesterday and the wisdom of today.

Many think that happiness comes from achievement, or from success after the long haul. But today for me, all of my life's experiences—the good, the bad, and the ugly—are grounds for happiness. I do not regret the past nor do I fear the future. I was brought low, to a point where I had been willing to learn, and the program has taught me. I have learned to live with my strengths and my weaknesses; happy to be myself, happy with what I have. I do strive for improvement in all areas of my life and pray for it, but I don't sit around waiting for it.

The early wounds are still there bodily and spiritually, and will always be. But I heard somewhere that every scar on an athlete's body is an adornment. My former "drowning" and every wound in my mind speak of hope for the newcomer; they say that he or she is not alone.

AMIN A., *Isfahan, Iran*



You are the mother I have always longed for  
Showering me with affection and overwhelming me with love  
You are the father I never thought I had  
Raising me into a man and leading me from above

You are the brother I have always wanted  
Walking with me hand in hand as I fell into the straits  
You are the sister who has held me in sorrow  
Sitting with me in silence as the tears flowed down my face

You are the spouse that I have always pined for  
Uniting my soul with your very essence  
You are the friend who knows my every secret  
Supporting me with no judgment as I sit in your presence

You are the teacher that I have always needed  
Instructing me with your love and guiding me with care  
You are the therapist who showed me how to heal  
Hearing me, validating me, helping me become aware

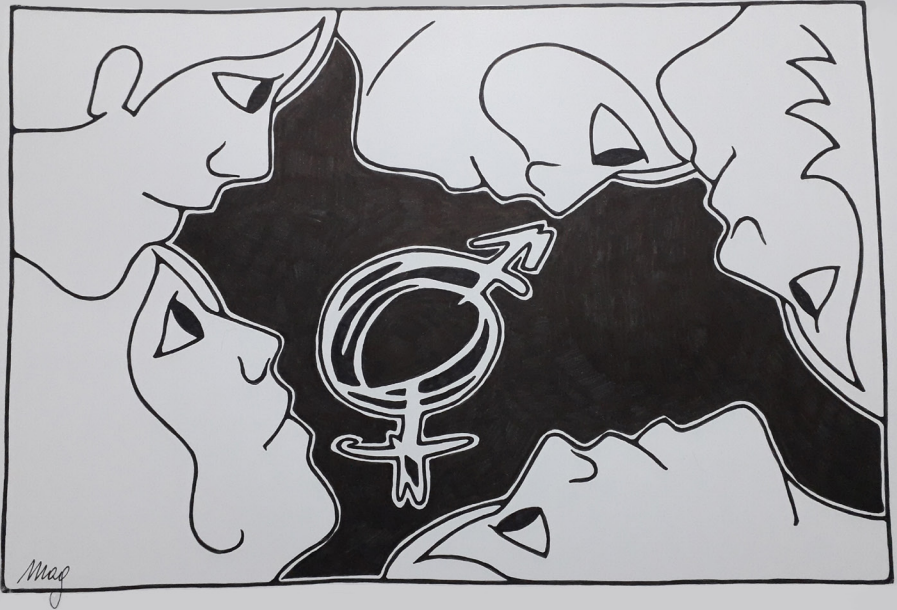
You are the king I have always desired to serve  
Your ways are truth and your will is supreme  
You are my God and my Creator  
In you all of my relationships are redeemed

DANIEL S., *New York, USA*



The Joy of  
Serving The King!

# “Sobriety Is Where My Heart Is”



*In order to avoid being high at the convention and feeling low afterwards, Aga drew a lot. This picture is about brotherhood and being part of family.*

**P**articipation in conventions is one of the strongest recovery tools. I was able to experience it again last weekend, together with almost 50 fellows from seven countries. Since I first went to the Exeter winter convention last year, it has become a priority in my agenda.

These kinds of gatherings always bring some challenges to me and this time I had to face the fact that I was the only woman there, which wasn't easy because lust came to the surface. The same thing happened to me before. When something good was occurring in my life, my illness wanted me back.

When I noticed my dark thoughts and started to consider canceling my booking, my addiction began whispering that I didn't deserve to be there. But my two years of sobriety was my anchor at that moment. I surrendered it immediately, and peace returned to my heart.

Then I recalled what I'd heard many times. That my sobriety and recovery don't take away either lust or my character defects. But they teach me how to live with them, using all available tools, especially in developing my spiritual life and deepening my relationship with my Higher Power. Once again my weakness turned into strength.

Taking part in previous conventions had made me realize that I belong to SA, but this year I was able to feel a wonderful power of brotherhood, acceptance, understanding, and love from all who attended. I've learnt the lesson that in recovery we all are equal, despite different life stories. I hope that I took as much as I could from the speakers invited to the convention, and I want to multiply this now and share with others who weren't able to be there (e.g., by sponsoring them).

AGA M., Edinburgh, UK



### The Joy of Translating ESSAY into Spanish

**M**y job has nothing to do with graphic design, advertising, illustration of magazines, or anything like that. Years ago, in my beginnings in SA I combined the design of the bulletin of my parish with sessions of consumption of chat and pornography. Only by a miracle of my Higher Power did I never by accident place a lust image in one of those newsletters. And, logically, the quality of my work was barely regular, the time invested twice as much as normal. I stayed up late and I used to be easily annoyed if someone criticized my work.

I have had several episodes of withdrawal in SA, from days to months without consuming. I became a “periódico”, or chronic relapser, a pattern that has been repeated over and over again. Today I am less than a month away from turning one year of sobriety and my knees tremble just thinking about making the fatal decision and consuming again. You’ve taught me that recovery is one day at a time and that service is a fundamental pillar of a sober and happy life. So I am deeply grateful for being given the opportunity to be part of the translation group of the ESSAY magazine into Spanish.

Today is Sunday, the first of January 2023, and it has been a most productive day in terms of the work of organizing the ESSAY magazine for December 2022. The magazine is an exceptionally



good work, the illustrations are of high quality, the texts are organized with elegance and sobriety, there are no excesses in the use of color or font size. I am sure that if we did a Twelve-Step worldwide contest of fellowship magazines, our beloved ESSAY would win first place.

The work of translating the magazine from English to Spanish involves not only cutting and pasting images, but also translating texts. That sometimes is not an easy task, because some phrases when translated literally lose meaning. We then make changes where necessary and try to make the final texts understandable for Spanish-speaking readers.

The translation team is made up of men and women from various countries, with varying degrees of English proficiency, but with a shared desire to serve. There is camaraderie between us, and our hearts are filled with pride and joy at seeing each edition translated.

In this work we all win. It is impressive to read the stories; somehow we connect positively with the original writers. We are enormously blessed with the opportunity of providing this service.

JAVIER C., *Costa Rica*





# GIVING TIME TO MY FAMILY IS SERVICE TOO

*He got married in sobriety and has discovered that giving his time to his family and his work is not depriving the fellowship of service he owes to it.*

In my early days in SA, I was single, had no job, no car, no money, and a lot of time. It was 2009, and because of the economic crisis I was unemployed. I attended three to four meetings a week, called my sponsor daily, wrote my Step work daily, and translated the whole White Book, Big Book, and Recovery Continues into Dutch within a year. Still, I had plenty of time left because I was no longer filling up

**Together, we cleaned the toilets. To me, this was a spiritual awakening and the highlight of the weekend.**

every spare minute with lust. I took on many service positions like coffee person, cleaning up after the meeting, literature person, chair, treasurer, and opener.

My first year, I was involved with organizing an SA Step workshop. At

the end of the weekend, we made a list of chores for which attendees could sign up. When I looked at the list, still half empty, I noticed that the speaker of the weekend—a fellow with 14 years of sobriety—had signed up for cleaning the toilets. Nobody else had!

**This group of sex drunks are so slow in decision-making and so averse to authority, that I have no other choice but to surrender and give up.**

I intuitively put my name next to his. Together, we cleaned the toilets. To me, this was a spiritual awakening and the highlight of the weekend. He later became my sponsor.

I was also involved in starting up an Intergroup in my country. I became chair of the Intergroup for two consecutive terms. Meanwhile, I also became a secretary in the Regional Assembly. Soon I was an Alternate Delegate as well and attended the General Delegate Assembly in 2013, with barely four years of sobriety. Although it was very ambitious, this actually overwhelmed me. I realized that this was a bit too much, so I stopped taking on service at that level.

The role of pioneering a newly emerging SA fellowship in my country was a gift, a blessing, and a joy to me. However, entrusting the permanent leadership to the group conscience has been a journey. With my personality,

it is not easy to work in a team. Not for me, and not for the team. Usually I intuitively and quickly know what is best to do. The only thing the team needs to do is to agree with me. Since I hate waiting and postponing for slow people, I just start doing what I want to do anyway. It is easy to see that this has little to do with group conscience. I am so grateful that God, in His infinite wisdom, has handed me over to a group of sex drunks, who are so slow in decision-making and so averse to authority, that I have no other choice but to surrender and give up. It has been my only chance for sobriety and the best thing that could have happened to me.

I met my wife-to-be in 2014. We married a year later. I slowly rotated out of the Intergroup, out of the Regional Assembly, and out of nearly all the positions I was holding. I haven't attended an Intergroup or an Assembly since. This has been a relief for me and most likely a blessing for them. I am very grateful for all the service opportunities that I could take in the first few years of my recovery.

**My sponsor is teaching me that having a good quality of life is, for me, the best service I can give to the fellowship.**

Without it, I wouldn't have made it. It was a wonderful and exciting time.

Today I have a wife, three children, a car, a job, a house, and very, very little time. I learned that there are many other ways to do service, apart from

holding positions within the service structure. I could attend conventions, speak at meetings, sponsor people in sober dating, organize workshops or

## SA does not have a negative sobriety definition of everything we cannot do, but a positive sobriety definition of believing in marriage for the sexaholic.

write articles for ESSAY. My sponsor is teaching me that having a good quality of life is, for me, the best service I can give to the fellowship. This means that giving my time to my

family and my work is not depriving the fellowship of service I owe to it.

Some services are very dear to me, which I continue doing with great joy. First is being an opener for the meeting I'd set up six years ago. It is still my home group meeting. Second, I have made myself available for overseeing and coordinating the translation of our fellowship literature into Dutch. It is a joy to be doing this together with our neighboring country.

Third, more than anything else, I enjoy working with members in the process of sober dating. At one of the first conventions I attended, I heard one member share that SA does not have a negative sobriety definition of everything we cannot do, but a positive sobriety definition of believing in marriage for the sexaholic. To see a love cripple finding that belief and actually proposing to a woman is one of the most beautiful gifts of this program.

DAAN L., *Den Hague, The Netherlands*

### DISCUSSION TOPIC

### (How) Do I experience the joy of service?

**T**he author of "Giving Time to My Family Is Service Too" describes how he had plenty of time to do SA service when he got sober in 2009 and was no longer filling up every spare minute with lust. He lists all the services he did in the first years of his recovery, services that are available for us to do too.

He married after six years of being sober

as a joyful and happy single member. In the next years, he came to see that giving time to his family and work is a great way of doing service too.

Have I experienced the joy of service? Am I going to any length to return to the fellowship all the gifts it has given me? Am I doing service in my home group? What about my Intergroup and Region? Am I assisting

when SA events are being organized? Am I still doing the humble services I did at the beginning?

Which special experience, skills, and interests do I have? Am I engaging them in the service of the people around me?

*You may use this topic in a discussion meeting, or send us a story of your own recovery journey to [essay@sa.org](mailto:essay@sa.org)*



# Giving Two Hours of My Time Keeps Me Sober

*Many hours in service have added up to many sober and joyful 24 hours since August, 2018.*

**W**hen I began attending meetings in 2008, I did not want to do any SA service. But on Saturday, August 5, 2018, my current sobriety date, I began to feel different.

On Sunday, the very next day, a local group voted me in as its Intergroup Rep. Before that, I had only done things like putting out chairs, filling in as a back-up meeting secretary, making coffee, serving as a temporary sponsor etc. And recently, I joined with other SAs in helping a member move house. Ironically, all of the SA members that helped with the move are in the same sponsorship lineage.

I'm reminded of the line by AA co-founder, Bill W., in the Big Book where it says, "For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead." How do I know this is true? My very own experience has borne it out!

I look at my past—all those years of coming to SA meetings, taking half-measures, avoiding service for fear it would take away "me time." Now, having had a spiritual awakening as

the result of working the Twelve Steps of SA, I routinely get to enjoy the principle of self-sacrifice. I know that if I give two hours of my time helping someone move or ride along with an SA friend to visit an SA in prison, that I get to stay sober for those two hours. Once those hours in service add up to 24, that's a whole day! And that's not "sexaholic math"! (That's a whole 'nother topic!) The Big Book says: "We work out our solution on the spiritual as well as an altruistic plane." (AA xxvi)

Again: How can there be joy in service? Joy and service sound so oxymoronic! Am I not entitled to get what is mine? Who will give me j-u-s-t-i-c-e for the long-term abuse and traumatic experiences that I endured? Do I not have a right to hold on to "justified resentments"?

I don't know about you, but when I think that way, I find that it leads me to feeling shut off from my Higher Power and my SA community. That's dangerous for this man! So I need to keep it simple. Trust God, clean house, and help others. Thanks for letting me share. With that, I'll pass.

HAL C., Virginia, USA





# Making SA A Better Place For Women



The acts of courageous members can transform home groups, intergroups, and even the whole SA community.

**M**y experience of joy in service through making SA a better place for women includes how one individual, then a home group, then intergroup, and finally the SA international community made themselves better places by taking measures to more comfortably accommodate me, a woman.

My home group had a daily noon meeting that was only attended by three, maybe four members. The other members of our group would not attend because I was there. Then, a gentleman who regularly attended the noon meeting and who used to take regular calls from males in our group, took a risk one day. He told the men that if they wished to speak with him, they could reach him only

at noon meetings. Soon enough, other men started to come along, and they still come to this day. Since then we have all benefited hugely from sharing our respective male and female perspectives. The group was transformed by the courageous act of one member.

My home group adapted its workings to better accommodate me when a man privately messaged me in our Zoom chat function. The group decided to shut down the chat function so that I could participate in meetings more comfortably. In order to better accommodate me, they decided that any important information could be emailed. I have since enjoyed these meetings in peace and comfort.

My intergroup also made a better place for me by inviting me to start a Women's Welcome Meeting in order

to welcome women newcomers into SA, and offer sponsorship while advocating for mixed meetings. They also suggested, and then voted, to have a workshop on healthy interactions at mixed meetings. Lastly, the workshop committee gathered interviews on mixed meetings and opened a Whatsapp group to share them with SA members globally.

Those in the international SA community made a better place for me by inviting me to bring an idea of mine to the Public Information Committee. That committee, in turn, invited me to join the committee and begin developing resources for women on [sa.org](http://sa.org). We are developing resources right now to present to the Board of Trustees and to the GDA.

LAURA W., Florida, USA



# A Story of Transformation From Meeting to Group

**Real commitment to his home group on the level of meeting attendance as well as business services has given this Iraqi member long-term sobriety as well as joy.**

**I**f I wanted to summarize the AA Big Book on the importance of service, it would be in one word: joy! I have been transformed from misery to joy by freely giving of myself to others. As the Big Book rightly says: *Joy at our release from a lifetime of frustration knew no bounds.* (AA 128) I have come to experience the principle of The Solution: *The measure we give is the measure we get back.* (WB 205)

It's true! I am now addicted to service (in a good way!). Joy in recovery is not limited to sobriety; it includes helping others and witnessing their recovery! For years I experienced the false joy, the emptiness of lust. Today, I experience a warm and fulfilling joy by my recovery and service! As the Big Book says so attractively, *[remaining] sober, that motive became secondary. It was transcended by the happiness [I] found in giving [myself] for others.* (AA 159)

My service habit started by attending lots of meetings every week. I stayed for hours everyday in Zoom meetings. Of course, before recovery, I spent at least as much time, if not more, feeding my lust. If I can allocate time for lust, I definitely can allocate time for recovery. My recovery

journey has led me to join the SA Gulf Group, my home group. I am committed completely to this group. I attend every meeting, including the business meetings.

The group used to be very small. The business meeting had only three to five people, including me. We had two meetings a week, Mondays and Fridays. I took the meeting chair position for more than a year; other fellows did the same for an extended number of months. The Monday meeting collapsed. Did I leave the group? Did I wash my hands of any responsibility? Did I unthinkingly assume it is God's will for us to stop? Definitely not! I said, "God, help me to do thy will!" and I went on.

**Joy in recovery is not limited to sobriety; it includes helping others and witnessing their recovery!**

As a group, sensing the common threat we face in cunning, baffling, powerful sexaholism, we decided

to become a virtual recovery group, open for everyone in SA in the Arab world. We spent two to three hours in each business meeting just discussing internal group issues! We created sev-

## Today, I experience joy not only by attending meetings, but also by contributing to the health of the group, seeing it become a recovery bright spot.

en service positions so that as many group members as possible could have a chance at doing service for the group.

Soon enough, we experienced a real joy to see the wonderful effects of shared service which has transformed our meeting to a solid group of recovering members. Today we are known as a strong SA group with meetings focused on sobriety and recovery, and the application of the Traditions as much as possible.

We are all happy to participate and contribute to the growth of the group. We also created a small focus group within our home group so that we could discuss group dynamics, see where we can improve, and also see how we might avoid problems that have arisen in other groups.

Group conscience is not limited to business meetings. It is something we take on a daily basis! We openly discuss in an inclusive environment every “objection,” making sure that

it is properly considered and respectfully addressed. What better way to apply the principles of Traditions One, Two and Twelve—namely to admit complete and utter powerlessness over myself and others, to reach out to a Higher Power to help me have sane relationships, and to carry the message of joyful recovery to sexaholics?! It works!

I am truly witnessing the Promises of Step Twelve, as stated in the chapter “Working With Others”: “Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.” (AA 89)

Today, I experience joy not only by attending meetings, but also by contributing to the health of the group, seeing it become a recovery bright spot, and carrying the message of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. I am not only staying sober, I am happy, joyous and free!

Ameer M., Iraq



This is a terrific service opportunity!!



## FINDING GOD IN THE BEAUTY OF NATURE

I'm Mike and I'm a sexaholic, sobriety date Aug 7, 2005. SA has given me my second chance at life and has been central to my recovery since.

From the age of four, I always felt different, less than; that I was on the outside looking in. I was afraid of people and hid my true self from them. Instead, I put on an act to try to get them to like me. At age seven I became obsessed with the pretty girls in my school class—voyeurism, dreaming and fantasizing about them. There was no sexual component yet, but the obsession was strong; I was now a 'romantic' lust addict. Over time, I became a disruptive child.

I discovered masturbation at age 11 and it quickly became my secret coping mechanism, used to manage all uncomfortable feelings. It was an ecstatic escape that I experimented with in order to achieve longer and greater highs. I quickly became addicted to pornography too. It disrupted my

ability to form any relationship with girls and then women. It affected my ability to connect with others and I became a loner. It undermined any interest I had in a promising career. I became an empty shell, the lust inside ever-increasing, feeding on my soul, my emotions, leaving me empty, in growing pain. I tried for ten years to stop in various ways, but it was impossible. This included trying four 12-Step fellowships, including SA.

By age 32 I was desperate. My rock bottom was seeing my true spiritual condition and realizing I had no way out, just a never-ending descent into (I believed) greater depths of pain and depravity. I realized I would have to give 'one of the S-Fellowships' a serious go. This was truly my last resort.

I tried counseling (again) and for the first time was fully honest with the counselor. She didn't pretend to understand sex addiction, but her skill lay in supporting my search for my own solutions. By some miracle

I came to realize that masturbation was my enemy and not my friend. The counselor supported me in going to the S-Fellowship where you “stop it all”—SA.

I was Twelve-Stepped, and the next miracle on my journey was to learn that lust was the invisible monster that was killing me. I finally knew my problem, and that giving it all up was

## When I’m alone I ask my HP to walk with me, and I find Him reflected back to me in the beauty of the landscape and nature.

the beginning of the solution. I found it difficult in SA to find a sponsor and good Fellowship. Conventions proved critical. A couple of times I wavered in my determination to continue in SA. However, this counselor helped me to stay the course for the first nine months or so. After this, I had a solid sponsor and other SA support and could stand on my own two feet in SA. It is likely that without this counselor I would not be in recovery.

I’ve worked the Steps a couple of times; have participated in SA enthusiastically; have held a variety of service positions, started a local meeting, sponsored others and generally, have grown up in SA. The 12 Steps have provided me with a manner of living free from compulsion to lust. For about ten years SA was my principal activity outside of work and marriage. However, I reached a point where I did need something extra in my life. I have no children. I’ve always enjoyed

walking and I ended up joining a long-distance walking club. Making friends doesn’t come easily with me, but I’d learned enough in SA to stay the course with this club and gradually came out of myself.

This hobby has helped me enormously. I found that I have a talent for ultra-distance walking. Being an obsessive, I did try to become one of the best. However, whilst I had the ability, I found that the time, sacrifice and focus needed to become the best would take too much time away from my recovery and marriage. I’m a rock-bottom sexaholic addict and I must keep recovery first, marriage second and let other things follow. I am grateful for this insight and for the willingness by the Grace of my Higher Power, to place recovery first.

My walking does take up a long day each week, but it is in balance with other areas of my life. I love either walking alone in wilderness areas or walking with a group. I also do multi-day hikes and wild camps. When I’m alone I ask my Higher Power to walk with me, and I find Him reflected back to me in the beauty of the landscape and nature. A long walk gives me clarity of thinking and emotional balance, and I often come home and write down insights for my recovery.

I used to feel guilty for taking so much time for myself each week, but I do give back by leading walks. I’ve also nearly finished an 1100 mile walk with my wife, a wonderful experience together. Ultimately my walking is an expression of my Step 11, a form of meditation with my Higher Power, and allows me to bring a better quality me to other areas of my life. I regard it as a gift from God to be enjoyed while I can.

MIKE B., *Cardiff, UK*



# Letting Go of Porn



*She made this illustration to depict that while porn was harming her in many ways, she was unable to let it go.*

If I had to choose one word to describe how I felt for most of my life, I would choose “disconnected.” I had a hard time making friends in both kindergarten and school. There were many engaging ways to escape reality—creating stories in my head, adventure books, and video games.

When I was nine years old, I was assaulted by an unknown man at the stadium. This experience marked my life with fear. I felt very ashamed about what happened but decided to tell my then best friend about it. He told me something like: “That man had to be desperate when he had chosen you.” His reaction taught me that I am so disgusting as a person that I should be grateful if someone even harasses me. However, I never was.

So my fear of men started. I also hated my teachers because they said: “You are still young and naive.” I hated what my childish naivety

caused me and decided never to be like this again. My classmates bullied me a lot, making sure I know that I am repulsive and would never be able to find a partner. But when I was eleven, I realized I didn’t need to interact with people or be attractive to men as the internet is full of them.

It all began when my then sixteen-year-old brother didn’t clean his browser history. Just one click on this weird page with a red logo, and I was in awe. Why would somebody make videos like this? It was weird and disturbing. A few days later, my curiosity took over. I thought about something sexual and wanted to check how it really is. I opened those “documentaries” again. I was hooked since the very first video I watched. It had only one problem. It wasn’t perfect. I wanted some details to look

different. I was browsing for hours, looking for a video that would fulfill all my expectations. I've seen dozens of clips, and it was the most exciting thing in my life. There was always something new to see and explore. I don't remember how I learned to masturbate. I just found out it was a great combination with all these videos. It was an amazing way to deal with my life and all my negative emotions. I was using high doses daily.

Now I'm porn-free for over six years. I wish I could say how God healed me. I would run around meetings an-

**I should have been very uncomfortable being surrounded by mostly men. It was the exact opposite. I could finally see that they are neither a threat nor objects to my lust.**

nouncing it as a miracle of my Higher Power. However, I know that my recovery requires rigorous honesty. The truth is that one day I got really high, turned on some video and got horrible anxiety, staring into the abyss for a while, then turned it off and decided I would never return to it.

I also wish I could say that was the breaking point, and everything was better after. Throughout the years, everything just got much, much worse. Our disease is progressive. It deteriorated in every other aspect, be it masturbation, sex or cybersex.

My disease took many things from me—loads of time I could have used better, my human dignity. One evening after acting out, I felt so bad that I just prayed to God to finally kill me.

Well, he didn't. And I realized that unless I threw myself under a bus (literally) I would have to find a way to cope with my miserable life. I didn't know what to do. But then I recalled a fellowship I heard of. So I hid behind a pile of bricks, so nobody could see me, and decided to give them a call. I was desperate. What could I lose?

When I came to my first SA meeting, I thought that this was the saddest, lowest, and most shameful moment of my life. I was judgmental when I saw some of the members laughing. How could they laugh, I thought? We are in SA. This is tragic. Now I laugh at almost every SA meeting and I laugh a lot.

I was the only woman at my first SA meeting but I thought of it as a statistical difference. I was the only woman member in the western part of the country and for a few months, I was the only woman member in the country. Logically, I should have been very uncomfortable being surrounded by mostly men. It was the exact opposite. I could finally see that they are neither a threat nor objects to my lust. They were my suffering brothers. I was harassed at school, sometimes I was harassed at a street, bus stop or station. SA was filled with the spirit of recovery. Despite outsiders calling these men negative things, they created the safest environment possible.

At first, I had a lot of excuses for why I couldn't come to meetings. But when I realized that fellowship is the key to my survival, I was willing to travel for an hour to get to a meeting starting at 7 a.m. Sometimes I got on a train and rode to a meeting in another town.

Often I felt ashamed and disconnected from other people in my life. My friends didn't know what I was going through. Friends in SA knew as they had the same problem. The connection I have with other members is very unique for me. SA is like my second family and I love all these quirky, weird cousins I have now! I even met my best friend at SA. When I'm coming to my home group, I know it will be an hour filled with pure joy. Now I see that recovery is not tragic—it's cheerful.

When I was one month sober, my home group needed to fill some service positions. We all agreed that we need a man with broad shoulders to be responsible for setting up the meeting room, as it included moving the

table. Somehow I, the only woman in the meeting, ended with this position and stuck with it for three months. In SA, I felt that I can be useful and do service for others, whether by my translations, drawings, shamelessness at open meetings or my mysterious ability to move a heavy table.

So my recovery journey goes on. My life has been filled with beautiful experiences ever since. When I was one month sober, I was at my first SA event in Huty. When I was three months sober, I was at the convention at Esker, Ireland. Although I'm not exactly sure what God's plans for my life are, looking back at all these things, I'm sure it will be quite a party!

BEÁTA M., *Bratislava, Slovakia*



## THE SPIRITUALITY OF SERVICE

In Sexaholics Anonymous, as in all Twelve Step fellowships, service and recovery go hand in hand. Indeed, service on behalf of the Fellowship is recovery in action. This very insightful pamphlet explains the different aspects of service.

Topics:

- Service on behalf of the Fellowship is recovery in action.
- Benefits of Service
- The Twelve Steps and service
- Leadership through a spiritual lens
- Love is the key
- Through carrying the message in service, we see the words of the Third Step Prayer become real as victory over our defects bears witness to those we would help of God's great Power, Love, and Way of Life

**Find this wonderful pamphlet on service as a spiritual activity for you and your group's literature table on the SA store: [sa.org/store](http://sa.org/store)**



# GOD IS IN CHARGE OF THE UPS AND DOWNS OF MY LIFE



**W**hy am I still in SA? A simple answer to this question could be, “I am here because I have to be,” but that doesn’t tell the whole story. The pain of repeatedly hitting bottom lines was enough to get me in the door, but never enough to keep me inside.

My past was destructive and abusive. When I was less than five years old, my mother burned my hand with a hot spoon to punish me because she thought by doing so she would teach me perfect obedience. When I was six I was sexually abused in a very painful way by a nine-year-old cousin. The abuse became more widespread,

first other cousins started abusing me, and then others of them offered me to friends of theirs and to people in the neighborhood for their abusive pleasure.

The emotional abuse that followed the sexual abuse was even worse. When people understood that I was abused, I was mocked, teased, beaten, threatened, and treated as a piece of garbage. In family, at school, at work, wherever I went I faced sexual abuse, and if that couldn’t be perpetrated, then emotional and physical abuse. Even in my own home I was not safe. The relative who abused me taught me how to masturbate and that was how I chose to cope with my feelings.

And so started my sick embrace of reality—running from it, hiding inside myself, in a fantasy world of sex, masturbation and lust. When I was 15, I decided to stop all the sexual behaviors in my life. I didn't let anybody else abuse me and I tried to stop sexually acting out. I did all I could but I could not stop, even for a week; I was devastated and suicidal. At school I gradually lost the ability to socialize and became very isolated. I was angry and resentful at almost everything—myself, my parents, my family, the world, life and God. I had severe nervous breakdowns and through this series of horrors I came to believe that I had a problem that I was unable to solve by myself; I remember hoping that this nightmare called my life would soon finish.

When I joined SA, it took me a while to realize what the program was about and what was required of me. With time however, I began to change, and when I changed, life changed. And soon enough I came to know that, by the Grace of God and by this program of SA, there is indeed a solution, a remedy for this disease and the pain.

After ten years of trying without success to stop and after a life-long experience of terrible pain, I was convinced that I would die from this disease. What a relief to find a solution that worked. And I figured, if SA is a solution for a disease such as this, then there has to be a solution for my other difficulties as well, of whatever sort.

Another huge source of relief was sharing some of my deepest secrets with my fellows. Before this I used to think that I was the only one who had done the things I had done and that if anyone knew my secrets they would reject me just like others had done. The pain and loneliness of carrying such shame always made

me feel inferior and hate myself. But my sponsor explained that there is nothing I have done that someone else with this disease has not done, somewhere, at some point, and that my acting-out behaviors came from my disease, not from me as the person I really am; and that, no matter what, I

**My sponsor explained that my acting-out behaviors came from my disease, not from me as the person that I really am.**

am God's, His precious child. So God blessed me with huge relief from toxic guilt and shame.

In Step Two a lifelong paradox for me was solved. I came to believe in a Higher Power who is loving; who is there to help me and who wants me to live happily, joyous and free.

When I worked Step Four, a dream came true. I could experience living without resentments and fears. A life filled with resentment and fear is not life; it's just about a half-life, I would say. I know of no other remedy for the scale and depths of resentments that I have; they are deadly. For the first time in a long time, I felt love toward others in my heart; I could look them in the eye and make deep, healthy connections. I believe Step Four was the beginning of my recovery; after this, everything started improving.

By working Step Nine, making my amends, another miracle happened. Little by little I began to like myself.

I had hated myself for most of my life because of the abuse I allowed others to perpetrate on me and also because of what I had done to others. I don't know how this particular Step helped me so much to distinguish my Real Self from the sick person I was, but it did. The Hamed I knew before the Steps was a very superficial man, incapable, sick, crazy, insane, abusive and a liar. But after working the Steps I came to believe that I am a precious child of God who has an important role in this world and who is indeed a very capable individual.

Working Steps 11 and 12 also helped me towards healthier ideas, beliefs and attitudes. Life before the program was relentless torment, a toxic stew of anger, fighting, danger, lies, abuse, fear. The program helped me believe in a purposeful life, provided the space and nutrition to grow, to help

others, to experience love and integrity; to find happiness, joy and freedom. This was more than I had been looking for when I first came in the door.

Completing the SA Steps, opened the way to working on other problems in life as well. I worked the Steps of DA, and I'm now working the Steps of CoDA and UA. These are helping me a lot. So much has changed in my life. Some of my old dreams have become reality, like being able to speak and write in English. Life is not always perfect, nor am I; but I don't have to be perfect; as long as I work this program, I continue to make healthy progress.

By working the Steps of SA—and the Steps of other programs, as necessary—my life is precious to me; a wonderful journey through all the ups and downs of life, but always in reality with God in charge.

I came into the program trying to get away from resentment and rage; what I found was peace; peace with myself and peace with others.

I came into the program to find freedom from masturbation and acting out, even for one day; what I discovered was that sex is optional, even sex with my wife; moreover, I can help others achieve freedom from this disease of sexual obsession and compulsion.

I came into the program to get free from thinking about my abuse and my abusers; today, not only can I forgive, but I contribute significantly to the quality of life of others similarly afflicted by memories of abuse and their abusers.

I came into the program to find a way to endure life. Instead I tapped into a source of wonderful hope, happiness, growth, love and the chance to continue growing, so long as I continue working the program a day at a time.

I came into the program trying not to hate myself anymore. What I discovered was that I am a worthwhile person and precious child of God.

I came into the program looking for peace from a vengeful, judging, punishing God. Instead I came to believe in a God of pure love who is mad about me and wants me, all of me; Who wants a life of happiness, joy and freedom for me.

I came into the program to learn not to beat myself up; instead I found a way to build myself up.

These might all sound like trite slogans, but if they are, working the Steps is where they come true.



## Sharing a Light Makes It Twice As Bright



Step Twelve has been allowing his spiritual awakening to grow every day for the last 36 years.

**W**hen I admitted powerlessness and unmanageability (Step One), I began Twelve-Step recovery. Within one week my spiritual awakening began as I could believe in the experience of others and feel hope. For me this was Step Two. Beginning to learn and live the Steps in my life (with some assistance from professionals) enlarged and deepened my spiritual awakening.

Steps Ten and Eleven kept my spiritual experience fresh. However, it was Step Twelve that gave me the most spiritual growth. Practicing the principles in all of my affairs infused me with a spiritual experience that I could share with others. In my recovery it's important to share with others rather than give things away. If I give something to a person, they have it and I don't. However if I share something, we both have it, and it becomes more powerful. For me, sharing may be the greatest force in recovery leading to a spiritual experience. Ironically, shar-

ing a burden makes it half as heavy while sharing a light makes it twice as bright.

Nearly all sharing enlarges and deepens my spirituality. Sharing is as simple as opening the door for the meeting, setting up chairs, leading a meeting, or sharing in a meeting.

**If I give something to a person, they have it and I don't. However, if I share something, we both have it, and it becomes more powerful.**

Much more intense is one-on-one sharing in sponsorship. Bill W. and Dr. Bob were both powerless over drinking alcohol. However, when they met and shared one-on-one, they were connected to a much larger power

that kept them sober for the rest of their lives.

Sponsorship continues to be the largest part of my service—my sharing—because it is every day. Sharing my recovery experiences with others allows my awakening to grow every day. Helping others is the primary message of the entire AA Big Book.

Very early in my recovery I began participating in the administrative parts of recovery such as steering committees for individual meetings and intergroup meetings. It is not directly my spiritual experience that I am sharing, but I am sharing abilities that were opened up to me through having my spiritual awakening. I

have continued the administrative participation now for the past 36 years. Before we had a telephone, it was my job to receive the mail in our post office box and reply to it. I am in three fellowships and have been a group representative, committee chairman, intergroup chairman, and a representative to regional conferences. Today I stay connected as the phone contact for newcomers. Service has been the key to receiving, keeping, and enlarging my recovery. It's the sharing of my recovery with others that makes it continue to grow into something larger and more powerful every day.

LEE T., *Tennessee, USA*



## Outside Help Is Part of My Eleventh Step

A few years before I came to SA, I saw several therapists. I didn't realize it then, but I was looking for a "higher power" that would save me from myself, that would carry me. Being saved and carried was exactly what I tried to find in lust.

One of the therapists encouraged me to masturbate, not understanding how much harm I did to myself and others by masturbating. Another problem with therapy was that I couldn't be honest because of shame and because I couldn't see the truth. You can imagine that therapy under these conditions did not help me; the pain in-

side of me kept growing. I kept acting out, being convinced that there was no solution to my addiction, that my case was too bad and hopeless.

When I eventually got a sponsor, took the Steps seriously, and did whatever was needed for recovery, I started to understand that my solution is my Higher Power. And this is the basis of my healing. My sponsor told me that, from his experience, the priority is working the Steps, which brings some clarity. After that, I can get professional help for specific problems.

After taking my Ninth Step and experiencing sobriety, I identified

health problems and emotional problems which prevent me from feeling peace and connection with my HP. I started to get outside help. For me it was definitely part of the Eleventh Step. Getting this outside help was a huge development in my spiritual life. I learned to connect with my body, and I learned how to take care of myself.

For me, a big part of recovery is to learn how to ask for help, to open my mind and listen to other people, and to understand and accept a simple truth: I am not alone anymore!

ODEYA R., *Jerusalem, Israel*



# STARTING AN SA MEETING IN PRISON

**A CFC member outlines how he got an SA meeting running at Valley State Prison in California.**

**S**tarting an SA meeting in prison is not an easy job, despite just being a widespread problem. Although I had no experience with prison meetings to speak of, I did not let that get in the way. My own lasting experience and service had shown me how we can be uniquely useful to others.

Following the Tucson Ray written template for contacting prison officials, I wrote an email to the Community Resource Manager at Valley State Prison. The letter clearly stated my reason; three men in Valley State (Chowchilla) had contacted SAICO for help in finding sponsors by mail.

It was apparent to me why I had been led to contact this particular prison. Valley State's population

at the time was comprised of more than 80% sex offenders. After a few high-level exchanges with the CRM Carmen Maroney, Valley State's warden, green-lighted the meeting. It was the first such organized meeting in the entire California state prison system.

In addition to my own understanding, I had help. A member of the Utah fellowship introduced me to Volunteer Coordinator Lieutenant Tolai Pei (soon retired) of the Utah State Department of Corrections at Draper State. Lt. Pei had been in charge of SA meetings attended by men at Draper and Gunnison state prisons. I spoke with Lt. Pei who agreed to be an early CFC referral.

This portion of the 2016 letter to Ms. Maroney lists SA's approach along with relevant resources:

## The SA approach

We share a common problem. Like the alcoholic or drug addict, we believe lust addiction is addiction to a substance that affects the entire person. Just as for the alcoholic who discovers the solution to the problem(\*) in AA, we see the value of the SA support structure as a crucial step for the sexaholic seeking recovery.

I have devoted the last fourteen years to sponsoring prisoners in the US who fit this description. What I have learned of these men inside Valley State (Chowchilla) makes me believe in our ability to help them.

This letter aspires to answer some of your questions in support of your work with the Chowchilla prison community.

## The SA approach in reducing recidivism

SA is for the sexaholic, someone who is powerless over addiction to lust in various forms; pornography, sex and other destructive physical, mental, and emotional behavior.

We offer support for prisoners and parolees through 12 step sponsorship with visitation, establishing meetings, and through working with chaplaincy and correctional staff. Sponsorship often evolves into long term relationships with these men (and women). In time, we see them reunited with their families and living productive lives. Those who regularly work the SA program virtually assure themselves of not going back to prison.

(\*) <https://www.sa.org/essay/harvey-a-shame-the-fourth-dimension/>

With the help of SAICO, I researched the prison and read about its earlier approval of AA for its population, and about the medium level of security. By including some of this information, we were able to demonstrate why SA would be an effective tool at Valley SP.

The full letter and other SACFC resources are in the SACFC service manual. Contact SACFC Chair Paul Z. or trusted servant Ben V. for availability.

ERIC S., *California, USA*



July 14-16, 2023

## SA & S-Anon International *Summer* Convention Cracow, Poland


### Int'l SA Convention

with S-Anon participation

In God We Trust



14-16.07.2023  
CRACOW POLAND

 Metropolo by Golden Tulip  
ul. Orzechowa 11  
30-422 Krakow, Poland

More Information on: [sa.convention.2023@gmail.com](mailto:sa.convention.2023@gmail.com)  
[www.sa.org.pl/sa-convention-2023](http://www.sa.org.pl/sa-convention-2023)

One of the unofficial slogans often heard is: "Join SA and See the World." Come over to Poland in July for the biggest SA event of the year in the 4-star Hotel Metropolo (by Golden Tulip) in the picturesque and historical city of Cracow.

The organizers expect between 500 and 800 live participants from more countries than ever. Many members who have extended their stay before or after International Conventions in the past testify that such days have been absolute highlights in their recovery.

There is easy and cheap access from the airport to the hotel by taxi, train or bus. The hotel has a gym and sauna. Kosher meals will be organized by a Kosher Committee.

Meetings throughout the whole weekend will be translated in English and other languages. The Saturday night Talent Show is traditionally a time to sit back, relax, and laugh while being entertained by members of both Fellowships. Conference approved literature will for purchase at the Literature Table.

**Early birds register for 65 € only! Go to: <https://sa.org.pl/sa-convention-2023/>**

Jan 22-24, 2024

## SA & S-Anon International *Winter* Convention Jerusalem, Israel

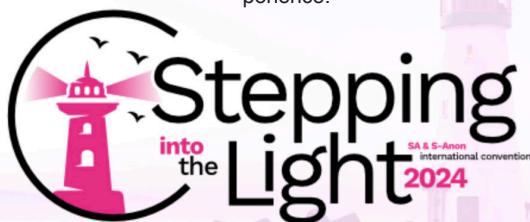
Go to <https://steppingintothelight.org> for more information about the convention and to register for the convention, meals and sleeping arrangements!

For any questions, please email: [registration@steppingintothelight.org](mailto:registration@steppingintothelight.org)

Please also email if you are interested in being a local representative for your intergroup to spread the message of the convention.

Registration for early bird pricing is now open and the discounted price is available until April 30th!

Our global recovery village of connection and recovery will bring the world of SA and S-Anon together for 3 days of fellowship, fun and shared experience.



**We can't wait to see you in Jerusalem! Go to: <https://steppingintothelight.org>**



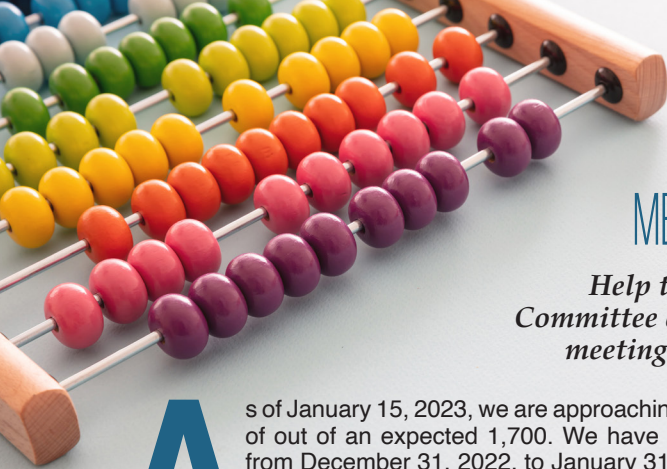
# sa events calendar

## International Conventions and Events

JULY 14-16 2023	<b>Cracow, Poland</b> <i>In God we Trust</i>	SA & S-Anon International Summer Convention <a href="https://sa.org.pl/sa-convention-2023/">https://sa.org.pl/sa-convention-2023/</a>
JANUARY 22-24 2024	<b>Jerusalem, Israel</b> <i>Stepping Into the Light</i>	SA & S-Anon International Winter Convention <a href="https://steppingintothelight.org">https://steppingintothelight.org</a>
JULY 12-14 2024	<b>Los Angeles, CA, USA</b>	SA & S-Anon International Summer Convention
JULY 11-13 2025	<b>Dallas, TX, USA</b>	SA & S-Anon International Winter Convention

## Regional and Local Events

FEBRUARY 3-5 2023	<b>Sarasota, FL, USA</b> <i>How Important Is It? Really!</i>	SA & S-Anon Ultimate Winter Retreat <a href="https://tinyurl.com/UltimateWinterFL2023">https://tinyurl.com/UltimateWinterFL2023</a>
FEBRUARY 25 2023	<b>Kearney, NE, USA</b> <i>Overcoming Obstacles to Recovery</i>	Annual SA & S-Anon Marathon <a href="http://www.sanebraska.org/">http://www.sanebraska.org/</a>
MARCH 4 2023	<b>Norcross, GA, USA</b> <i>The Journey Continues</i>	Atlanta Area SA & S-Anon Hybrid Marathon <a href="http://www.atlantathejourneycontinues.org/">http://www.atlantathejourneycontinues.org/</a>
MARCH 12 2023	ONLINE	Annual SA Spring Speakerthon <a href="https://www.sa.org/">https://www.sa.org/</a>
MARCH 31 - APRIL 2 2023	<b>Knock, Ireland</b> <i>Free At Last</i>	SA & S-Anon Ireland West Convention <a href="mailto:cm1essay@gmail.com">cm1essay@gmail.com</a>
APRIL 1 2023	ONLINE <i>Overcoming Obstacles to Recovery</i>	CASA Annual SA Speaker Meeting <a href="https://www.casaig.org/events">https://www.casaig.org/events</a>
APRIL 14-16 2023	<b>Sumas, WA, USA</b> <i>How Free Do You Want to Be?</i>	SA & S-Anon Northwest Regional Spring Retreat <a href="http://www.savancouver.org/">http://www.savancouver.org/</a>
APRIL 14-16 2023	<b>Kansas City, KS, USA</b> <i>Awareness, Acceptance, Action</i>	SMW SA & S-Anon Family Reunion Retreat <a href="http://www.sa-dfw.com/">http://www.sa-dfw.com/</a>
AUGUST 25-27 2023	<b>Stirling, Scotland, UK</b>	SA UK Stirling Convention with S-Anon Participation <a href="https://www.sascottishconvention.weebly.com/">https://www.sascottishconvention.weebly.com/</a>



# RAC UPDATE ON SA WORLDWIDE MEMBERSHIP CENSUS

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

**A**s of January 15, 2023, we are approaching 1,000 Registered meetings out of an expected 1,700. We have extended the deadline once from December 31, 2022, to January 31, 2023. For several reasons, we have not yet approached the critical mass we had hoped for.

These reasons include translation from English to the local language. Special thanks go out to Antonio S. from Columbia for the great work

he has done in the Latin America Region.

We have received meeting totals but no registrations from the Farsi-speaking Region for obvious reasons. They have provided current totals. The German-speaking region has also gotten off to a late start.

RAC has voted to extend the Census data collection until the hard date of April 10, 2023, at its January 7 meeting. This allows time for RAC to compile the data and present it to the BOT in time to present this data to the GDA prior to the May 7 meeting.

GDA members, Intergroup Reps and GSRs, please continue to assist and register all meeting data. Include face-to-face Meetings, hybrid meetings, Zoom, Skype, etc. as per the BOT transmission to RAC (included) which directed us: "Meetings are a valuable place to begin because this is where the newcomer first meets SA. There is a need to know how many opportunities a newcomer has to hear sexaholics share the message."

RAC will continue to assist you in answering all questions. Laura at SAICO also provides assistance and can be contacted at [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org)

FARLEY H., RAC Chairperson



## SAICO Financial Feb 2023

- Revenues **\$383,051**
- Expenses **\$412,639**
- Net Income **(\$29,588)**
- Prudent Reserves **\$258,552**

## New Groups Feb 2023

### North America

- Seattle, Washington, USA
- Fairmont, Minnesota, USA
- Rockford, Illinois, USA
- West Haven, Connecticut, USA
- Tullahoma, Tennessee, USA
- Bellingham, Washington, USA
- Licking, Missouri, USA

### Europe, South America

- Regia, La Habana, Cuba
- Athens, Greece

# COMING IN APRIL

## Experiencing the Miracle of SA Sobriety



### NEXT EDITION

*In the April issue, read about the miracles that have happened in members' lives since they started living according to our common sobriety definition.*

### *Giving Up My Stash Like the Alcoholics*

This Australian female member testifies how she had to go to any lengths to become sober.

### *A Different Life*

Embracing the SA sobriety definition carried him from a life of same-sex acting out to having a happy marriage with a woman, an astonishing spiritual growth, and helping out his parents.

### *I Did Not Quit. I Surrendered.*

The program changed this depressed and suicidal woman, who came into the SA program in 1992, into a precious child of God.

### SUBMIT YOUR STORY

#### **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)** What tricks do you have to stay 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)** Share the strategies your home group has to welcome and keep new members.

**October 2023 edition: Relapse Prevention (Stories due Sept 1)** What can we learn from those having long-term sobriety today in order to safeguard our sobriety?

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.

While we provide the full version of each magazine on PDF, as well as six selected articles in 10 different languages on our website at no charge, it is not free to produce. To support the ESSAY magazine in carrying the SA message worldwide, please make a contribution on [essay.sa.org](https://www.sa.org/essay).

A cartoon-style illustration of a person from the chest up, wearing a teal shirt. They are holding a large white sign with both hands. The sign is divided into two sections. The top section is grey and features the word "GOD" in large, bold, red, distressed capital letters. The bottom section is white and contains a prayer in red, distressed capital letters. The person's mouth is open at the bottom of the frame, suggesting they are speaking or shouting the words on the sign. The background is a solid brown color.

**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.**