

ESSAY

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS

THE POSITIVE SOBRIETY

April 2026 | 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.

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RESPONSIBILITY DECLARATION

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

Sexaholics Anonymous

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

We have a solution. We don't claim it's for everybody, but for us, it works. If you identify with us and think you may share our problem, we'd like to share our solution with you (*Sexaholics Anonymous*, 2). In defining sobriety, we do not speak for those outside Sexaholics Anonymous.

We can only speak for ourselves. Thus, for the married sexaholic, sexual sobriety means having no form of sex with self or with persons other than the spouse. In SA's sobriety definition, the term "spouse" refers to one's partner in a marriage between a man and a woman. For the unmarried sexaholic, sexual sobriety means freedom from sex of any kind. And for all of us, single and married alike, sexual sobriety also includes progressive victory over lust (*Sexaholics Anonymous*, 191-192). (*Adopted 2010 by the General Delegate Assembly.*)

The only requirement for SA membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober according to the SA sobriety definition. Any two or more sexaholics gathered together for SA sobriety according to the SA sobriety definition may call themselves an SA group.

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

ESSAY is a publication of Sexaholics Anonymous

essay@sa.org

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

Adopted by the Trustees and General Delegate Assembly in May 2016

Editor's Corner

Most times, all that can be done is to take an action of love long before any positive feelings follow. Yet they do follow. It has also been said that closer union in God's will brings the internal loving disposition to his will even before action is taken. Sometimes those experiences come, and many times they don't, but either way, continuing to get out of one's comfort zone helps reveal how God wants to be served today.

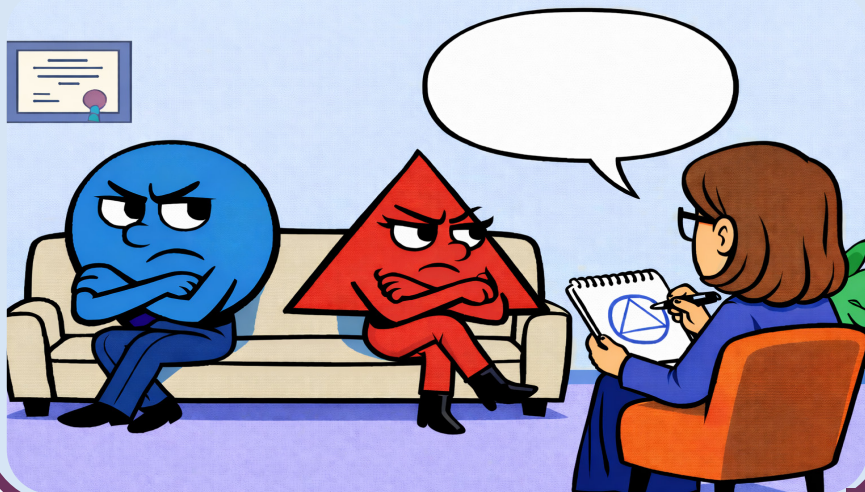
In this edition, members share their experience with positive sobriety and how it is reflected in their daily interactions with others. One member shares how positive sobriety is discovered only when living in God's law of love. Another member shares how positive sobriety meant being ready to spend all his time helping his elderly loved one while on vacation. Self-care allowed this member to be more available to others in a healthier way.

In Fellowship,
The Editorial Team
essay@sa.org

THE BEST CAPTION

ARE YOU READY FOR ANOTHER CAPTION CHALLENGE?

We invite you to craft the perfect recovery caption for the cartoon below, centered on June's theme, "The Three Legacies". If your caption wins, you will receive a free print copy of the June edition. Don't miss out—the submission deadline is May 15. Send your entry to essay@sa.org. Unleash your creativity, and may the cleverest caption win!



April 2026

"Healing for us is incomplete without the positive sobriety of healed relations with others."

Sexaholics Anonymous, 146

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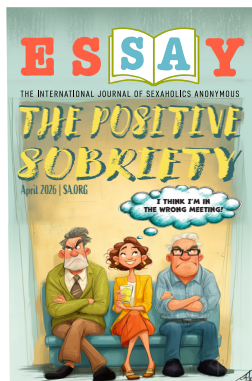
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ESSAY presents the experience, strength, and hope of SA members. Opinions expressed in ESSAY are not to be attributed to SA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by SA or by ESSAY.

Regarding graphics, any resemblance to real persons is purely coincidental, as all images in ESSAY are handmade, bought from Shutterstock, or made by means of Midjourney AI.



On the cover: Taking the actions of love produces in us an attitude of joy that is infectious and welcoming. Our main objective in sobriety is service to others with the gratitude and kindness that brings people together.

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Dear ESSAY

REST IN PEACE



DEAR ESSAY,

This is a letter written by one of the intergroup representatives to our regional assembly on the occasion of the death of our delegate, Antonio S., in January 2026.

Tribute to our dear friend Antonio

Aristotle taught that honor does not belong to the individual, but to those who observe him. It is an external

marker, the public recognition of a virtuous life. Today, the honor we attribute to Antonio is an accurate reflection of the man he chose to be.

As a dedicated servant of SA and a pillar of the cause of the Latin American Regional Assembly (ARLA), Antonio not only sought his recovery but also worked hard to ensure that ARLA expanded and welcomed everyone. He understood that recovery is only real when shared.

It must be said, with the honesty that the rooms teach us, this honor we celebrate today is a direct result of his journey in sobriety. Had Antonio decided not to face his addiction, we would not be reaping the legacy of a man of integrity, respected by his

peers and surely loved by his family. Recovery was the soil that allowed his virtue to flourish.

Antonio leaves us with the mission to continue what he started. We honor his passing by keeping alive the message he so fiercely protected from SA through ARLA.

Rest in peace, dear friend. Your journey was victorious.

Maria, Brazil



What's Going On In SA

HOSTING AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

The SA ICC walks an intergroup through the process of hosting an international convention, opening a channel for spiritual growth.

The opportunity to attend an international convention can lead to a recovery experience that will last for years to come. We listen to the experience, strength, and hope from many oldtimers. We make new and lasting friendships with members from around the world. We give our time in service by leading a meeting or volunteering in registration or the fellowship room. This is an experience we won't want to miss.

But what about the experience of those who have facilitated this event? In my years on the SA International Conventions Committee (ICC), I have found that this can be the most spiritual experience of all. It only takes six people to get things moving, and before you know it, others join in, and a planning committee comes to fruition. Meetings are held, ideas are shared, and everyone is given the opportunity to practice the program principles they have been learning about. Each meeting is guided by the SA Traditions. The Concepts of Service bring about a group conscience as the convention comes together.

You are not alone! The ICC works

closely with each convention. Our database contains decades of information from previous conventions that have shared what worked and what didn't. This gives the local committee the time to add its own personal flavor to the event.

International conventions are facilitated by local intergroups. One does not need to be a professional event planner. All that is required is a heart and passion for that special type of recovery that deepens through conventions.

The SA ICC holds a quarterly informational meeting on Zoom. There you will find ICC members, past and current convention planners, and others, like yourself, who are looking for more information. You are invited to attend this meeting and discover if your Higher Power is asking you to facilitate a future International Convention. To receive the Zoom information for this meeting, please contact Daniel K at danielk.sa.service@gmail.com. You may also contact the SA International Central Office at saico@sa.org.

Tom K, ICC





This member shares how to form an S-I-P committee for your intergroup.

The main purpose of the Support for Institutions and Professionals (SIP) Committee is to contact professionals and institutions that deal with people who are afflicted with sex addiction. Typically, we function as a subcommittee of the intergroup with two or three SA members. Our primary role is to inform the various SA meetings in the intergroup of SIP's existence and its purpose. We have a brochure available on the SA website, sa.org, called "SA As a Resource for the Health and Helping Professional."

In the Southeast region, we have had a committee for over 10 years that worked to contact institutions and professionals. We host one open SA meeting, which is held weekly at an institute of mental health, where students and health professionals can attend an SA meeting and learn about our Program.

We have run open meetings at SA international conventions with SA, S-Anon, and S-Ateen representatives. Mental health professionals were invited to attend. A video was shown, and individual representatives from each group

gave a five-minute presentation. At some events, a mental health professional would present. At one SA meeting, we invited a Certified Sexual Addiction Therapist (CSAT) to come and be the featured speaker.

We have held several Zoom meetings where SA and S-Anon representatives speak and share their experiences. Then, the professionals can ask questions. We have found that the most successful way to contact professionals is by invitation from SA and S-Anon members who are currently patients of theirs. Also, some Catholic parish priests have referred members to SA. Although we have had some success sending brochures to hospitals and prisons, our experience is that personal contact is a more effective way to have health professionals attend our meetings.

Another source of starting SA programs is when a group of prisoners creates an SA meeting in prison with the involvement of the chaplain or social worker. We also have groups in South Carolina, Idaho, and Northern Georgia, where members of SA can visit prison meetings.

Paul Z, SIP Subcommittee

The Law of Love

In living a life of selfless giving, he finds his needs, joy, and serenity supplied.

I've had several conversations over the last 24 hours about Step One. It seems to me that everything, right down to the core of my being, resisted admitting my powerlessness. This has been, quite possibly, the biggest hurdle in my recovery journey. Admitting complete defeat felt like dying; it felt like giving up; it felt like the end.

And it was the end—the end of my old life and the only doorway through which I could be born into the new life. Freedom from the bondage of self is a free gift that can only be accessed by the grace of God. As long as

I was trying, wishing, willing, and working to make it happen, it eluded me. It was only when I entered into the despair and hopelessness—the "broken and contrite spirit" of Step One—that the door swung open freely and God was there. My self-will had been blocking God the whole time.

God was not lost, and He was not sitting idly by, dangling sobriety and freedom just out of reach. I think sometimes those of us with religious backgrounds can get this image or idea of God passively sitting back and watching us suffer and struggle without any concern and without doing anything to help us. Or even worse, He is actively working to make us suffer to drive us



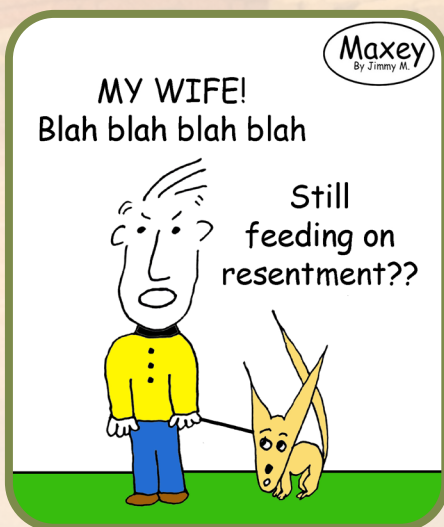
to Him. I don't believe in a God that sends suffering. I believe in a God who created a world where the rock that is hard enough to stand on is also hard enough to stub my toe on. I believe the world is created in such a way and I am constructed in such a way that there are natural laws—both physical and spiritual—that I can either live in harmony with or I can fight and resist. So long as I fought and resisted reality, I lived in suffering and pain. The more I live in harmony with reality and the laws of the universe, the more freedom, joy, and peace I experience.

The primary spiritual law of the universe, as I understand it today, is the law of love. *The law of love is that whatever I wish to experience in life, in the world, and in my relationships is what I need to be seeking to give to life, to the world, and to my relationships.* The word love brings up many different connotations to different people, but I understand love as only nourishing and life-giving when it is expressed. Love must be actively giving to be real. Love does not hold anyone accountable or seek any payment or return for itself. It simply seeks to give freely for the benefit of the receiver. Love does not keep a tally of wrongs or build cases against others. Love does not seek to benefit itself but to give freely to all.

God is love. God is not “loving” as in one of the attributes of God is love—no. God is love. Where there is love, there is the presence of God. This is extraordi-

nary to me. It means that when I give love freely, I experience God. If I feel empty and unable to connect with God, all I have to do is seek to love, comfort, and understand another, and instantly I am in God's kingdom of freedom, peace, and joy. I always had it backwards. Instead of trying to get, I needed to try to give. Then, in the giving, my own needs are satisfied. As I give my bread to another, it comes back to me in the form of whatever supply I need for that day. In my experience, this is most often the ability to live comfortably, peacefully, and joyfully with myself, to enjoy reality and the people around me, and the experiences I encounter. Apart from God and an attitude of service and love, I am bereft of this. I have no light and joy regardless of how “good” my life is on the surface. God is the difference between mere existence and joy-filled life.

Luke H, Oregon, USA



A Mixture of Emotions



Attending solution-focused meetings and working on his first step inventory helped him better see the depths of his addiction.

September 11th

S This morning in the meeting, there was a powerful atmosphere among the 25 participants. Someone shared a recognizable anecdote of my own disease: when another person shares about his acting out, which differs a lot from the one listening, he tends to be envious.

Saturday noon

I reviewed my First Step notes. It stirred up a mixture of emotions: gratitude towards my sponsor who insisted to write everything down as open and detailed as possible, with all the sexually explicit details (which we cannot do at meetings); gratitude because he was willing to hear all of it, word by word; unrest, lust and recall stirring up all these sexual memories; and fear by reading the extent of my disease. I started making it into a short version.

We had a meeting in a church building with about 60 people. My sponsor encouraged me to make three to four calls a day, in order to learn to use this tool. As a man shared at a meeting about using the phone: "If you want to swallow

a frog, don't look at it too long!" Meaning that if you want to phone someone, don't think too much about it, don't look at it, just do it.

The few meetings I followed until now have given different emotions:

- disillusion on hearing the lust and emotional hits that people with years of sobriety still seem to experience, while I thought they would have this thing nailed;
- I hear through them the depth and extent of the disease;
- people here are very straightforward, which needs some getting accustomed to because they just say what goes on in them in any given moment, and that can be a lot of anger, unrest, uncertainty, etc.;
- fear and disorientation because each of them is such a powerful mirror, which is confronting me a lot with my disease;
- strength;
- gratitude.

To be continued...

Luc D., Belgium



The Positive Sobriety

THE ROLE GOD HAS FOR ME

He stopped trying to obtain happiness his way and found it by living God's way.

I can imagine myself from early in recovery saying something like: “positive sobriety??? How about just sobriety?? I can't even stay sober, and now you tell me I need positive sobriety!? What the heck is that!??”

Well, as I see it today, it means actually living out my Step Three decision on a daily, hourly, minute-by-minute basis. In Step Three, they tell us we have to quit playing God and make God our Director by turning our will and lives over to God's care. The intended result of this is I become God's customer service agent in the world. I no longer walk around evaluating how everything is going and whether or not it is going my way (playing God), I am now walking around looking to see what role my new employer (love, good, God) might have for me. Who can I help here? What can I do to bring some of God's love and light into this situation?

This attitude shift is summed up well in the last sentences of The

Solution, which we read at most meetings:

We began practicing a positive sobriety, taking the actions of love to improve our relations with others. We were learning how to give; and the measure we gave was the measure we got back. We were finding what none of the substitutes had ever supplied. We were making the real Connection. We were home (SA 204–205).

I had to give up the delusional idea that I could get, achieve, and acquire my way to happiness. This gameplan for living was found wanting (literally) and never led to the experience of life that I was truly seeking. I was a wanting and problem machine, never experiencing lasting peace and freedom. The Steps (beginning with Step Three) opened the door to a new way of living that actually does work. It actually does lead to freedom, peace, love, joy, and harmony, and is the most wonderful life I have ever had! Thank you, God!

Luke H., Oregon, USA 



A VISION OF KINDNESS

Only God's power can remove the blindness of self-centeredness and enlighten the eyes of service.

As a little child
God revealed to me
My entire day in one
vision to see.
“Look,” said He,
“At all good things for you
In loving service to choose to do.”
“Not I,” I said,
Firmly shaking my head.
And with a wave of my hand,
like brushing away sand,
I wiped away every good deed
from my mind,
Giving up the path to sincerely be
kind.
“I will do no such thing
But with my entire being
Seek only selfish flings
That I can take in the course of
one day.
So, I’ll be on my own way
Destroying everything with what
I do and say.”
I traded pleasure for pain.
Everything was lost with nothing
to gain.

Even if I tried to change this
course
My mind saw only paths from a
darkened source
That increased my pain and
agony.
What I couldn’t foresee
Was losing everything good inside
of me.
Desperate and taking a knee,
I begged my Creator to let me see
The good that I can do
By serving others as I go through
The course of my day
With the Steps as my way
To serve mankind
By being kind
In what I do and say
For 24 hours today.
And if I’ve gone astray,
May the Steps correct my way
That by the grace of God
I will have trod
On a path that is true
With visions of You.

Anonymous





Focusing his attentions on others in service became more attractive than his self-interest.

Sobriety was not a possibility for me before starting the Program two and a half years ago. Years of escaping unpleasant aspects of life by fantasizing in my mind and finding ways to pleasure myself seemed unchangeable. Going to my escape drug was an ingrained habit leading me to a kind of despair and hopelessness. I was finally open to the truth that I was sick, addicted, and unable to find hope by myself.

Having just finished another round of the Steps with my sponsor, I have a new appreciation for Step 12. In particular, ongoing recovery has had an impact on my decisions to act with love and care. In the past, I would have been more motivated by self-interest. What is attractive to me are the many ways of service offered as a practical way of taking those actions of love.

One surprise for me is what I'm doing right now in offering this little share of my experience in hopes that it may encourage others on the way. Previously, there was no thought of taking time and effort for service beyond my local

fellowship. I was serving as literature chairperson, meeting leader, timekeeper, and secretary at different times and was satisfied that that was enough action. Sponsoring others also became part of my involvement.

There are a number of groups and programs that I belong to that fit the service criteria. I can see occasional contributions to this journal and volunteering for days of recovery and conventions as further opportunities for giving instead of getting. When I saw the request for proofreaders for ESSAY, it caught my attention. This looks like something that fits my interests, and it doesn't look like much time would be involved.

My life has much improved since facing reality instead of escaping to fantasy in its many forms. Taking actions of love brings healing, peace, and hope. Being of service keeps me more outward-focused than self-preoccupied. Ongoing sobriety is not only possible but happening. Take the next best step, one day at a time.

Robert C., Louisiana, USA



The background of the page is a soft-focus image of a woman's face with reddish hair, appearing to be inside a large, vibrant pink rose. A monarch butterfly is perched on the petals of the rose. The overall lighting is warm and golden, with bokeh light effects.

The Butterfly, the Garden, and the Gardener

The Gardener prepared her to receive the garden of his presence, a Presence who is growing a new life in her that the butterfly of obsessive love could never give.

For many years, I lived chasing a butterfly. I believed that within it lay my breath, my meaning, and my joy. I thought that if I managed to catch it, my heart would stop feeling incomplete.

That butterfly took on different names and faces. First, it was the face of an alcoholic father. Later, it was men who seemed to promise the love my soul yearned for. Without realizing it, I turned love into a desperate search.

I came to believe that if I gave everything of myself—including lust—I would receive in exchange the love I so desired. When that butterfly drew near or looked at me, I felt euphoria; when it moved away, I experienced sadness and emptiness. I lived oscillating between illusion and despair. And while I ran after that butterfly, I was losing myself. But no butterfly can live imprisoned. And no heart can find rest in the pursuit.

Then SA arrived and welcomed me with a promise that over time has been fulfilled: “We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.” At first, those words were only hope. Today, they are becoming a testimony.

My Higher Power, whom I now call the Gardener, began to show me that happiness is not born from possessing, but from trusting. It is not a fire that consumes, but a light that accompanies.

I understood that I had been seeking in creatures what only my Higher Power could give me. I had asked people to fill a void that only God could inhabit.

Little by little, the Gardener taught me to remain. To stay still and quiet. To listen. To recognize that I was already loved, even when no one chose me.

I discovered serene happiness: the kind found in walking under the sun with my dogs, in breathing consciously in a Pilates class, in playing a tennis match without wanting to win obsessively, and in celebrating an anniversary of my SA fellows. Happiness does not depend on being chosen, but

on knowing myself loved by my Higher Power. That Higher Power was always with me, even though, because of my addiction, I would abandon His gifts for a crumb of romantic illusion. I would let go of hobbies, dreams, and inner peace out of the fear of being left alone.

Surrendering and working the Steps are changing the rhythm of my soul.

Surrendering and working the Steps are changing the rhythm of my soul. When I stopped running after that butterfly, the Gardener began to work my soil. And turning the soil hurts: it confronts, it strips bare, it purifies. But it also prepares new and beautiful fruits. Sobriety has become a fertile ground, where fruits I could never have imagined are being born: discipline to finish my master's degree (the one I always dreamed of as a child), gratitude for everything—even for my singleness—and joy in travels now lived with full presence.

Before, my interior was an arid field where I ran after that butterfly I called love. Today, I understand that the true miracle was not that the butterfly returned, but that my heart and consciousness began to transform.

The Gardener, my Higher Power, with the help of SA, was bringing to life my inner garden, rivers of serenity, mountains of hope, and trees of firm boundaries; and although the terrain can be difficult to walk at times, I always find flowers of joy. Love is not conquered: it is cultivated, and thus a positive sobriety begins to bloom. Now I know that I am not alone; I have SA and, above all, I am cared for by the Gardener who does not abandon His work, my Higher Power.

If one day the butterfly returns, it will be received with sobriety and as one more gift among many, not as a necessity. And if it never returns, my garden will remain cultivated and cared for by the Master Gardener, by True Love...God... who is doing for me what I could not do for myself.

Viviana S., Colombia



DISCUSSION TOPIC

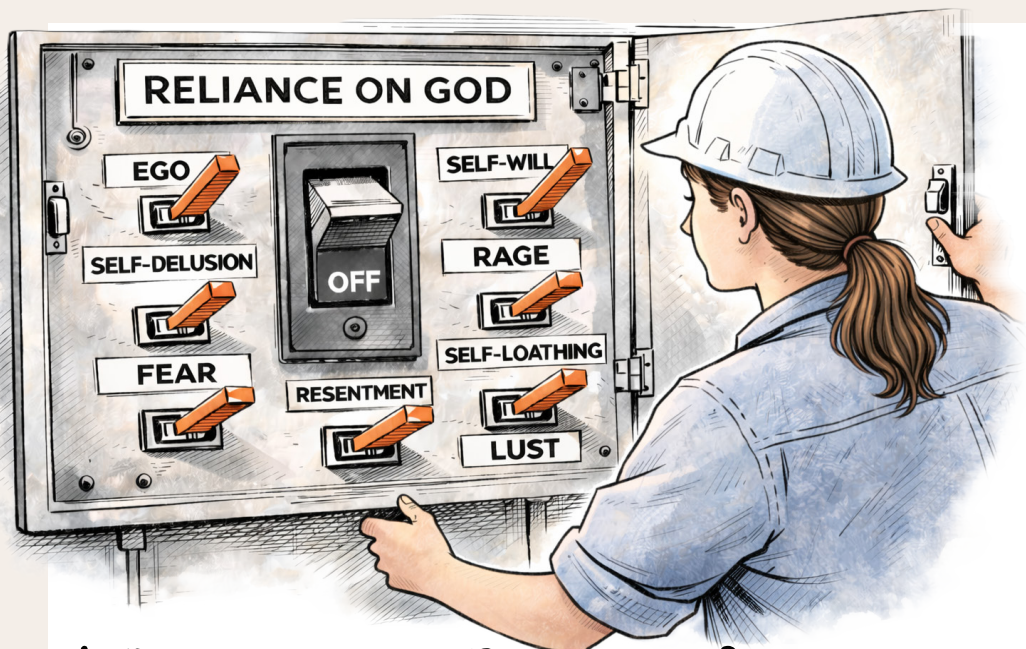
In her article, "The Butterfly, the Garden, and the Gardener", this member shares how the butterfly of lust was always promising something beyond her grasp. Do you identify with lust promising

something that it couldn't deliver?

The author shares how Higher Power taught her how to remain with God. How has practicing the 12 Steps helped you remain in God's presence? Do you relate to ego-crushing be-

ing painful along with a promising new life? Has this produced gratitude for what God has done for you?

Will you use this article for a discussion topic at your homegroup? Send a story of your own recovery journey to essay@sa.org.



A LIFESTYLE OF POSITIVE SOBRIETY

Connecting with a Higher Power by living in the solution, the 12 Steps, empowers her to serve other addicts, including those in the Service Structure.

For nearly my entire life, I acted in ways I knew weren't right. I said things that hurt me and harmed others. Sweet relationships were destroyed. It seemed like I couldn't help myself. I was driven by some insane urge for attention from men, and that one feeling that felt like connection but left me completely empty. My life was driven by a force within me that I could not tame. Nothing I said or did stopped me. I made every promise that could be made and kept on getting sicker.

I was addicted to lust but thought my behavior was the problem.

What I was doing was wrong. I knew what I was doing crossed the line. I honestly thought it was because of the choices others made. I couldn't control them, and I couldn't control myself. I was lost.

I came into this Program and was shocked to hear the description of lust and what it did to the men in the rooms. I immediately identified with the power of lust. The literature and the people described it in a way that was impossible for me to deny. I was a few days into the Program when I heard another woman share. I literally cried. She sounded like she knew lust but lived in recovery. There was a solution. I wasn't sure if I qualified for it, but I had

hope that it existed for her.

I got a sponsor and began the process of recognizing and surrendering lust to the Power that is greater than lust. My mind began to focus on the solution rather than the problem. I have proven to myself that I cannot outrun lust. I know for a fact that I have no weapon to fight lust. I cannot enter the battlefield. When I focus on lust and lust hits, I become increasingly agitated. I lose my ability to connect with God and the people around me. Negative sobriety does not work. When I focus on the solution that is within the Steps and maintain a certain simple attitude, I have nothing to fear. I do not need to run. The people around me are seen as brothers and sisters who are there to be prayed for and respected. I become one among many. Safe and protected.

I know for a fact that I have no weapon to fight lust.

I've come to see that the power of God is sufficient and holds my mind in check when I ask. There is a 24-hour time limit, and I need to renew each and every day. It wasn't easy at first. My mind didn't know what to do if it wasn't seeking lust. It took time, patience, and much encouragement not to give up.

Today I live in the present 24

hours. I do not focus on avoiding lust. When I find that my mind is seeking distraction, I simply pause and connect with that Power and reach out to another addict.

Getting involved in the Service Structure really helps. The people I've met are focused on giving back to the Program rather than just maintaining physical sobriety. The life I live now has its ups and downs, sure, but the joy is in the journey, and I am never alone.

My mind is only capable of one thing at a time. The problem OR the solution. It's my choice to make each day. For today, I pray for another day to seek God and pray for all who catch my eye. They, like me, could always use another prayer.

Grateful and Sober in Florida





A Road to True Happiness

She often forgets that being happy happens on the inside and not on the outside.

I often tell newcomers, so they know it is part of the process, that it is okay to feel the pain of quitting lust. I also tell them that it is not me who stopped or quit lust. It was my Higher Power and the company of SA's women's meetings that I stayed abstinent and didn't commit any harm to myself. Even though I was abstinent, I wasn't sober because I was thinking: "Will I ever find love? Why did I end up in SA? I want to be a corporate manager again." It was important to me who I was on social media, all on the outside. I wanted all these things to show off. I often asked myself, "If I stayed sober, would I look as happy as people do on Instagram posts?" Well, it turns out that no! It's not even close!

It wasn't until my second arrival to SA in 2024 that I surrendered my will, and I discovered a positive sobriety. I surrendered that "I was powerless over lust and that my life had become unmanageable." (Step One) As I continued working through the Steps, I learned that I was no longer in charge. Oh dear! Giving up my will to somebody else? Before SA, my will was all I ever knew, acting out and boys were my obsession and higher power. That was why the outcome was a disaster.

When I worked the Steps with honesty, opening up wholeheartedly to my sponsor, and allowing my Higher Power to take my whole life, I reached sobriety. To my surprise, there was a "positive sobriety," and

it was nothing like I imagined. Celebrating my birthday at the beach with my family, not wanting to act out, and feeling calm was something I could not envision. Before SA, I was constantly feeling like I was missing out on living my best life. All my identity was lust, and finding myself outside of it was the biggest challenge to me. I realized that having a normal life without hectic moments, drama, and lust was possible. My sobriety now is attending meetings, working on the translations for ESSAY, being sponsored and being a sponsor, work, family, teaching, and all that keeps me closer to my Higher Power as I conceive Him.

Positive sobriety doesn't mean I'm happy all the time. I'm actually writing these words with wonder and fear, but I have decided to do the Step work, to be honest, and to trust God. Not all days are good, but I HAVE BETTER DAYS NOW THAN WHEN I WAS OUTSIDE SA. I'm closer to my Higher Power as I work through the Steps, and I know that this is the true road to happiness.

I live each day knowing that I'm held by God. He wants the best of me in each aspect of my life, even though some days, I fail to believe it. I have decided to continue to do the work because I finally know what the "positive" in sobriety is. Now that I have experienced it, I do not want to let it go.

Lucy M., Guatemala.



When choosing between meditation to know God’s will and helping the person in need, God’s will was immediately revealed.

The Solution says, “We began practicing a positive sobriety, taking the actions of love to improve our relations with others” (SA 205). A recent experience that made me grow describes this quote. Last month, I visited my aunt. I spent money from my tight budget and traveled for over a day to visit her, since she now depends on others. It was stressful to find the right ticket, make several plane stops, run to catch one, and—worst of all—be bloated. The only sure thing I knew was that I would have lustful temptations.

The next morning, I was about to do my morning meditation when she called me to help her.

My first thought was that if I didn’t do it then, I wouldn’t be able to do it until later that night.

I learned something new that day that I didn’t know was possible: starting my day without meditation and still knowing what God wanted from me—to be of service to my aunt. Instead of getting upset because things didn’t go as I planned, I got up and helped. During the four days I was there, I got her anything she needed: I listened to her shares, I cleaned the

house, I cooked for her under her direction, I gave her massages to ease her pain, and I helped her do some exercises.

She said something like, “It seems you didn’t come here to enjoy your holidays.” I simply replied, “Before coming here, I already knew I was coming to be of help.” I don’t know how it feels to love, but nowadays I do know how to take actions of love.

I could never have experienced this if I was not in SA, had a sponsor, worked the Steps, and sponsored others. I stopped counting the days, stopped being a meetingaholic, started finding the silver lining, began setting aside time to have fun with myself outside the rooms, and started engaging more with people outside the Program, to name a few. Because I began having more spiritual experiences. Today, I can say I am happy, joyful, and free.

I’m deeply grateful for being a lust addict—and for wanting to remain one.

Antonio N., Spain



**I KNEW I WAS
COMING TO
HELP**



“How can you lose your sobriety if you’re not even sober?!” I was listening to an old-timer when these words echoed in my ears. At that time, I had two years of sobriety, but I was sick and drunk.

I am a white knuckler, and I have various manifestations of this disease that are not physical but spiritual and mental. It’s really not about how many acting-out behaviors I had before SA. It’s not really a competition.

I’m not sober unless I’m in recovery. I have to ask myself each day if I am having progressive victory over lust. However, I have to go deeper. In my childhood, I used fantasies in my head to cope with domestic violence that I was experiencing. It’s all connected.

My head tells me I will die if I don’t lust, and my trauma tells me I will die if I lust. I was stuck in this vicious cycle for years before I did

some deeper work. My disease is tied to my pain, and my pain is tied to my trauma. If I learn to experience pain without numbing it with lust, I get progressive victory over my pain and hence over my disease.

My relationships with men have changed drastically. The men are not the trigger. The stories in my head are my trigger. “Stick to the business, Arpita,” my former sponsor said. “When you talk to men, think about why you are there and what your role is.” I am always grateful for such tools, as they keep me sober and in the moment. I am always grateful for those moments. They gave me hope that I can make real connections with people.

If I don’t stick to my program, I will stop recoiling from lust and die. I really have to practice the 12 Step solution to really come into recovery. Sobriety is a journey, and I am recovering as I strive for positive sobriety one day at a time. Amen!

Arpita, Delhi, India



Striving For Positive Sobriety

Practicing the 12 Step solution allows her to come into recovery and experience pain without numbing out.



A life-changing condition forced this member to embrace self-care and God's peace more fully, giving her more to offer others.

My journey through recovery has been a joy and a great challenge, because I have a number of medical conditions. I'd like to write from my heart about what positive sobriety looks like to me today.

I am accustomed to being around on WhatsApp for many hours. I was asked about this by an oldtimer whom I respect greatly. I've been chewing over her question ever since. One reason for my behavior has been the whole service and connection ethic.

When I read in AA literature that a kindly act once in a while isn't enough, that I have to play the Good Samaritan day and night if need be, I translated that into answering questions and offering experience, strength, and hope as much as possible in the only medium available to me, which is WhatsApp. I really believed my life was positive sobriety. I have three years sobriety. I've been asked to speak at meetings. I'm being sponsored and sponsoring.

Then I got whacked between the eyes with the proverbial two-by-four. In addition to sleep disturbance, my

Higher Power has given me a severe case of chronic tendonitis in my right arm. My medics ordered exercise and rest. Given that this is a permanent weakness, I have to overhaul my lifestyle.

This initially caused fear, resentment, and bargaining. This has led to my being forced to practice self-care and set up boundaries in communication, which will no doubt positively astonish my fantastic sponsor, who has tried to get me to do this for four years. This is exactly what the oldtimer meant back in the autumn.

My medical conditions are actually gifts from God, precipitating me into the Fourth Dimension: life-giving recovery and maximizing my health, and so my fulfillment and joy. Which in turn means that I have real experience to share, and this has to be good for me and for my sponsees and friends, and other fellows.

They said don't leave before the miracle happens. It's never failed me yet. I don't think it ever will.

Kathie S., Devon, UK.



To Trudge Along with Them

Positive sobriety was not possible for him without positive steps and real connection with others.

I came into this Program seeking “negative sobriety”. By that I mean I wanted to negate acting out from my life. Like everything else up to that point, I thought I could do it on my own. If I read some literature, meditated a bit on all the things I’d done and sought absolution for them, bingo, I’d be cured. This was, of course, my ego telling me that I could solve all my problems. Of course, it was that mindset that overwhelmed me, that drove me to pornography and fantasy, away from the real world where people I loved and cared about lived.

But my actual sobriety asks more of me. I need connection with others, and particularly with those who understand our com-

mon problem. This is not a solo program, no matter how much I want it to be. Positive sobriety is reaching outside of myself through acts of love to others and avoiding the innermost worlds of fantasy I’ve created for myself. It involves others in my recovery, even as I take responsibility for my own recovery. The phrase “positive sobriety,” spoken aloud at most of our meetings, reminds me I must take positive steps to remove the negative actions that landed me here. And I can’t do that on my own. I need to speak to others, to trudge along the road with them. I can only stay sober through my connection to others. If I try to will it myself, I’m already lost.

Kip H., Washington, USA



NO LESS A MAN

Positive sobriety was not possible for him without positive steps and real connection with others.



Before coming to SA, I prided myself on being able to figure things out on my own. I work as a Firefighter in my local town and am known as the go-to guy when it comes to fixing things. So when I was told to take actions based on what other people had done, I struggled. Where was the pride in that? I felt as though this was my problem, and if I don't figure it out on my own, I'm less of a man.

But soon I realized I had no other logical choice but to follow in someone else's footsteps if I wanted out of this mess I called a life. Once I let go and followed, positive results came. This all reminded me of a situation when I followed someone else's footsteps or, should I say, tire tracks.

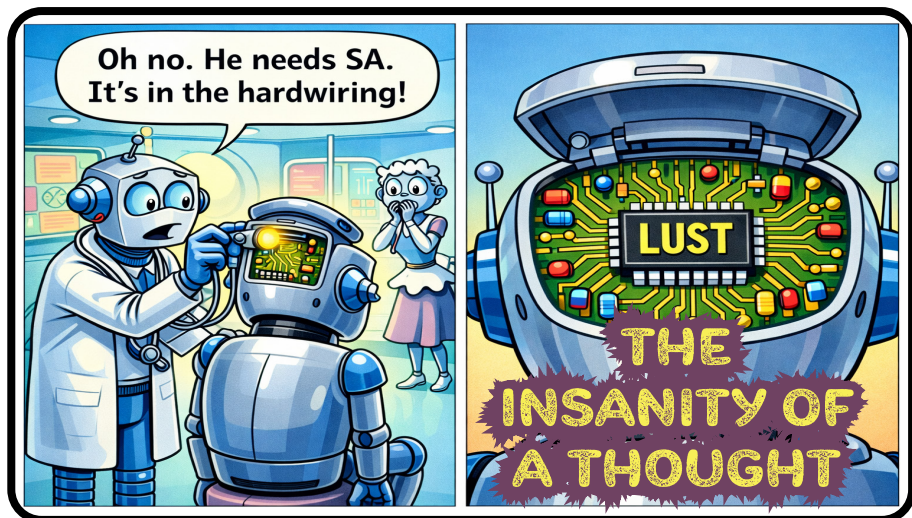
I grew up riding dirt bikes and always wanted to race. Finally, in my early 20s, I started racing moto-

cross with my stepbrother who had been racing for years. I didn't have a lot of success in the beginning because I wouldn't jump the larger jumps. I was terrified of crashing and just couldn't do it. Well, one night at the track, my stepbrother told me to find a rider on the track who was jumping the jumps that I wouldn't jump and to follow his lead. So, I found a rider and followed him. Making all the moves he made and matching his speed, and even though I thought it would be "off the edge into oblivion", I did it! I didn't crash; I followed his lead and landed the jump with ease. The rest of the night I jumped that jump without hesitation.

I still struggle with the pride of figuring things out myself, but because of the Program, I am aware of the value in following those who went before me. I now know I'm no less of a man because of it.

Daniel M., Georgia, USA





He realized that a business conversation that expresses interest in a woman without intentions to follow up is lust.

I'm a silent partner with a drug and alcohol recovery clinic in Atlanta. (For anonymity purposes—I'm not from Atlanta and don't live there). Last May, I flew down for a grand opening for our newly relocated facility. Grand openings are an opportunity for all the people in the industry to come and see what the new location is like, to see each other again, and have some fun chatting with each other.

When I was there, I met a nice lady from the industry. We had a fun time chatting together, and that was that. Because she knew I was a partner with the clinic, she gave me her business card.

The next week, I flew down to Atlanta to visit with my business partners. The thought came to mind to call that lady and go out on a business lunch with her to chat some more. I was thinking it could be an innocent lunch to

discuss business, but also to express my interest in her. I've had this thought several times now over the past few months, and it seemed like an innocent enough idea.

Since it was time to go back to Atlanta, I thought I had better start talking about it. I mentioned it that morning to my check-in partner, and after I had said it out loud, I realized the insanity of that thought. I was only focused on that one event—that one lunch date. The thought never occurred to me that there must be follow-up and continuation after that date, because that's the only reason you start a conversation to express interest in someone in the first place. And since I'm not interested in starting a long-distance relationship with follow-up conversations, that one lunch date is not going to happen.

LOL—I'll keep coming back.

Jeff O, Chicago, USA



He discovered that by living in the Steps, he found a spiritual home for himself in SA.

I did not come because I was full of hope;
I came when I'd run out of ways to cope.

I did not come because I loved the Steps;
I came when my life was tangled, a mess.

I did not come with peace in my soul;
I came when I'd lost all control.
I came because nothing gave me rest,
Because my best ideas had failed the test.

I found my disease in Step One's light,
Saw the truth that ended my endless fight.

In Step Two, I found the will to believe
That God could do what I could not achieve.

In Step Three, I found the Power, the Way,
My new Employer—I'd work and obey.

In Step Four, I faced myself at last,
The wreckage, the chaos, the ghosts of my past.

The Steps reconnected me with humanity,
As I saw my own spiritual malady.
My struggle was not only mine to

bear,
But a human condition, ancient and rare.

In Step Nine, I walked with trembling feet,
To clean the past, to make amends complete.

I found humility, love, and grace,
And shared my story, face to face.

When selfishness called, I took God's hand,
To act, to serve, to finally understand.

I felt His love when mine was small,
And freedom came when I gave Him all and helped others.

I am here to pay the debt I owe,
To the one who helped my spirit grow.

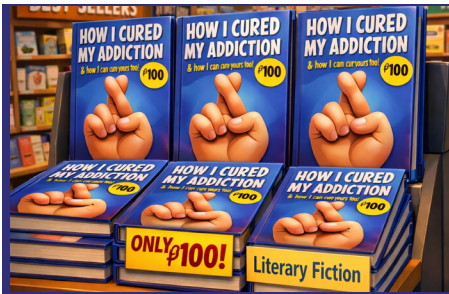
I am here to serve the God who gave
A second chance beyond the grave.

I am here to pass the gift received
To any heart that still believes.
I am here to level pride and fear,
To die a little—and be reborn here.

I am here simply, humbly, clear
Because by God's grace...
I belong here.

Anonymous





I WANT TO RECOVER!

Integrity has to be practiced in every aspect of his life.

I've been seeing ads on social media offering a huge collection of books about psychology, therapy, healing, motivation, and self-improvement for only 100 Mexican pesos. A question arose in me: Could this be dishonest? I asked those people whether they were

the authors of that material, and their answers were everything except "yes."

Even while chasing something good with pain in my soul, if it comes dishonestly, I don't believe it would do me any good. It would be like buying stolen medicines to heal my stomach infection. The Program has taught me, through a very strict sponsor I once had, that I must be honest in all my affairs, even in what is not related to lust.

Higher Power, I thank You that in Your mercy today I have days of sobriety. I commit, counting on Your grace, to stay sober, to accept the pain of surrender, and to do something for my recovery just for today.

P.S. I did not buy those books because the legality of that offer was unclear.

José N., Chihuahua, México



Stick With the Winners

He learned the true meaning of what it means to be a winner.

I've never loved that saying because I was a chronic slipper. It sounds like there are winners and losers in recovery. But that's not how our Fellowship works. A more honest version might be: "Stick with the sober members." In SA, there are only two kinds of people—those who are sober today, and those who are not yet sober. Both belong here.

Losers aren't the ones who slip

or struggle. Losers are the ones who never show up at all. The real winners are the people who walk through these doors, sober or not, willing to admit they need help. That takes courage, honesty, and is the beginning of recovery.

Our only requirement for membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober. If we're trying and showing up, if we're willing to keep coming back, we are all winners. Those who are struggling aren't failing; they're miracles in progress. Every day we keep coming back, we're choosing to be on the winning side.



Yaniv G., New York, USA



Steps & Traditions

Without God, I can't; Without me, God won't (SA 96)



In Step One, I admitted that I was powerless over lust and that my life was unmanageable. This is absolutely true, but my sponsor reminds me that I have to work my SA program.

So, I do these things:

-When I see an interesting person (which is to say, when I objectify a person for lust's sake), I have to pray and immediately work my program.

-When I call my check-in partner every week to report my behavior and challenges, I work...

-When I call my study partner every week to study and discuss 12 Step literature, I work...

-When I go to several SA meetings every week even though I feel busy, I work...

-When I do service for my home group or an SA Committee, I work...

-When I am hit with a lust temptation, even a small one, and pray to my Higher Power and work the Steps on it, I work...

-When I do Steps One, Two, and Three on a temptation, or do Steps Six and Seven on a character defect, or do Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve daily, I work...

I work, work, work and work.

The amazing thing about all this work is that I actually do less hard work when a temptation comes. My regular maintenance work makes surrendering lust temptations become like a habit. I avoid those people, places, and media where the temptations are apt to occur. I live my life in the light due to the Fellowship. I have serenity because I have had the courage to change the things I can.

I live my life in the light due to the Fellowship.

I must thank my Higher Power for this serenity because it is also true that I am powerless over my tendency to be lazy, make excuses and indulge my ego. At the end of the day, I have to give all the credit to my Higher Power. It is all prayer and surrender, and it is a way of life that I must work every day. Thank You, Higher Power.

KB, St Louis, USA



HOT SAINTS YET

This member finds hope by not leaving out the possibility of one day becoming a saint.

This morning in my meeting, we read from Chapter Five of Alcoholics Anonymous, which is occasionally referred to in AA meetings as “the preamble”. It was a reminder to me of my group’s pre-COVID days, our face-to-face meetings, which have now become entirely too infrequent.

In those meetings, before we were forced to migrate to the virtual world to hold on to our sobriety, we used to read this as our own preamble, substituting the White Book’s version of Chapter Five from the Big Book.

I jotted down some notes as I was listening today.

Many of us exclaimed, ‘What an order! I can’t go through with it.’ Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection (AA 60).

This is the Program’s way of immediately taking the pressure off. After having just laid out what can sound like a tall, intimidating, even impossible order—com-

plete surrender, moral inventory, amends, lifelong maintenance, daily contact with God, carrying the message—and then saying: “Yeah, we all felt exactly the same way. Relax. None of us does this perfectly, ever. We’re not saints. All that’s required is a willingness to keep growing.”

In early recovery, that single paragraph kept me from bolting out the door. It’s the antidote to perfectionism, which is deadly for an addict like me.

Then it distills the entire Pro-



gram into the three “pertinent ideas”, the program's ABCs:

(a) *That we were addicts and could not manage our own lives.*

(b) *That probably no human power could have relieved our sexual holism.*

(c) *That God could and would if He were sought (AA 60).*

In early recovery, that single paragraph kept me from bolting out the door.

These three sentences are the core of the Program's message:

A: We're powerless (Step 1)

B: Greater power can help (Step 2)

C: God can and will if sought (Steps 3-12)

Everything else—the Steps, the stories, the Fellowship—is just the practical “how” of moving from (a) to (c).

When I was asked to read this in our meetings, I added the word “yet” to the sentence: “We are not saints.”

It's cheeky, it's hopeful, and honestly, it lines up beautifully with both the Big Book and my faith tradition's understanding of sanctity.

The Big Book is crystal-clear; “We are not saints” is present tense, a description of where we are right now, not a permanent verdict on what we can become. Adding “yet”

doesn't contradict the text; it just refuses to close the door on grace.

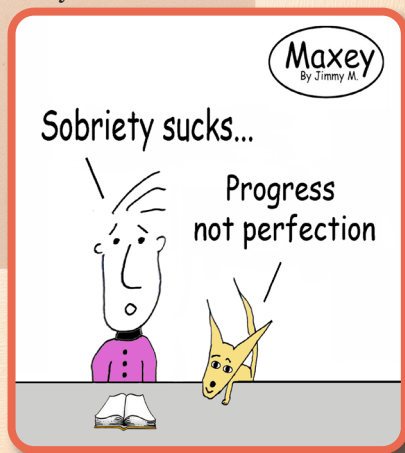
In meetings, some people bristle at adding “yet” to that sentence because they hear it as a sneaky return of perfectionism—“Oh great, now I'm supposed to become a saint?!” But if it's coming from a place of hope instead of pressure, it's pure Twelfth-Step energy: “Keep going; you're not done growing; the best is still ahead.” That's the opposite of the spiritual despair that kept me drunk.

I've heard old-timers say things like: “We're not saints, but some of us are getting pretty sanctimonious!” (usually followed by laughter), or “I'm not a saint yet, but I'm a hell of a lot closer than I was when I walked in.”

That little “yet” is in good company. It keeps the horizon open without beating anybody up.

So, I keep sneaking the “yet” in occasionally when I read it. It's a quiet act of hope, and hope is what newcomers need to hear between the lines anyway.

Anonymous



FROM PRISON TO
FREEDOM

PART TWO

With two addicts in Program supporting him in prison, he experienced real freedom before he was set free.

They put me in an eight-by-five holding pen. Ironically, this physical prison would become the key to my freedom.

On the wall at the foot of my bed, someone had scratched five words: “How did I get here?” For two days, those words were all I could see. God held my eyes open, forced me to stare at that question until I finally, finally looked at the truth: ME. I did this: not my ex-wife, not my childhood, ME. For the first time in my life, I felt the crushing weight of decades of guilt, remorse, and self-loathing. But in that tiny cell, something began to crack in the prison I’d built around my heart. From the general population, God sent me a friend—an alcoholic who had killed someone while driving drunk. He didn’t preach. He just showed me, through his hope, that maybe I wasn’t beyond saving.

When my daughter bailed me out, I knew I had to find help or die trying. I found SA, and five minutes later, I called Frank, child of God; may he rest in peace. Frank called me back. Soon after, I was on a Saturday Zoom meeting, shaking, terrified, hopeful. I met my sponsor. I started ninety meetings in ninety days. It took a year to finish my First Step—a



year of facing every demon I'd spent a lifetime running from. With each step, another wall of my self-made prison crumbled.

Then, in August 2021, I was sentenced to 53 days in jail. I kept working the Steps. It was all I had. Inmates called me "Papa-Phone" because I was always on the phone with my sponsor. But God wasn't done sending me help. He connected me with another inmate—a recovering alcoholic with rage issues who was also working the 12 Steps. We talked for hours about the Program, about surrender, about finding God in the darkest places. He became my accountability partner behind those walls, someone who understood the battle I was fighting.

I was in a physical prison, but for the first time in decades, I was beginning to feel free.

Together, we worked through the Steps. In that cell, in that solitude, with my sponsor on the phone and my fellow recovering addict by my side, I finally connected with God. He knew exactly what I needed. By His grace, I finished Steps Two and Three behind bars. The irony wasn't lost on me: I was in a physical prison, but for the first time in decades, I was beginning to feel free.

When I was released, I didn't

essay.sa.org

stop: meetings, calls, and the Steps one day at a time. By God's grace, I'm now working on my 12th Step. Who am I now? I'm the same broken man, but with one precious gift: a choice.

Every morning, I choose recovery over addiction. I choose freedom over my self-made prison. I have a relationship with God. I've joined a church. I still struggle. I still fall short. But every day, I recommit to sobriety. Every day, I forgive myself. Every day, I remember: I am worth it. I am worth God's forgiveness and love. I am grateful for my arrest. I am grateful for the graffiti on that cell wall. I am grateful to be alive for the first time in my life. Why did God save me? Why didn't He just let me end it? I believe He saved me so I wouldn't die with all that hate poisoning my heart, trapped forever in that prison of addiction. So I could finally see a sunrise and feel something. So I could grow. So I could experience the promises. He saved me so I could make amends to the people I destroyed, so I could make amends to Him and know Him truly, so I could help others like me—lost, broken, drowning in their own prisons. See, there's another way out.

Since my liberation from addiction, I am freer now than I ever was in my so-called freedom. The prison of addiction held me captive for decades. But through God's grace, the 12 Steps, and the Fellowship of SA, I found the key. I walked out of that prison and into the light. I had to go to prison to be set free.

Shawn M., IL, USA



The First SA India Convention Becoming a Reality



Celebrating the Steps and recovering together in mixed meetings brought life to India's first-ever convention.

From 2020 onward, online meetings gave SA India a strong push, resulting in steady growth in both members and meetings.

A major turning point came when a Higher Power sent Luc D, a member from Belgium, who was willing to conduct a workshop in person. At that time, very few in-person meetings had begun, and the Bangalore Fellowship stepped forward to host the workshop. By God's grace, that event became a powerful inspiration. Following the workshop, the SA India Intergroup was formed, providing a unified structure. The Mumbai Fellowship then proposed hosting the first-ever SA India Convention, and by God's will, that became a reality.

Both Mumbai members and the SA India Intergroup began planning for the convention, held during the 14-16 of November. Over 60 members participated. The convention opened on Friday evening with Step Zero, highlighting the importance of program tools, meeting attendance, and active participation.

A session on relapse prevention fol-

lowed, where members shared practical tools to avoid relapse. The recurring message was the principle we all cherish—surrender. Many shared that surrender is something they must practice daily, and that working the Steps is the only solution.

Step One focused on complete surrender. One member shared using a “surrender salute” to turn away when triggered. Another shared deeply: “If I am lusting and losing something more precious than lust, that is my rock bottom.”

In **Step Two**, members spoke about coming to believe in a Power greater than themselves. One shared the need for brutal honesty, while another shared how their Higher Power helps them cope with shame, guilt, and fear of the past, present, and future. After the first day's sessions, fellowship naturally followed. Many of us stayed awake late, laughing, sharing, and playing games. Some woke early for a nature walk, and a small yoga session was organized the next morning, adding to the sense of connection.

Step Three was explained through

the powerful “Valley Story.” A member described life in a village called Lustpur, separated from recovery by a deep valley with no bridge. The only way across was to jump. After blaming himself and others, he realized both were acts of selfishness. Step Three became clear: complete powerlessness and complete surrender. He shared that trusting the Power of the Unknown allowed him to remain surrendered.

Step Four addressed the courage to look within. Members were encouraged to examine where they were wrong, where harm was caused, and what patterns were repeated. This step was framed not as shame, but as clarity and responsibility, preparing the way for Step Five.

In **Step Five**, a member shared how admitting his part in a resentment toward his brother softened anger and restored connection. Responsibility replaced blame, leading to healthier Relationships.

Steps Six and Seven were explained using nature as an analogy. Nothing in nature is called defective; defects arise when we go to extremes. These steps invite readiness and humility, reminding us that defects are learned and can be unlearned with God’s help.

Steps Eight and Nine emphasized that amends are more than apologies. They require willingness and action. Members were reminded that these steps depend on the careful work of earlier steps.

Step Ten was described as a daily maintenance step, helping prevent lust and emotional hangovers such as fear, resentment, and dishonesty. Through pausing, prayer, and honest self-reflection, members learn to align with “Thy will, not mine, be done.”

In **Step Eleven**, members shared

that conscious contact with a Higher Power can happen anytime—by pausing, breathing, and surrendering present thoughts and fears. Step Eleven is about willingness, not perfection.

Step Twelve highlighted service and carrying the message. A simple experiment showed that while a currency stays with one person, the message reaches everyone. Service—through meetings, sponsorship, and welcoming newcomers—keeps recovery alive.

A session on **women’s safety and mixed meetings** stressed clear boundaries; female members should have female sponsors only, and male members should not sponsor females. Mixed meetings were affirmed as essential, reminding us that all members are equal in SA.

The session on the **12 Traditions** highlighted the triangle of Unity, Service, and Recovery. The group and the newcomer were emphasized as vital, with group conscience guiding decisions while protecting SA as a whole.

The convention closed with deep connection and gratitude. We prayed, danced, and shared openly. Sobriety chips were given, and standing in a candle-lit circle, we celebrated joy, hope, and freedom. Many continued fellowship late into the night, carrying home the spirit of unity and recovery that defined this convention.

SA India Intergroup Committee



Slogan bookmarks as gifts, coming soon to the convention.



Progress One Day at a Time

Celebrating the Steps and recovering together in mixed meetings brought life to India's first-ever convention.

What started as an intuition in prayer and meditation one day at church, continued with a desire to make amends to those of another language and culture whom I objectified and wronged by starting a Spanish-speaking SA meeting in person. This desire has evolved over the past two years. Though Spanish is not my primary language, I have experience as a trusted servant in my faith tradition that was international in service. I am disposed to use one of the gifts of serving in another language among our SA fellowship.

On November 21, 2025, Fortaleza Los Angeles celebrated the second anni-

versary of its beginnings in the city of Long Beach, CA. I had shared my desire through discernment of God's will with my sponsor. He forewarned me of being ready for the difficult times of starting a new meeting, where I may be alone in the meeting due to a lack of members. I consulted the SA delegate for the Latin American Region, Antonio S., about this possibility. He was helpful in sharing his experience, strength and hope of SA service among Spanish-speaking members. Thanks to SAICO during the pandemic, I had made contact with Eduardo and Martin of the Ya Rindete Fellowship Group of SA Arizona who were able to receive our Spanish-speaking inquirers by providing newcomer meetings and sponsors.

We began with three members and in

a short while, we grew to seven regular members in the weekly meeting. There were a number of newcomers traveling from the neighboring cities and counties who came to our meeting and received orientation. As is a custom among many Latin SA fellowship groups, the question was asked as to what we would name ourselves. The name eventually evolved to be Fortaleza Los Angeles.

This fellowship has contributed to the service of two Spanish sessions at the SA International Convention in Los Angeles in 2024. We welcomed two members from Guatemala and Colombia, who shared resources of our meetings, conducted an annual retreat on the Steps and provided access to literature. At an SA Unity Conference this year, some of our members contributed to the preparation of a 90-minute hybrid panel session: How to carry the message of SA recovery in the family?

How to carry the message of SA recovery in the family?

However, there were developments in the lives and recovery process of a number of the group members and our numbers lessened.

At one point, my sponsor suggested using the phone to allow a hybrid mode of the meeting that helped the

few members to continue our recovery as a group.

Though we are now four regular members in the group, I feel a strong bond through our experience, strength and shared hope. This has deepened and strengthened our unity as a group. Leading with our weakness has helped us find strength and courage to grow together in recovery through working and living the spiritual principles of the 12 Steps and Traditions of SA. Each of us shares a service role in carrying SA's message locally.

Through listening to fellow members with much sobriety, I have been able to learn of many resources of the SA message being transmitted in Spanish. There is promising progress in the translation of SA-approved literature into Spanish. I realize now I make a living amends in another language which has deepened my experience of recovery and sobriety today.

Kiko S., Long Beach, CA. 



WE NEED YOU, SA!

The International Convention Committee (ICC) is in need of groups to host our annual international conventions. Open dates include: January 2028, January 2029, and July 2029. If you are interested in exploring this opportunity to bring the whole worldwide Fellowship to your doorstep for three days of exceptional recovery, please be in touch with me, Daniel K., ICC Chair, at danielk.sa.service@gmail.com.



Scan to register

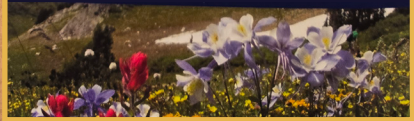


DenverHope2026.org

SA / S-Anon / S-Ateen
International Convention
July 17-19, 2026



Denver Marriott Tech Center
4900 S Syracuse St
Denver, CO 80237



AN SA RETREAT IN MICHIGAN

THE BIG BOOK: A DESIGN FOR LIVING

THIS MAY JOIN US FOR A dive into how the Big Book of AA outlines recovery from lust and a path of spiritual growth through the 12 Steps.

MAY 29-31 LIMITED ST. FRANCIS RETREAT
FRI, SAT, SUN CAPACITY CENTER, DEWITT, MI

Register Now @ www.samichigan.com

Serenity in Big Sky Country

SA SPRING MONTANA RETREAT

May 22-24, 2026

-Meditation Hike
-Cornhole Tournament

Experience the power of the 12 Steps at the beautiful Flathead Lake United Methodist Camp. From sunrise over the Mission Mountains to evening fellowship by the water, join us for a restorative spring retreat dedicated to healing, hope, men and women recovering together, and a panel on the value of recovering together.



Register at sa.org

COMING IN JUNE



NEXT EDITION

Our next edition's theme is "The Three Legacies." We will explore how each Legacy impacts our recovery in a way the other Legacies do not. With the Steps as our lasting foundation, we are able to progress to the goals/ideals described in the Traditions and Concepts. We learn together how to cooperate with God's individual and collective work in us. While giving our lives to God through the Steps daily, we also learn how to live among our fellow brothers and sisters. As we hit or miss the ideals in the Traditions and Concepts, the Steps set us back on track every single time. Thus, God, through living in the Three Legacies, becomes the Director of our lives for the rest of our lives.

ESSAY is your magazine. It is your experience, strength, and hope that carries the message of recovery to the still-suffering sexaholic. Please consider sharing your experience with the Fellowship by submitting an article to essay@sa.org.

SUBMIT YOUR STORY

June 2026 edition: The Three Legacies: Recovery, Unity, Service (Stories due May 1) What is your experience, and what promises have you received by practicing the principles in the Steps, the Traditions, or the Concepts?

August 2026 edition: Raising Our Hand-Sharing in Meetings (Stories due July 1) What is your experience with sharing in meetings that help you surrender while not overwhelming someone who doesn't yet know how to surrender?

October 2026 edition: Made A Decision-Giving Our Lives to God (Stories due September 1) How has this decision changed your life? Can this decision be made half-heartedly?

Opinions expressed in the ESSAY are not to be attributed to SA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by SA or by the ESSAY.

While we provide all articles in English, as well as six selected articles in 9 other 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.



Sourpusses
Anonymous

GOD,
GRANT ME THE
SERENITY, TO ACCEPT
THE THINGS I CANNOT
CHANGE, COURAGE TO
CHANGE THE THINGS I
CAN, AND THE WISDOM
TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.
THY WILL, NOT MINE, BE
DONE.

