

# ESSAY

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS



## **S**ober Living Sober Dying

FEBRUARY 2024 | 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](mailto: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



## *i readers, and happy reading for 2024!*

In this month's issue we remember those members of early SA who have since passed away in sobriety; their example attests to the great strength of our program and to the grace of a loving God in our lives. Their testimonies are not really about them; rather, they illustrate how trust in a loving God, as understood by each one, can help a bunch of drunks like us to stay sober.

Read how the Daily Sobriety Renewal came about. We reflect on Dave T., amongst the most widely traveled of SA members, giving SA workshops all over the world, and who has now sadly taken his final journey. A member tells us the inspiring story of our founder Roy K., whom he knew very well. Be inspired too by reflections on oldtimer Jess L., as related by two of his old time SA friends. Enjoy the transcript of one of the many brilliant talks given by David M. And, at CFC, read about the fellow who devoted his service to helping our SA brothers in prison.

We include inspiring testimony from a soldier on active service who shares how he manages to stay serene amidst the horrors of war by creating for himself fresh, invigorating ways of working his program. Another member recounts how Step Zero has been a game changer for him and for his home group.

Finally, we on the editorial team would like to give special mention in remembrance of our esteemed colleague, Barbara F. Barbara got sober in 2001 and left us in 2023. She was the editor of the ESSAY from 2007 till 2015.

Let their footsteps guide us as we trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

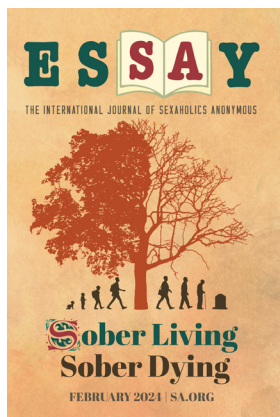
In fellowship,  
THE EDITORIAL TEAM  
[essay@sa.org](mailto:essay@sa.org)



# February 2024

*He sobered, never to drink again up to the moment of his death in 1950. This seemed to prove that one alcoholic could affect another as no nonalcoholic could. It also indicated that strenuous work, one alcoholic with another, was vital to permanent recovery.*

AA xvi-xvii



*On the cover: Our in-house illustrator LaRon designed a respectful and profound cover in homage to those brothers and sisters who passed away in sobriety before us.*

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ESSAY presents the experience, strength, and hope of SA members. ESSAY is aware that every SA member has an individual way of working the program. 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.

Please consider subscribing for the beautiful, 36-page, full color print version on the SAICO Online Store: [www.sexaholics.org/store/](http://www.sexaholics.org/store/)

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## What's Going On In SA

# The Joy Of Serving Internationally



There are always service opportunities at the General Delegate Assembly, the Board of Trustees, and their committees.

"A sexaholic Trustee candidate will be a member of SA who has a love of service, relevant real-life skills, and a willingness to take on a four-year commitment to an unpaid, part-time position for the benefit of the SA Fellowship" (SA Service Manual).

"In accordance with the principle of the Inverted Pyramid, the groups are the ultimate authority of SA. In order to conduct SA business, the Fellowship delegates authority to the General Assembly Delegate. The General Delegate Assembly, in turn, delegates administrative tasks to the Trustees and their committees" (SA Service Manual).

If you have five years of sobriety and are interested in serving in this way, please read the description of the BoT in the SA Service Manual and send an email to [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org).

"Trustee Committees exist to serve the Fellowship by administering the policies and decisions of the General Delegate Assembly" (SA Service Manual). If you have interest in joining a committee, fill out an application from the SA Service Manual or email SAICO and ask to be connected with the chair for that committee.

**1 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE (NC)**  
(Jack H., Trustee liaison; Gary L., Chair)

The purpose of the NC is to serve SA by identifying, recruiting, screening, interviewing, and recommending candidates for the Board of Trustees (BoT); and, when directed, seek qualified candidates for Committee Chairs. The NC is seeking two potential Trustee candidates, one for the currently vacant seat on the BoT, and one to replace the Trustee who will term out (four years) in July 2024. The NC encourages members of the GDA and the membership to bring potential candidates to the committee's attention.

**2 IT COMMITTEE (ITC)** (Jerry E., Trustee Liaison; Jeff M., Chair)

**Event Registration:** Reg-Fox has been adopted as the new Event Registration Platform. All future events should use that platform for registration. This is an important part of securing the SA infrastructure moving off of a customized system not maintainable.

**Meeting Finder:** Development of the new Meeting Finder based on the Meeting Repository is proceeding well. It will replace the Find a Meeting function on [sa.org](http://sa.org). All groups should make sure they are registered in the Meeting Repository so their meetings will appear in the new SA-ICO Meeting Finder.

**Webmaster Report - Store:** The

Old Store operates on 2007 OS Commerce. New Store is WooCommerce built off WordPress. New Store is ready for user testing. Some layout/format changes were suggested. SA-ICO can now make direct e-book sales. The remaining task is Quick Books integration.

**3 REGIONAL ALIGNMENT COMMITTEE (RAC)** (Kirt B., Trustee Liaison; Farley, Chair)

There are 57 meetings that have registered but have not indicated that they belong to an intergroup or region. We are reaching out to them to encourage them to connect to the SA Service Structure and receive the benefits that intergroups and regions provide. Here is a summary of the registrations as of Jan 1, 2024:

Region	Meetings Registered	Current Delegate Number	Census Derived Delegate Number
Australia/NZ	16	1	1
Don't know	10	0	0
Europe & Middle East (EMER)	403	5	8
German-Speaking	28	1	1
Israel	92	1	1
Latin America	77	1	1
Mid-Atlantic	194	4	3
None	49	0	0
Northeast	189	2	3
North-Midwest	146	3	2
Northwest	115	3	2
Persian-Speaking	8	2	1
Southeast	207	4	4
South-Midwest	174	3	3
Southwest	203	3	4
Meetings Registered	1911	33	34

**4 PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE (PIC)** (Jack H., Trustee Liaison and Acting Chair)

The PIC seeks ways to bring the SA program and stories of recovery to all who suffer from sex and lust addiction, by developing BoT- and GDA-approved media material for distribution to the public. It is currently moving forward with the creation of a *SA Women's Welcome Packet* and will produce Standardized Assessment Criteria for all PIC Media production proposals.

**5 SERVICE STRUCTURE COMMITTEE (SSC)** (Jack H., Trustee Liaison; Jon H., Chair)

The SSC is tasked with providing the BoT with analysis and recommendations regarding SA organizational issues. Since the Oct 2023 GDA meeting, the SSC has been considering issues and seeking information pertinent to the structure and organization of SA with regards to the issues raised in surveys and workshops on how well our Service Structure is working.

**6 CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES COMMITTEE (CFC)** (Kirt B., Trustee Liaison and acting Chair)

Due to the efficiency of using a database, we are quickly filling requests from potential sponsees in prison. There was only one outstanding request from a Spanish-speaking person in prison, which has been filled.

The CFC has produced an orienting video, a weekly Zoom workshop and orientation documents to better interest and in-service new volunteers.

**7 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS COMMITTEE (ICC)** (Jim C., Trustee Liaison; Rich P., Chair)

There are currently open

spots for hosting an International Convention starting in January 2026 onward. Please encourage your Intergroups to submit a bid.

**8 GLOBAL OUTREACH COMMITTEE** (Matthew M., Trustee Liaison; Duane D., Chair)

The GOC primarily gives attention to areas of the world where SA has no region presence. The three areas currently attended are Sub Saharan Africa, India and surrounding countries, and Asia Pacific Rim. The first two mentioned area meetings are largely virtual with a sprinkling of face-to-face meetings. The Asia Pacific Rim apparently has a higher percentage of face-to-face meetings. However, the challenge for the GO Committee here is establishing reliable communication in this area. I applaud the efforts of two committee members who are persevering in the pursuit of establishing these contacts.

The last year has witnessed an increase in GOC participation in giving attention to these geographical areas. Currently the committee is exploring ways to further support the area coordinators in their outreach.

**9 LEGAL COMMITTEE** (Jerry E., Trustee Liaison; Chair Open)

SA's BoT is served by a number of committees who assist it in administering the policies and decisions of the General Delegate Assembly. The mission of the Legal Committee is "to advise the Trustees on legal matters affecting the Fellowship" (*SA Service Manual*, ch. 13, p. 2). The Legal Committee is looking for both members and a chair. If you can help, please contact SAICO.

JERRY E., Virginia, USA  
TRUSTEE CHAIR





## Dear ESSAY



WIKIPEDIA

## Wikipedia

**THANK YOU ESSAY,** for your amazing magazine, every two months again. The themes, the depth of the articles, the colors, and the images have become so much more attractive these last years.

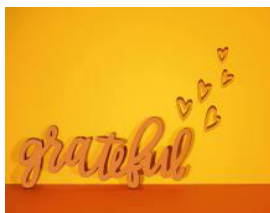
As I don't master English, I read the Spanish version which is translated every two months by a team of Spanish fellows who do speak it well. Fortunately today, Google Translate does a great job to help me write emails like this one.

One of the previous editions had an article that mentioned information about SA on Wikipedia. Currently, there is information about SA on Wikipedia in six languages: English, Dutch, Polish, Ukrainian, Hebrew,

and Persian. With Spanish being the one of the biggest languages in the world, the Spanish Intergroup would love to add the Spanish information too. However, we don't know how to go about.

Therefore, it would be great if some of the fellows who have experience with putting information on Wikipedia would be willing to contact me: bcnjuansa@gmail.com

JUAN A., Barcelona, Spain



## An Attitude of Gratitude

**ONE OF THE MOST** helpful practical tools in recovery for me comes from the 18-wheeler: "Whenever I'd catch a likely image in the corner of my eye, instead of obeying the impulse to look and drink, I'd keep looking straight ahead while praying for that person" (SA 162). To that, however, I have found it particularly helpful to add a prayer

of gratitude to God.

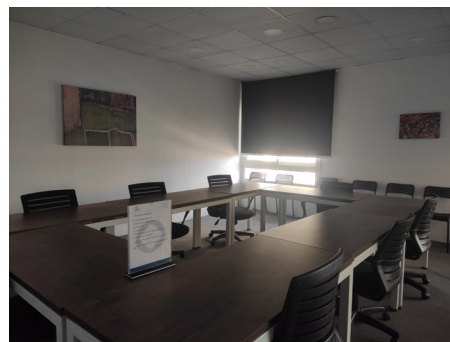
For example, if I see someone while I am traveling and am tempted to take from that person through lust, instead I will pray for them, surrender the trigger to God, and thank God for something unrelated that I am grateful for, such as my home group in SA. Why do I feel the need to add gratitude to my prayer for the person I am tempted to lust after?

Two reasons: one is that as one old timer said, "gratitude is an antidote to lust." I find this to be true in my own experience. The other is that I have, as the Big Book puts it, a "magic magnifying mind" (AA 420). If I am triggered, my magic magnifying mind tends to want to return to lust after I have prayed for a particular person. But when I focus on gratitude, my mind has something else to latch on to. I can surrender, give in the form of prayers toward someone, and then give gratitude toward God for something else. That helps me to move forward to the next best step, and helps me to stay sober even when I am most triggered.

JAMES H., South Carolina, USA



## Worldwide Walls of SA



*Heliopolis Meeting  
Cairo, Egypt*



*Meeting Room,  
Koblenz, Germany*



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



*Monday Men-Only Meeting  
Bangalore, India*



*SA Clubhouse  
Howell, NJ, USA*



*Inspire the rest of the Fellowship with beautiful pics of your meeting place!*

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

Find loads of photos of worldwide meeting places at the bottom of the GET INVOLVED page on our website [essay.sa.org/get-involved/](https://essay.sa.org/get-involved/)



## Practical Tools

I am an SA member and have been for some time a reserve soldier in one of the many warring countries on this planet. Often I get woken up by alarms. Sometimes I see rockets in the air. Friends of mine have been killed. Everything is scary and weird, surrealistic. My whole life got turned upside down compared to just some time ago.

The day I received an order to join my unit as a reserve soldier, I arranged my equipment quickly and then went to my sponsor's

house. He told me something that has been helping me a lot ever since. "This is a war," he said, "hard days are ahead of us. And everything—every feeling, every kind of experience—is something to face and learn from." He encouraged me to focus on what will help me keep my serenity. We both knew that on the battlefield it would be hard for me to keep my daily routine of recovery actions. My sponsor suggested finding new ways to practice the old principles of the program: powerlessness, connection to God, service, etc. So the form of the program may have changed a lot for me during the past months, but the essence has remained the same.

Here are a few things that have helped me:

**Although this fellow became an unsolicited soldier overnight, he found new ways to practice the old principles of the program.**

**EXPERIENCING  
GROWTH  
IN  
HARD  
TIMES**

- **Service.** As much as I can. I have learned there are always opportunities: to ask a friend how he's doing, to prepare food for someone, to tell a joke, to volunteer whenever needed.

- **Quiet times of silence, prayer and writing.** Before going to sleep, while guarding, on the way somewhere—there are many moments for it. Most of the time these moments are very short. It is hard for me to get longer moments for my time with Him, but that is where I am now and I believe my HP loves me with what I have.

- **Connection with the fellowship.** Whenever I can, I try to call my great program buddies, and on breaks I try to attend meetings.

- **Acceptance.** I've found out this is a fertile time to practice acceptance. To allow every feeling. To accept every experience without judging. As the Big Book says on p 417: "Nothing, absolutely nothing, happens in God's world by mistake." When it is hard for me to believe it—I'm trying to take it to God. I'm trying today to acknowledge the fact that this is a hard time and it will take my heart and mind time to process it. And that that is OK.

- **Focusing on things that are good for me.** Yoga, playing, good books, friends.

85 years ago, Bill W. wrote the following: "When World War II broke out, this spiritual principle [*dependence upon a Higher Power*] had its major test. AAs entered the services and were scattered all over the world. Would they be able

to take discipline, stand up under fire, and endure the monotony and misery of war? Would the kind of dependence they had learned in AA carry them through? Well, it did. They had even fewer alcoholic lapses and emotional binges than AAs safe at home did. They were just as capable of endurance and valor as any other soldiers. ... And

**I am getting to experience the presence of my Higher Power in dark places, and He keeps blessing me with the gift of recovery and sobriety.**

far from being a weakness, this dependence was their chief source of strength" (12&12 38-39).

Today, this is my reality too. Surprisingly, along with the difficulty and grief, I'm experiencing this hard time as a time of growth. I am so gifted—surrounded by so much love and care. I'm getting to know myself better, the dark and the bright sides. Even being a soldier is another opportunity to be in service. I'm getting to experience the presence of my Higher Power in dark places, and He keeps blessing me with the gift of recovery and sobriety. It is much more than I could imagine.

*Anonymous*



Jim Egan played a big role in my early SA years. I loved his shares, which were always a loving, humble meander. I learned from his shares to be loving and humble myself.

Always with a smile on his face, he also helped me feel comfortable at the International Conventions I attended.

My sponsor credited Jim (who was his sponsor, so my grand-sponsor) with what became one of my

most effective personal SA practices: When surrendering lust, don't just pray your surrender; bring it into the light with another SA member.

Once in a discussion with Harry B., he and Jim spontaneously asked each other some probing questions about their recovery. These questions later became the "Daily Sobriety Renewal" practice, a beloved tool of many in the Fellowship.

I was delighted to see Jim credited in the AA book, *The Soul of*

*Sponsorship*, a memoir of the relationship between Bill Wilson and Father Ed Dowling. Jim was like Father Ed a Jesuit too, and the archivist of the latter's writings, some of which were used in this comforting little gem of 12-step history.

Jim was a true peacemaker and helped us all strive for unity in SA. He died in 2008 after 20+ years of sexual sobriety. He is still very much missed.

MITCH A., Wisconsin, USA



Here is the original renewal (with one omission, where a short phrase from a particular religion was quoted):

#### **Desire for Sobriety: daily renewal with sobriety partners**

1. Are you willing to admit you are powerless over lust?
2. Do you desire sobriety for the next 24 hours? (Freedom from the obsessions and actions of lust, freedom from fear, resentment, shame, self pity, etc.)
3. Are you willing to do whatever is necessary to protect this desire for the next 24 hours? (Setting boundaries, prayer, reading, physical care of your body, reaching out and calling others)
4. Do you understand that at the end of this 24 hours you are free to choose this sobriety for another day or go another way?
5. Just for today, are you willing, with me, to hand over your will and your life to the care of the One who kept you sober yesterday and protected you from the full consequences of your lust in the past?

*Jim E. is remembered for being a true peacemaker and for developing the Daily Sobriety Renewal.*



## He Went on a Last Well-earned Trip



*After his passing away last November, Dave might be continuing telling stories and doing string exercises in yet another exotic and faraway location.*

How true is the saying, "Not by argument will you change a person's mind but by telling them a good story" when speaking of Dave T.

Dave stayed sober in SA from 1990 till he passed away in November of 2023. He had a gentle way of telling stories of recovery, both with and without "string figures." String figures are formed by manipulating string on, around, and with the fingers. Dave collected stories and string figures from different cultures, and used them when sharing the SA message with others. He was as authentic with SA members as he was with someone he met on the street. He loved life and lived the life he wanted to live.

Dave's passing marked a sober and contented life lived to the full. He was gifted and didn't hide his talents. He was brilliant in many ways. Dave's spirit will surely continue to shine. Dave touched so many of us in a most extraordinary way, and I am grateful to have felt his loving, gentle, and wise influence. I feel privileged to have met Dave and thankful I can call him a friend.

Dave traveled widely! In 2019 he visited all the SA groups in Ireland within a few weeks giving workshops, all with his charming string figures. He traveled 2,630 miles across Ireland by car, bus, and train. That's the equivalent of traveling

across the whole of America or from Madrid, Spain to Moscow, Russia! And before driving to any far destination, Dave would offer a prayer, "Thank you, God, for a safe journey," and then he'd say, "Now we can relax and enjoy the trip."

Dave believed in making very practical action tools a part of his recovery. When he felt resentment or lust, he'd stop the car, open a window, and say, "Get out!" as he pantomimed the action of throwing the unwanted thought or feeling right out the window. He had practical ways to keep life manageable too like keeping dishes washed so they don't pile up, making his bed every morning before he left the house, and consistently paying bills before they're due.

Here are things I heard Dave say often:

- When he wanted you to enjoy life and your recovery, he'd say, "Don't get caught looking at the bug on the windshield!"
- When he wanted to gently refocus someone: "It's never been the problems in life, it's always been the solutions!"
- Oldtimer Sylvia S. taught him, "Don't fear your disease, just trust the program."

Dave lived the SA program in so many ways including when he said, "A true share is not what you keep but what you give away." Thank you, Dave!

ANONYMOUS, Ireland





*Although Roy K. was not a saint but a man with character defects like each of us, he showed us the simple and profound insight that lust was our addiction and founded our amazing fellowship.*

## His Sober Dignity Lives On As A Beacon



Roy K. saved my life, just as his inspirations and guidance have helped save most of our lives. Roy gave me hope, something I had lost a decade prior to meeting him.

Roy helped me find my soul, my conscience, my humanity, my spirituality, and my Higher Power.

Roy was our soft-spoken, dignified founder. He was a deep thinking man who had many brilliant insights which were gifted to us through his writings, his talks, and his way of living soberly. He left much for all of us to ponder and discover. For me, his greatest gift was his insight into how addiction works; and specifically how sexaholism works. He was also insightful in giving us suggestions and guidance in living soberly.

He showed us the simple and profound insight that lust was our addiction. It was lust I was addicted to, not sexual acting out. The minute I heard that, all kinds of things came together and started making sense. I had always been so helpless and hopeless in stopping my acting out. That was because I was trying to stop the symptoms, not the problem. One of the first things I learned in business school was to “search for the cause, not the effect.” Looking at the effects can help in finding the causes, but dealing with the effects won’t solve the causes.

Roy showed me that our lusting was the cause, and our acting out was only a symptom. For me, the chain reaction was that my spiritual maladies triggered my lusting; the lusting triggered my acting out; the acting out caused my feelings of

guilt, shame and desperation; those feelings caused me to hate myself; which caused me to do self-destructive, self-sabotaging things. This started the cycle all over again, and I spiraled deeper and deeper into the abyss.

Roy also taught me that breaking this repeating cycle anywhere along the chain reaction helps in stopping the next effect. But the closer to the beginning of the cycle we can break it, the less we will need to deal with the impending causes and effects. I think that working the 12 Steps, gradually gets us closer and closer to the beginning of the cycle.

Being a brilliant, deep thinking, and inspirational person does not mean a person doesn’t make mistakes. Being gifted with insight doesn’t mean that a person will always comprehend his mistakes. This applied to Roy, just as much as any other person. In my opinion, Roy was a great man, but he was not a saint. Not everything he thought was always correct, and not everything he did was done cleanly.

This is not the place to discuss those foibles, but I will say that Roy and I butted heads more than once. I would guess that 50% of the times we butted heads, he was correct; 25% of the time I was right; and 25% of the time neither of us were correct. I am very grateful that Roy made his amends with me, and I made mine with him, before he died.

Here is how I first encountered Roy. It was in 1985 that I saw the light that my acting out was a result of an addiction. At the time I had never heard of sexual addiction or of SA. I didn’t even know what I was addicted to. I looked for Pornography Anonymous, Prostitutes Anonymous, etc. This was before the internet, so the telephone and the library were my

means of research. During that time, I joined AA in Los Angeles—not because I thought I was an alcoholic (which indeed I was) but because I thought I could learn about addiction and recovery there. I truly did want to quit drinking and doing drugs, because they often reduced my inhibitions; plus they fueled or enhanced my acting out experiences.

Periodically, I would call the Los Angeles AA Intergroup Office to ask if they knew of any programs for

**He showed us the simple and profound insight that lust was our addiction. It was lust I was addicted to, not sexual acting out.**

someone with my problems. For the first several months, the answer was always: “No.” Finally, in March 1986, I reached a man at the office who said something like: “Well, I don’t know of any programs for what you described. However, there is this guy named Roy who often talks about problems like yours. He said it was fine to give his number out to anyone who asked.”

About a week later, at 11:30 p.m. after my wife had gone to sleep, I called that number. I got a very sleepy Roy K. on the phone. Within 10 minutes I was sobbing and sobbing, spilling more and more of my guts out. We talked for about an hour. I finally had found someone who understood. I didn’t think there was anyone else



but me who acted out like I did. He told me about a meeting of SA that weekend. I had hope.

For the next hour, I was still sobbing, and I couldn't go to sleep. So, about 1:30 in the morning I called him again, and again got a very sleepy Roy K. I didn't know at the time that Roy routinely went to bed about 10 at night. We talked for a while longer.

**In my opinion, Roy was a great man, but he was not a saint. Not everything he thought was correct, and not everything he did was done cleanly.**

That's how I found Roy, and how I found SA, hope and recovery.

At that time, there were only four SA meetings a week in the Southern California area. Roy and I lived in the same part of Los Angeles, so we saw each other regularly at meetings. I got a lot of experience, strength and hope from those meetings; especially when Roy was there.

At that time the White Book hadn't been published yet. It had been written and revised, but it still needed more revisions before being published. In the meantime, Roy had printed out 15 or 20 articles he had written about sexaholism. We would staple them together and give them out at meetings. I would go to Roy's house (actually his garage) and help him staple them together. I also

helped him revise the White Book for its initial printing. I did not do any of the writing, just helped organize things and such.

Roy and I talked a lot in his garage. What a blessing it was for me to be able to get his experience, strength and hope on a one-to-one basis. We also helped form several more meetings in the Los Angeles area.

In 1989, the White Book was finally printed. That first edition was not much different from what we use today. About six months later, Roy asked if I could help him some with SA's finances and accounting. That's what I did for a living, so I said sure.

The main problem was that we did not have an effective way of gathering essential financial information or for collating and assessing it. I set up an easy to use accounting and information system. When we looked at the information gathered by this system, I clearly saw that SA was losing money, and Roy was using his own funds to keep SA afloat.

We had a bit of a discussion about Tradition 7 and being self-supporting. I told Roy I would see what I could come up with to remedy this problem. One thing I discovered was that SA was losing money on each White Book it sold. Because the printing runs were not very big, the cost of printing was high. I think the cost was about \$3.50 each and they were sold for \$3.00. I told Roy we needed to double the price of the White Book. Roy was worried some people would not be able to afford that cost. I countered that, if we didn't do that, there would be no SA, so no books would be available. We agreed on the \$6.00 price, and that if someone could not afford it, the group would let that person pay what they could afford.

That solved some of the financial problems, but SA was still losing money. I suggested that every two weeks, each group could pass around a second basket, with that money going straight to SA Central Office, along with what the groups could afford from their regular 7th Tradition. So folks, if you begrudgingly donate to that second basket now and then, you can blame me.

When I think about Roy, the word that usually comes up for me is "dignity." Two definitions of the word "dignity" are: "The quality of being worthy of honor or respect," and, "A composed or serious manner or style". This is exactly who Roy was. This is how he lived his sober life. He was a magnet for sobriety. His dignity attracted sobriety. Roy "walked the talk", and he "talked the walk."

When I was quite new in AA, there was a fellow in many of the meetings who was dying of AIDS. This was before there was any hope of life for someone with AIDS. I watched as his condition worsened and worsened. Being a newbie, I naively asked him why he wanted sobriety. I said that if

I were in his circumstances I would be going on binges every night. He answered: "I want to die with dignity." That response left an indelible stamp on my psyche.

**He was a magnet for sobriety. His dignity attracted sobriety. Roy "walked the talk", and he "talked the walk."**

I was no longer living in California while Roy was dying. I heard from others that Roy died with dignity, and he died with sobriety. This was in 2009. He died the way he lived. His sober dignity lives on for me as a beacon, a compass to stay on the path of sobriety. Roy was a bigger than life person, who helped give us something much bigger than life.

TERRY M., North Carolina, USA 

## DISCUSSION TOPIC

Is my recovery a dignified and humble beacon to others?

**T**he author of this article knew Roy personally. He describes how he learned a lot from directly associating with him and helping him with service.

He was able to notice first-hand how Roy was our inspirational and very gifted founder while at the same time a flawed human being, like all of us.

Am I associating with longer sober members, while being open to learn from them? Or am I hanging out only with those who are not really "walking the talk"?

Am I at the same time vigilant in not putting longer sober members on a pedestal?

Am I looking for opportunities to help those who have been

around longer with their SA service? Or do I take their efforts for granted and only take from the fellowship without returning anything to it?

Is my recovery a humble beacon to others?

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



## HIS IMPRINT WILL LAST FOREVER

*Two oldtimers who knew Jess L. personally share some of their personal experiences about this very inspiring member in this ESSAY interview.*

**HARVEY:** Jess L. was a towering figure not only in height but also in personality. I first met him for the first time at the Warm Beach SA conference. It was my first conference but not Jess's. The cabin we stayed in had four rooms. He and his wife were in one, and I and my wife were in the other. Ted P. and Terry M. with their wives were in the other two. We all became friends from then on.

**DAVE:** I was introduced to Jess via a cassette tape that a member from our group had received from Central Office from one of the first national conferences. We listened to the tape as we traveled to Cleveland to attend a marathon meeting in October 1985. Jess was a gifted speaker that inspired those two sexaholics on our journey to Cleveland and our first experience meeting with a group outside of our own.

Later I would meet him at a con-

ference and ultimately he would become my grand-sponsor. To say that I was in awe of him and scared to death at the same time would be an understatement. Jess's comprehension of the disease concept and the passion he brought to his talks was both enlightening and intimidating to this sexaholic. As I got to know him I realized that his intensity was driven by his love for his fellow sufferers and his conviction that we're all dealing with a potentially fatal malady.

**HARVEY:** Luckily, I did not know who Jess was professionally or else I would have been too intimidated to have asked him to be my sponsor. Jess was a world-famous author who had written a series of books, one of which sold over a million copies. I bring this up since Jess would say to me as I remember it: "Humility is when I say that I am a famous author.

By remembering and acknowledging that God gave me this talent I get humility for one more day."

Since he was famous he would give lectures all over the country. At these various cities he would somehow bring in the subject of SA. Cities in Oklahoma and Utah began having SA meetings after he would share at his book tour seminars. He was a true Johnny Appleseed for our program.

Jess brought his gifts of writing to the fellowship too. He had a great deal of influence on many of our brochures. He was our first member who announced that he was lust-free.

**DAVE:** Yes, he was. I remember being confused about the term lust when I came into the fellowship in August 1985. I knew I was an addict and that I was totally powerless over compulsive masturbation but I didn't understand the concept of lust and how it was the driving force behind my behavior.

I don't remember the event where he was speaking but I remember with great clarity what he said that day when he gave his definition of lust. Jess said, "For me, lust is me wanting something that God isn't giving me at any given moment." That statement resonated with me and I have repeated it dozens of times in meetings and as I reflected on my own recovery. For me, lust is me ruminating about someone or something and if not surrendered, can have very bad consequences for my recovery.

**HARVEY:** Do you remember that Jess would also tell us many stories from the East? One in particular diminishes the concept of the power of a trigger. He would tell us about a guru in India who was with his student walking down a road. All of a sudden they saw a beautiful woman in a flowing gown. She was not able

to cross a large mud puddle. The guru picked her up and carried her across the mud puddle and then set her on the ground. Two miles down the road the student was very agitated. "Guru, I don't understand", he exclaimed. "You are not allowed to touch a woman, yet you not only touched her, you also carried her." The guru replied: "Yes student, I picked her up and then put her down on the ground, yet two miles down the road, you are still carrying her."

He was certainly a great storyteller, full of these valuable stories. He was a super gift for me as a sponsor for almost nine years. He was even a bigger gift to our fellowship. He passed away on February 24, 2000, but his imprint on SA will last forever.

**DAVE:** I could also tell more stories about him but his definition of lust is one that I will carry with me and pass on to others as I continue to trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless our wonderful fellowship of Sexaholics Anonymous.

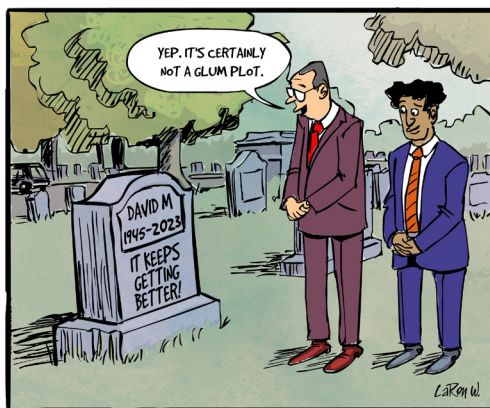
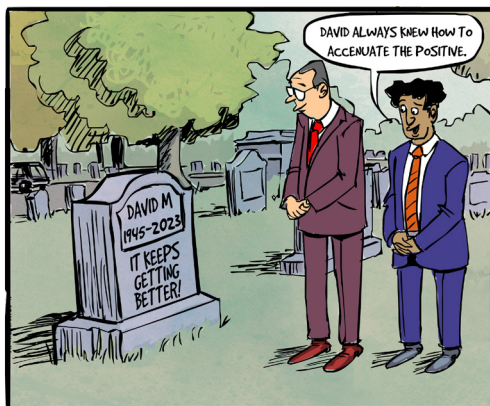
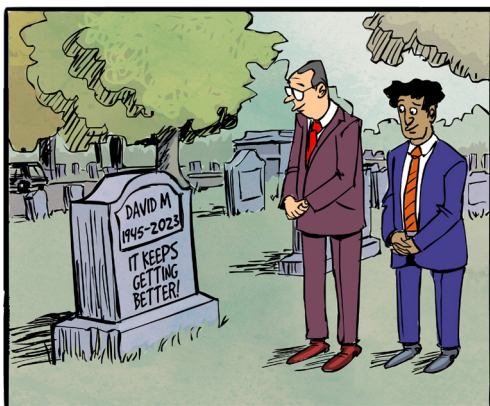
HARVEY A., Florida, USA

DAVE H., Tennessee, USA





# It Keeps Getting BETTER



*This is adapted from a talk David M. gave at the 2020 IC in Nashville.*

**M**y name is David, I am a sexaholic. By the grace of my Higher Power, my sobriety date is August 2, 1988, for which I can never be sufficiently grateful. That credit goes to my Higher Power, that's for sure. I was told after my first year of sobriety that it keeps getting better. And that has been the simple description of my experience in Sexaholics Anonymous, that it keeps getting better. I will use as a rough framework the reading "What Is A Sexaholic And What Is Sexual Sobriety?"

It begins with "We can only speak for ourselves." So much of what we respond to in ourselves and with each other is beyond the understanding of our society. It's so important to be together, as we indeed are the only ones who can speak for ourselves. Alcoholics were just a lost cause in 1935. There was no hope. They were not going to get better. They could be institutionalized, marginalized or otherwise tolerated and contained, but there was no hope. And then suddenly beginning on June 10, 1935, there was hope.

And it's very similar for us. Roy talks about the 1974 issue of *Time*

*Magazine*. We've always been needed and there've been people around us who knew that some help was possibly available through 12-Step recovery. Nonetheless, "The specialized nature of Sexaholics Anonymous can best be understood in terms of what we call the sexaholic." Fortunately, if something doesn't work out, I have 800 AA meetings in my area I can choose from per week to go to. It's virtually the same, the readings are very similar readings, the opening to Chapter Five, and all of that. So, the sexaholic name ties us into this immense reservoir of spiritual success and hope for the recovering alcoholic. And, we are very specialized.

I know you because I'm mentally ill and you're mentally ill. That's what we have in common. Did I ask for this mental illness? No. Did I sign up for it? No. Do I have it? Yes. Nobody signs up to be a diabetic. It just happens. And once it happens, you know what? Either we accept it and live our lives accordingly or we don't. And that's the specialized nature of Sexaholics Anonymous.

"The sexaholic has taken himself or herself out of the whole context of what is right or wrong." I can remember how lonely I was as a child. At the end of the first meeting I attended they were saying, "We were making the Real Connection. We were home," and I started crying. I was 42 at that point, and I had been looking for a home for a long, long time. I just didn't fit in. And like any good addict, my disease was chronic and progressive. I fantasized a perfect world where sex was really important. And it was just that isolation of being out of the context of what is right or wrong.

I didn't know it was a question of right or wrong. I just had all these

secrets to keep. I was taking off my clothes in public as a child and compulsively fantasizing, mostly fairytale things. I just couldn't stop. It took over my whole life. I was injuring myself with masturbation. Over the years it got worse: sex with animals, cross-dressing, use of pornography in all its forms, fantasizing, voyeurism, sadomasochism, acting out multiple adulterous affairs. I was pretty thorough.

"He or she has lost control, no longer has the power of choice and is not free to stop. Lust has become an addiction." For an alcoholic, alcohol

**As Jess used to say, "Sex isn't the problem, David. Lust in your head is the problem." That rang true and gave me a context because I never knew.**

is not the problem. The problem is the "ism" – I, Self, and Me, ISM – and the self-centeredness and the character defects that feed the compulsive use of alcohol, or in our case, lust. I knew how powerful AA was, and when I came into my first SA meeting, people talked about getting drunk on lust. I knew exactly and identified on day one. I knew I got drunk on masturbation over time. I also learned about getting drunk on fantasies, getting drunk on whatever.

That's exactly what it is. One night, three or four days sober, I was driving

home, and I came up behind a car. There was a woman in the car. All I saw was her head above the seat and I was totally triggered by her hair. I had no idea until that moment how constantly I was lusting. I never “let the glass run dry.” That character defect hasn’t gone anywhere. What has changed is that it doesn’t run my life anymore. And that’s a big change for which I’m never sufficiently grateful.

“Our situation is like that of the alcoholic who can no longer tolerate alcohol and must stop drinking altogether but is hooked and cannot stop.” My coworkers begged me to stop going out to the lunches, having the special conversations, closing my office door to have consultations about whatever. I wanted to stop. I identified with that line “...but is hooked and cannot stop.” That was me.

“Thus, for the sexaholic”—this is only a program for the sexaholic. We don’t claim it’s for anybody else. “...any form of sex with one’s self or with partners other than the spouse is progressively addictive and destructive.” And that’s what I identified with immediately because I knew, as I said, I got drunk on masturbation, I got drunk on fantasies, I got drunk on lust. We’re not negative about it. We just say it’ll destroy us. About two years before I came in, I made a list of women with whom I’d had affairs. I remember being shocked, first by the length of the list and second it was happening more often shorter periods of time between new affairs. I had no idea until I wrote the list how progressively addictive and destructive it was.

“We see that lust is the driving force behind our sexual acting out and true sobriety includes progressive victory over lust.” I knew that people have had trouble with sexual activities since

time immemorial. And I knew that I had tried everything to stop. It turned out that it was a gift, but I hadn’t realized it. I couldn’t stop and I was told that I wasn’t crazy. As Jess used to say, “Sex isn’t the problem, David. Lust in your head is the problem.” That rang true and gave me a context because I never knew.

“These conclusions were forced upon us in the crucible of our experience

**This entire program is about freedom. If I accept the fact that I’m a sexaholic, that I really need to have our sobriety definition, what is offered to me is freedom. I didn’t have freedom.**

in recovery; we have no other options. But we have found that acceptance of these facts is the key to a happy and joyous freedom we could otherwise never know.” I thought that was all crap for a long time. I was miserable. I didn’t want to lose another marriage. I didn’t want to lose another set of kids. I didn’t want to lose my job or my occupation. And I was terrified, and I was in a lot of pain. I really wanted to stop, but could not. My wife had a mental breakdown in front of me, and that was appalling. I didn’t want to be that guy who had that impact on the wife that he loved.

The next day we went to a counselor, and she had to listen to me say that

I just needed to be with more than one woman at a time. She said, “well, you’re a sex addict”, and it was kind of like saying, “Well, you like saltine crackers.” I knew it. I went to my first meeting that night and I’ve been going ever since. And this entire program is about freedom. If I accept the fact that I’m a sexaholic, that I really need to have our sobriety definition, what is offered to me is freedom. I didn’t have freedom.

“This will and should discourage many inquirers who admit to sexual obsession or compulsion but who simply want to control and enjoy it, much as the alcoholic would like to control and enjoy drinking.” One day I called Harvey and said, “Harvey, musicians can’t get sober.” I was talking about a guy I sponsored. And he said, “David, most people can’t get sober. You just happen to be focusing on musicians today.” Ever since then, when I sit in a meeting and there’s a group of people, I see everyone as a miracle because most people do not want what we have, and are not willing to go to any length to get it. We are walking, or sitting, miracles.

“Until we had been driven to the point of despair, until we really wanted to stop but could not, we did not give ourselves to this program of recovery.” That’s what I try to reconnect with all the time. I want to remember that point of despair, which I had. I really wanted to stop but could not. But I was willing to give myself to Sexaholics Anonymous.

And I remember this line, I use it frequently, “Sexaholics Anonymous is for those who know they have no other option but to stop, and their own enlightened self-interest must tell them this.” It begins with, “We can only speak for ourselves,” and it ends with, “our own enlightened self-in-

terest must tell us this”—I have no other option but to stop. And that’s a commitment. I don’t have to; I choose to renew it every day. One fellow was appalled when he heard me say to someone who had just acted out, “Better you than me.” I just think it’s my enlightened self-interest that I’ll try to stay around and keep coming back.

The last thing I wanted to share is that I have been dealing with a fairly significant cancer in my liver since last May. A few days ago, reading the 12 & 12 with a guy, this was the reading: “We have seen AAs suffer lingering and fatal illness with little complaint, and often in good cheer.” And I keep saying, so much of dealing with cancer is like this program. It’s very similar.

“Like most people,” the text continues, “we have found that we can take our big lumps as they come. But also like others, we often discover a greater challenge in the lesser and more continuous problems of life. Our answer is in still more spiritual development. Only by this means can we improve our chances for really happy and useful living ... If we place instincts first, we have got the cart before the horse; we shall be pulled backward into disillusionment. But when we are willing to place spiritual growth first—then and only then do we have a real chance.”

And that’s what I hold onto and will leave you with tonight: that with spiritual growth, then and only then, can we hold on to the hope that was offered us the day we walked in to the freedom that is available to us every day and to that desire to keep it, which we get by passing it on at every opportunity. And for that, I can never be sufficiently grateful. Blessed be.

DAVID M., Oregon, USA  
1945 - 2023





## How His Meeting Became a

# GROUP

*Step 0 has been a game changer for this fellow as well as his home group.*

**M**y first meeting was in the messy but cozy living room of a local presbytery on a Saturday morning in August 2017. This living room had been very generously provided by the old parish priest when approached by a fellow in 2014.

Because the room was small and getting too full at times, we had gradually started looking for a bigger one. Late last year, an opportunity came up: it looked like we were going to



be able to rent a really large room in a nearby parish center. As it turned out, we couldn't rent that hall, but were promised the small room at the back of the building; the room would be used only by us which would allow us to put up the Steps, Traditions, Slogans and other SA-related material. When we came to view the room it looked quite dingy; the carpet was worn and the walls were dirty with stains, as you can see on the photos.

Our group conscience decided to go for it nonetheless. Three fellows

put their hands up for painting and in one day the walls were like new. Several fellows worked for two days on laying the laminate—some even



from another group three hours away!

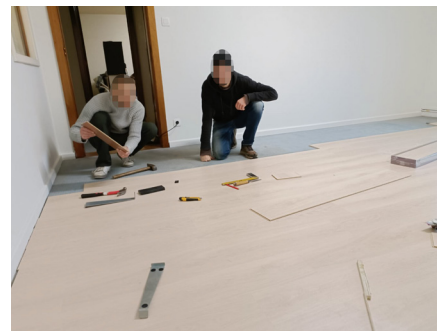
I helped out putting down the laminate. In my illness I dislike (heavy) work, especially if I have to bend over a lot and kneel and crouch and reach and lift and drag ... Nah! Life for me



was always supposed to be comfortable, easy going. Laziness has always been one of my character flaws.

But that's changed in recovery. Sure, physical work can sometimes feel

daunting, but with a healthy attitude I can enjoy physical work and certainly the end result. I especially enjoyed working with others, following the



lead of those with more experience in this kind of thing.

Everybody contributed something according to his or her talents and helped to shape the meeting room. Some fellows provided chairs, beautiful new drinking glasses, coasters, and even plants! The 12 Steps and Traditions went up on the wall as did the Promises.

The hard work and going for something to eat afterwards strengthened my Step 0 experience because it added



so much to my sense of Fellowship and belonging to the group. In fact, doing things together like going for walks and eating have kept me in the fellowship without drifting away after a few months.

Fellowship has shown me that

there is indeed life after lust. While fellowship activities don't necessarily guarantee sobriety, they do help me to keep coming back. They give me a "lust" to keep working the program and make phone calls (something I did too little of in the beginning) and come to meetings. Step 0 doesn't make me



better, but it helps sustain me through the rest of the Steps.

The excitement around our ideas and our plans and working together did something else too: it consolidated our sense of being a group as opposed to being just a meeting. We



were transformed into a solid group of friends who work together for the same purpose. It was such an enjoyable and healthy experience for all of us and our bright and cheerful new meeting room reflects it. I wish it for every fellow and group.

STEEFAAN D., Ghent, Belgium





# Living According to The Steps & Traditions

**H**ere are six affirmations I created on an app called "I AM", that show on my phone screen throughout the day to a background of a setting sun at a beach. They help me to stay sober.

**1 "TALK LESS, LISTEN MORE"**  
I need to give callers less advice (which we addicts don't much like anyway) and more simply paying attention. This is still the hardest one for me to do.

**2 "NOTICE BLESSINGS"**  
It's easy for me to not remember the little, often unexpected, good things that happen to me; a phone call from an old friend, or a business worry that turned out well are a couple of recent examples in my life.

**3 "SAY THANK YOU"**  
I believe that speaking to my Highest Power out loud helps me accept that I deserve His unearned blessings, regardless of my faults and mistakes. (At my age, the first thing I do when I wake up is to say "Thank You").

*His smartphone shows six affirmations throughout the day that are reminders from his heart to his head and have helped him stay sober for over nine years.*



February 2024

**4 "ALL LOSSES CONTAIN GAINS"**  
This reminds me that Highest Power gives me "pop quizzes" in the form of obstacles and challenges that usually hide a blessing; in my case, I had to let go of a couple of favorite hobbies (competitive fencing and skeet shooting) because creeping spinal stenosis requiring leg braces.

However, I now have more time to enjoy online chess, catch up on favorite old films, and read (currently the history of the Roman emperors and the origins of WW1).

**5 "ALL THINGS COME ... TO PASS"**  
This old saying reminds me to Slow Down, and not to try to manage everything ... Sometimes I just wait awhile, and see what happens; Higher Power usually does a better job at managing than I do!

**6 "ACT AS IF"**  
I can't seem to force away feelings like resentment, sadness, and shame, but I can smile, and speak as if I'm a character in a stage play or a movie, scripted to express those emotions, co-authored with Higher Power; I know not to take them too seriously.

These affirmations are reminders from my heart to my head telling me to work my Steps and live according to the spiritual principles of our Traditions.

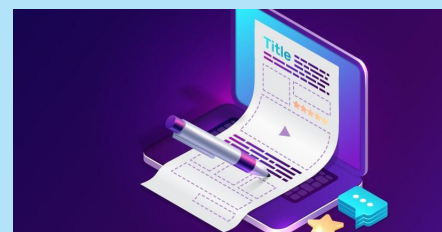
The app is free and has a huge variety of built-in affirmations and background scenes; mine have now helped me stay sober for over nine years for which I'm very grateful.

STAN H., New York, USA 

## ESSAY ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS

**L**ately there were almost no articles from female members. If you are a female member with some sobriety, please share your story or your experience, strength, and hope on the upcoming themes (see p. 35) with us. Help in this way your sisters around the globe.



**A** team of skilled and driven members has been working on a brand-new bimonthly ESSAY podcast entitled "ESSAY Conversations: Beyond the Page." Be prepared, as we will launch its first episode on April 15.

[essay.sa.org](http://essay.sa.org)

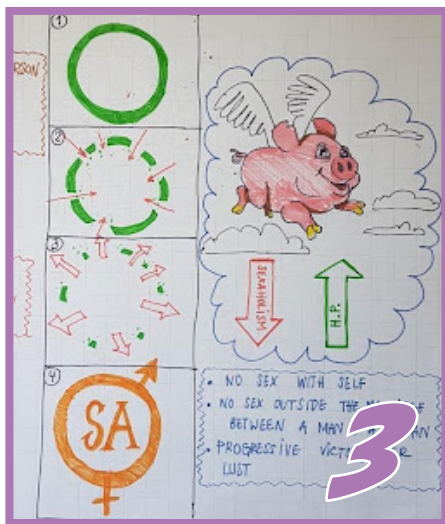


**S**ome months ago, our Bonn group hosted a 12-Step workshop. It was a creative combination of Dave T's awesome string exercises., Nicholas S.'s brilliant 12-Step workshop, and the workshop leader's live drawings on a flip chart.

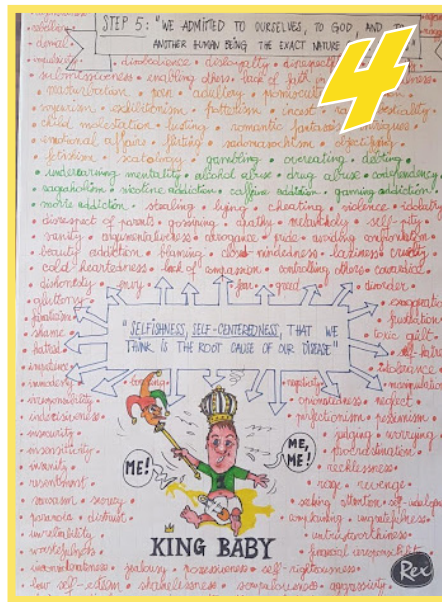
In another exercise (see **visual 2**) the whole group brainstormed on the tools of the program, which were listed criss-cross on the flip chart sheet. I was astonished to see the real treasury of tools I have at my disposal. I am truly not a victim anymore. In recovery, I am still as powerless as before but certainly not helpless anymore. There are more tools than I can work on any given day.



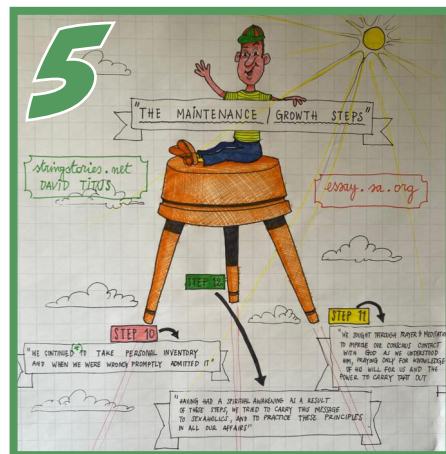
- Circle 1 shows an unbroken green circle, representing our unbroken boundaries when we entered this world as little babies.



The Big Book says “Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles” (AA 62). **Visual 4** shows in a most shocking way that each



**Visual 5** shows a three-legged stool, showing the importance of the “Maintenance Steps” or the “Growth Steps” 10, 11, and 12. With only one or two legs the stool is unstable and doomed to fall. A nice detail, depicted by the red lines under the legs, is that the legs of the stool keep growing if I continue to work.



Each of the 31 participants had been asked to bring a wrapped recovery gift. They had been laying during the weekend in the middle of the room. At the closing section each could choose one, which was a lot of fun. But probably the greatest gift of the workshop for me was the invisible gift of having been given new experience, strength, and hope, as well as a new willingness to be honest and have a "zero tolerance attitude" towards taking drinking looks in any way. This invisible gift is incomparably more powerful and loving than the invisible monster that is still inside me and wants to seduce me and possess me. It has been quite angry with me, because I have been full of new courage since the workshop.





## He Was a Ray of God's Love

*Tucson Ray devoted his life to staying sober and being of service and was instrumental in many of the tools the CFC is using today.*

One of the early members of the Correctional Facilities Committee (CFC) was Ray S. from Tucson, Arizona, who is better known in our program as "Tucson Ray." He started the Sponsors-by-Mail (SbM) program in Arizona by "offering it single-handedly for some seven years." He developed a format for this outreach to people in prison that is still used today by those who write to men and women in prison.

After seven years of writing to prisoners, Tucson Ray felt called to start SA meetings in the Arizona prisons. After doing this for several years, the Arizona Department of Corrections asked Tucson Ray to choose between continuing the meetings in the prisons or continuing to sponsor prisoners by mail. He chose to continue

the meetings in prison, and asked the GDA to take over the Sponsors-by-Mail Program. Ray continued the meetings in prison for 18 more years.

Jimmy P., an SA member who knew Ray for many years in Arizona, remembers the following: "Ray S. was one of the reasons I kept coming back to SA. He was at the first meeting I ever attended. I loved hearing his story when he told it to newcomers at our meetings. I always admired his dedication and sacrifice for SA."

"Those Tucson meetings were a little different than most of the meetings I have been to since, and I loved them. One of the things they allowed at that meeting was for people to ask questions and have other, more sober members speak of their own experience, strength, and hope. This allowed those with more sobriety to speak in the "I" form and dispense

wisdom, without having to sponsor everyone."

"Ray's experience was crucial for me to understand what it took to stay sober. His dedication to making the meeting was kind of amazing. He really lived a life where the most important thing he did each day was to stay sober. I think a close second was helping others in recovery. He drove all over the place going from prison to prison facilitating meetings for inmates. He put a lot of miles on his cars supporting those programs."

"The main thing that always struck me about Ray was how happy and at peace he was. His life was so simple in recovery. He lived a life of service. He prayed for others, and watched to see God's hand in their lives. I remember him saying that he knew that God was blessing all the people he prayed for, so he would pray to be able to see it. I believed that he could see it."

Eric S., who worked with Ray on the CFC, shares these memories of Ray: "A long-term alcoholic and sexaholic, Ray came to God one night and prayed to be relieved of the obsession. In exchange, he would devote his life to service. From that day forward, he was free from lust and alcohol. Few were willing to take on 12-Step work in correctional facilities, but Ray was a pioneer. Through Ray, we learned how to approach prison officials, how to write to those desiring sponsorship while they were in prison, and how to use letters or other media to 12-step a sponsee. Most importantly, Ray showed us how service has a profound effect on our recovery."

"In 2016, the Trustees allowed the SACFC to record Ray in Tucson, known as the Tucson Ray Audio Project. It was fortunate for the Fel-

lowship; Ray passed away from cancer a month later. Ray preferred to be known as a 'sponsor,' not a leader. His deep commitment, humility, tough love, and belief in the program are testament to the thousands of addicts whose lives he touched. Ray found "impossible joy" through a life in service. His is one of the most profound and inspiring stories in our 12-Step program."

It is clear from the witnesses of the above members that Ray served SA in an extraordinary way. He was a

**Ray found "impossible joy" through a life in service. His is one of the most profound and inspiring stories in our 12-Step program.**

lowship; Ray passed away from cancer a month later. Ray preferred to be known as a 'sponsor,' not a leader. His deep commitment, humility, tough love, and belief in the program are testament to the thousands of addicts whose lives he touched. Ray found "impossible joy" through a life in service. His is one of the most profound and inspiring stories in our 12-Step program."

Ray also died sober. As Eric relates above, Ray worked on a CFC project up to a month before his death. Jimmy P. relates his final memories of Ray. "I miss Ray. He was really close to getting a 30-year chip when he passed. I feel grateful to have known him and hope that I can help a 10th of the people that he was instrumental in helping."

K.B., Florida, USA





## BY FAITH & BY WORKS

The MAR and EMER Regions enthusiastically invite you to a jointly hosted online Zoom event on March 9 and 10, 2024. The Good Neighbors Committees from the regions are collaborating to organize this historic event. Speakers from both regions will offer their shares, with simultaneous translation into English and select languages provided interpretation channels of a dozen languages. In the near future, full details about the event will be announced, including topics, and speakers involved.

### BY FAITH And BY WORKS

A virtual SA recovery event hosted by:

MAR (Mid-Atlantic Region, USA)  
EMER (Europe and Middle East Region)

**9-10 March 2024**

11 am - 3 pm EST (UTC - 5)  
4 pm - 8 pm GMT (UTC)  
5 pm - 9 pm CET (UTC + 1)  
6 pm - 10 pm East Europe (UTC + 2)  
8 pm - 12 am AMST (UTC + 4)


Fostering recovery across the ocean by cooperation among regions

REGISTER FREE AT  
[TINYURL.COM/MAR-EMER-2024](https://tinyurl.com/mar-emer-2024)

Including speakers from both regions (topics to be announced)

Simultaneous translation into several languages

Or use the QR code below:



Please save the dates and be prepared for this first Trans-Atlantic event. We look forward to seeing you there!

**DATE: MARCH 9 & 10, 2024**

- 11am - 3pm EST (UTC - 5)
- 4pm - 8pm GMT (UTC)
- 5pm - 9pm CET (UTC + 1)
- 6pm - 10pm East Europe (UTC + 2)
- 8pm - 12pm AMST (UTC + 4)

Registration is open

<https://tinyurl.com/mar-emer-2024>



## Save the Date!

SA & S-Anon International Conventions  
July 12-14, 2024  
Los Angeles



← Scan this QR code for more!



Join us for fellowship and recovery in sunny Southern California next July, 2024. **\*\*Register early\*\*** You won't want to miss these fantastic SA and S-Anon International Conventions! Scan the QR code above or visit [iclosangeles2024.com](https://iclosangeles2024.com) for more details. Early registration till March 31, 2024.

Join us for an unforgettable time of recovery with a fellowship suite with refreshments, breakout meetings, quiet rooms, a literature suite, convention meals, and lots of strong international speakers. We look forward to seeing you in the beautiful Los Angeles Airport Marriott.

DAVE H., California, USA



# SURRENDER, DEEP IN THE OF TEXAS



Save the Date, Y'all!



**International SA / S-Anon Convention**  
**Dallas, Texas**  
**July 25, 26 and 27, 2025**

[essay.sa.org](https://essay.sa.org)

## New Groups

- ✧ NY (Washington Heights), New York
- ✧ Columbus, Nebraska
- ✧ Lander, Wyoming
- ✧ David City, Nebraska
- ✧ Penacook, New Hampshire

## SA Events

As ESSAY is an **international** magazine, it publishes **future international SA events only**.

However, your local or international events can be sent in to [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org) in order to be listed on the **Conventions & Events page** of [sa.org](https://sa.org) to [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org). Submit the following information: dates, theme, location, and contact(s). An event flyer is very helpful.

# Freedom From Relapse: Ignite Change

Have you ever wanted to be part of something transformative? Here's your chance to uplift fellow sexaholics still struggling in our meeting rooms. We're excited to announce the initial planning stages of an entirely new video series.



A few years ago, SA successfully created a set of informational videos available on SA's video page ([sa.org/videos](http://sa.org/videos)). These were crafted to communicate our message to newcomers and professionals, with subtitles in various languages. Following this, a member initiated the impactful "Aha! Moments" video series. Discover these at [essay.sa.org/get-involved](http://essay.sa.org/get-involved). Now, in our latest project, we aim to highlight stories of individuals who have overcome chronic relapse.



## Your Journey Is Valuable

Are you experiencing happiness, joy, and freedom after conquering chronic relapse? If you've maintained over a year of sobriety following frequent relapses, your story could motivate many. By engaging in a completely anonymous interview, your experiences will be woven into a tapestry of uplifting stories within our fellowship.

## Be the Catalyst

Ever wondered if your story could truly help others? It can! Your path to recovery is a beacon for those seeking guidance. If you're prepared to contribute and maintain your anonymity, or have questions, contact Michael J. at [1212michaelj@gmail.com](mailto:1212michaelj@gmail.com). Together, we can provide crucial support to those most in need within our community. Thank you for considering this role in shining a light of hope and being a source of encouragement. Your narrative has the potential to transform lives.



# COMING IN APRIL



## NEXT EDITION

The April issue will be focusing on the theme "Courage to Change," which will be the theme of the upcoming Los Angeles July International Convention.

## Picking a Convention Theme

This Los Angeles fellow describes why the theme "Courage to Change" was chosen and how the convention team is proceeding towards the event.

## Being of Service to Others

Whereas selfishness was the root of his troubles, being of service to others is the root of his recovery today.

## Every Day I Saw Them

He was in prison for four years and saw many friends in prison never getting mail. Therefore, he is very active nowadays in the CFC to make sure we reach out to those most isolated ones.

## SUBMIT YOUR STORY

**April 2024 edition: Courage to Change (Stories due Mar 1)** This edition will be devoted to the theme of the July International Convention in Los Angeles, USA.

**June 2024 edition: Men & Women in SA (Stories due May 1)** Share with us how you and your home group cultivate meetings and socializing activities that are welcoming and supportive for both men and women.

**August 2024 edition: What is Lust? (Stories due July 1)** Its focus on lust is what sets SA apart from the other S-fellowships and makes our fellowship so efficient.

**October 2024 edition: Using the Literature of the Program (Stories due Sept 1)** Exploring the wealth of the life-changing AA and SA literature we have at our disposal.

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



# SOBER LIVING,

# SOBER DYING

## THE TWELVE STEPS OF SA

- 1 We admitted that we were powerless over lust—that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3 Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
- 4 Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5 Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6 Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- 7 Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
- 8 Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9 Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- 10 Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
- 11 Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
- 12 Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to sexaholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Steps and Traditions are adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, INC. Permission to adapt and reprint the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions does not mean that AAWS has approved the contents of this publication, nor that AAWS agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in connection with programs which are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, or in any other non-AA context, does not imply otherwise. Sexaholics Anonymous is a recovery program based on the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous and received permission from AA to use its Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in 1979.

## THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF SA

- 1 Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SA unity.
- 2 For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
- 3 The only requirement for SA membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober.
- 4 Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups, or Sexaholics Anonymous as a whole.
- 5 Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers.
- 6 An SA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the SA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
- 7 Every SA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
- 8 Sexaholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
- 9 SA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
- 10 Sexaholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
- 11 Our public relations policy is based upon attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and TV.
- 12 Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.





**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.**