

ESSAY

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS

HAPPY, JOYOUS,
AND...SINGLE



AUGUST 2025
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 lust 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 lust 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

It can seem that being happy and single are two ideas that don't fit together. What a great discovery to learn that our joy does not rely on a relationship or even marriage! It relies on following the will of God through working the Steps.

In this edition of "Happy, Joyous, and ... Single", we will hear the many transformations that Higher Power has accomplished in members who embraced the single and sober path. One member shares how his time sober and single allowed him to make many mistakes in learning how to relate with others before, not after, meeting his future spouse.

Another single member shares that understanding base salary versus bonuses helped her learn the difference between love and lust, while yet another member shares the contentment of living the single life.

In this edition, we will explore the great surprise of many, "... joyous freedom we could otherwise never know." (SA 2).

In Fellowship,
Laura W.
ESSAY Editor
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essay.sa.org

August 2025

August 2025

We can look the world in the eye. We can be alone at perfect peace and ease. Our fears fall from us. We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator.

AA 75

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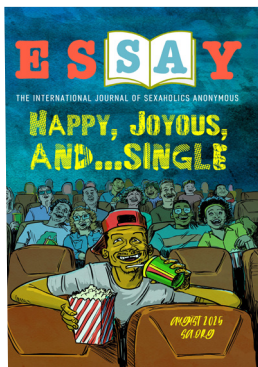
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Regarding graphics, any resemblance to real persons is purely coincidental, as all images in ESSAY are handmade, bought from Shutterstock, or made by means of Midjourney AI.



On the cover:
Recovery opens many of us up to receive the gift of the single life.
No longer is marriage something we need, but something we are open to only if it is the will of God.

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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.

Dear ESSAY

DEAR ESSAY, GREETINGS

from India. I am Iris from India—grateful, recovering, and blessed lustaholic and sexaholic. My SA journey and sobriety began on May 25, 2021, one day at a time (ODAAT). I heard about ESSAY and its garden of recovery at the beginning of my SA journey. I was approached to be a part of ESSAY's garden, and I blossomed through sharing 3–4 articles. ESSAY has

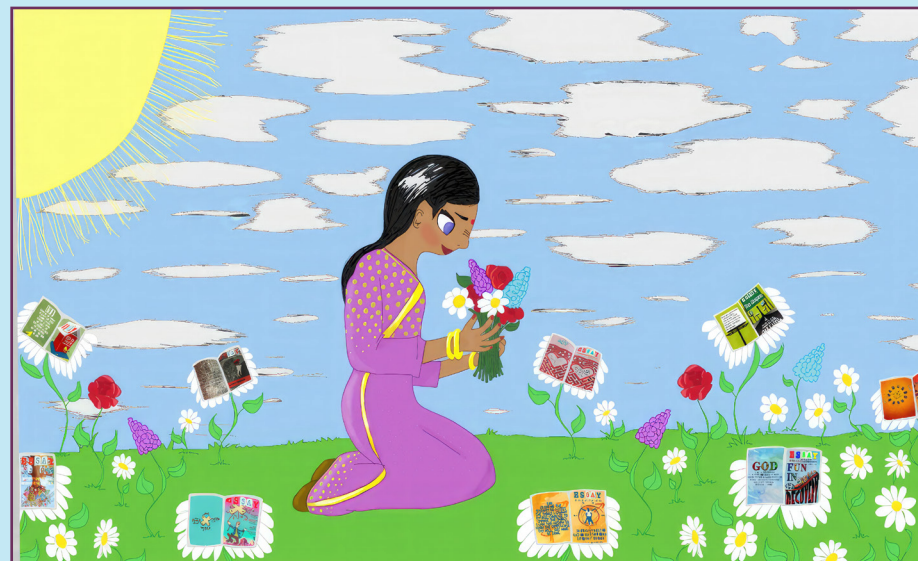
ESSAY's Garden of Recovery

been one of my very strong recovery tools. I am never sufficiently grateful for its birth in our SA world. I am grateful for the many articles of recovery and for ESSAY reaching many members virtually and in print.

I have always wanted to have ESSAY at home to enjoy, but kept thinking about it only. I do get to enjoy the online versions. Also, I have a few flowers (issues) from the yearly bouquet Luc gifted me last year while he was with us for the first-ever

SA 12-step workshop. Last year, I planned to ask my hubby, who is recovering in another program, to gift me ESSAY's yearly bouquet (subscription) as my Diwali gift, but when Luc passed away suddenly in an accident, I lost the opportunity. Today, I have overcome the grief with loving acceptance and wish to have ESSAY at home ASAP. I hope to see more and more blooming flowers (articles) with a beautiful fragrance of recovery.

Iris, India 



What's Going On In SA



QR code to access an informational panel for professionals and other letters to professionals

INFORMING PROFESSIONALS ABOUT SA


One of SA's 18 committees that helps to carry the message and serve the Fellowship is the Support for Institutions and Professionals Committee (SIP). Formerly, it was called the Hospitals and Institutions Committee. Our mission is still the same, to inform institutions and professionals as to how SA can help restore and maintain their clients' mental, emotional, and spiritual health. This committee's service is designed to take place at the intergroup and regional levels. Our International SIP Committee provides materials and guidance on how to reach local professionals and institutions. This article gives an example of how it can be done at the local level.

In April 2024, the South Midwest SIP Committee organized a workshop for professionals which took place at a retreat house in Kansas City two hours before the Regional Retreat was to begin. We invited a number of local

psychologists to Kansas City to attend an SA panel workshop, and three professionals accepted the invitation. We had two SA members and one S-Anon member on the panel. The first SA member shared a summary of their experience, strength, and hope as an SA member, working with a sponsor. The S-Anon member shared her experience, strength, and hope, and the second SA member served as chairperson of the event. After the SA and S-Anon talks, there was a question-and-answer time. The whole event lasted one and a half hours and concluded before the majority of the SA members arrived at the retreat center. It was a very positive event.

Our panel has created a format to duplicate this event at the intergroup and regional levels and we have composed form letters to professionals. These may be accessed using the QR code above.

For more information or support, contact SAICO at saico@sa.org.

Levi H., Nebraska, USA 

August 2025

Practical Tools

THE POWER OF THE LUST HIT

Surrendering Lust helped him to surrender the shame that came with it.

Yesterday, I started the day in the usual way with prayers and readings—I thank God for that. I then went to do some errands. About mid-morning, there was a lust hit. I knew the danger, and I acted swiftly. I averted my eyes, got out of the situation, surrendered the look, and prayed. I acknowledged my powerlessness. The lust look is a weakness—it always has been.

For me, this is not alarming. There was a temptation to look but no struggle or anything like that. I am a sexaholic and this can happen.... *I can't take the first drink!*

Afterward, I felt a bit depressed, angry and lethargic. That afternoon, I helped my daughter with some work. I looked forward to the SA meeting in the evening.

The topic of the meeting was Powerlessness. I shared and I talked about the lust hit and its impact on my day. Without the meeting, I would have forgotten about everything and moved on.

That evening, I realized the importance of sharing with another sexaholic and bringing the inside out,

especially if there was a lust incident.

Reflecting on the day, I saw the power in the lust hit. It stirred up shame and negative feelings within me. I realized the lust hit took away my peace and serenity.

Having peace and serenity isn't something I think about. However, yesterday morning, I was feeling good and my day was going great. *That is my peace and serenity—I can take it for granted.*

The lust robbed me of my serenity. It put me in a negative spirit and I felt depressed and lonely. Shame reared its ugly head.

In the past, these negative feelings could make me vulnerable to act out. Without the meetings and prayers, it would be a matter of time before I would go to lust.

I want to reflect on this and be aware when this happens again. Along with any lust, I want to surrender the shame and the negative feelings that may come to the surface. It's all part of my sexaholism.

Paul R., Prince Edward Island, Canada 





*This tool helps him to
release the past.*

The Prayer of Divine Remembrance

There are moments in life when the past will not let go. I've started the path of recovery, made amends where I could, committed to change, and yet—the memories remain. The images return. The shame lingers. While I've begun to move forward on the outside, my mind is still caught in the painful echoes of what I've done. This is where the Prayer of Divine Remembrance comes in.

**“God, grant
me Your divine
remembrance.
As You do not
hold my past
against me, help
me to release
the things I have
done and the
images I have
seen. Amen.”**

A Simple Prayer, Powerful Hope

This prayer is intentionally brief and easy to memorize. Much like the beloved Serenity Prayer, it is designed to be a practical spiritual tool in the daily fight for peace. Even in sobriety, my mind has been gripped with flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, or images that seem impossible to erase.

This is not the Prayer of Divine Forgetfulness. Forgetfulness implies a flaw or a lapse in attention. I cannot pretend the memories and images don't exist. The prayer is not about denying the past but about surrendering it. Just as my group and sponsor keep no record of my wrongdoing, neither does my Higher Power. In this prayer, I am humbly asking for that same nature to be imparted to me.

For Recovery

I'm sharing this prayer because it has helped me. It helps with specific memories that resurface.

Examples where this prayer can help:

-A porn or sex addict who cannot

unsee what has been seen.

-A person who exploited or abused another person.

-A person who engaged in other illegal activities who relives the images of their actions.

-Any person with distracting and unwanted memories and images that resurface in their mind.

When I pray, I am asking my Higher Power for a divine healing of my memories. It is a surrender of every image and regret that still cries out for attention. It is an invitation for peace to fill the spaces between thoughts and impressions.

For trauma, there is also another version of the prayer, written for not what I've done, but for what has been done to me. I, like many others, fell into addiction as a result of trauma perpetrated against me. In moments of healing these wounds, this modified version may be more appropriate.

**“God, grant
me Your divine
remembrance.
As You do not
hold my past
against me, help
me to release the
trauma I have
experienced
and the images
I have seen.
Amen.”**

This version is a lifeline for the innocence that was stolen by abuse,

early sexual exposure, or any other traumatic event in life. Once again, not all of these examples apply to me, but I am sharing this tool to offer help to the following people:

-A survivor of abuse who relives the trauma through memory.

-A veteran who has seen the violence of war.

-A first responder who was first on the scene of terrible accidents.

-Any witness to a violent act or the aftermath of an accident.

This prayer is a request to cleanse the mind and wash away the lingering shadows that trauma leaves behind. It is not a denial of the past but a reordering of it—inviting God to replace these memories with peace.

Using the Prayer Daily

The prayer can be written on a note card, kept in a wallet, taped to a mirror, or memorized as a spiritual defense against unwanted memories. I pray this prayer in the morning, the evening, or when the images resurface. I say it out loud. I whisper it. I hold it in my heart and let it bring clarity to my mind, 24 hours at a time.

Closing Words

The Prayer of Divine Remembrance is not magic. It does not guarantee instant forgetting or erasure. But it is part of a conversation in a growing relationship with one's Higher Power. As I pray, I am not pretending my past didn't happen. I am declaring that my past is no longer my master and, I will no longer be haunted or bound by it.

This is not forgetfulness. This is freedom. This is divine remembrance.

Ephraim, Oklahoma, USA 

From Being Thanked to Giving Thanks

*Recovery radically
changed how he
celebrates Father's Day.*

I used to think Father's Day was about waiting for my children to shower me with drawings, or words that would make me feel like a good father.

I thought it was a day to sit back and receive—to be told that all my sacrifices were noticed, my sleepless nights appreciated, my worrying understood.

But something has shifted in me.

This morning I sat with my youngest. She asked, "Are you happy, Papa?"

I realized that my greatest gratitude today is not for what I get, but for what I am allowed to give.

I am grateful to be a father—to be trusted with these small souls.

Grateful for every tantrum, scraped knee, bedtime story, and silent prayer whispered over their sleeping heads. Grateful for the chance to serve them while they are young enough to need me so completely.

My heart aches for fathers who, by separation or divorce, cannot experience this closeness daily. I know the hollow space they feel at night when they wish to tuck a child in but cannot. Today, I hold them in compassion. I forgive myself too, for every time I have failed, every time I tried to look perfect when what my children needed was an honest father, not a flawless one.

When my father wasn't around, God sent me other fathers:

My uncles, who showed up at school events when my father couldn't. They played cricket with me in the evenings and sat by my side helping me with homework when numbers and grammar tied my head in knots.

My grandfather, who played chess with me, let me win again and again—until he got tired of losing and taught me how to lose with grace.



My Chachan—an old family friend, now in his eighties—who still calls to pray for me. He brought up his own children alone after losing their mother. One of them is now a retired doctor, with grandchildren of his own; the other became an engineer, then an architect, building beautiful, honest houses for those who couldn't afford them. They are of a different faith, but it never stopped Chachan from fathering me in spirit when I needed it most.

Ayah—my wife's father, bless his soul—who taught me how to let go when children make decisions against our wishes. He welcomed me and my wife back into his home when pride could have shut the door. He showed me that a wise father does not interfere in the lives of his grown children, especially in their marriages. Ayah left this world in 2023, but his quiet lessons still guide my hands and heart.

I think about my own father, a man who was never home.

I used to carry resentment like a stone in my gut. But recovery taught me to look deeper: This man is perhaps spiritually sick. "Though we do not like their symptoms and the way these disturb us, they, like ourselves, are sick too. We ask God to help us show them the same tolerance, pity, and patience we would cheerfully grant a sick friend" (AA 66-67). Forgiving him has freed me to father my children differently—not perfectly, but freely.

Today, Father's Day is not so much about being thanked but about giving thanks. It's about service:

mending my relationship with my young ones when I fall short, apologizing, and giving hugs. It's about trusting the "Great Reality deep down within us" (AA 55) — the Light that says: "You can begin again. You can show up better today."

As I grow into this new understanding, I find that fatherhood is less about control and more about companionship. Less about ruling and more about being willing to bend, to listen, to forgive myself, my father, and any father who could not stay whole for his children.

So today, I celebrate by being useful to those around me...

by cooking breakfast, answering a curious question, offering my lap again, and continuing to learn to serve gently, day by day.

Father's Day, for me, is this: Not waiting to be celebrated, but living in gratitude for being trusted with little hearts. Not expecting thanks, but giving thanks for this role I never deserved, yet was freely given. Not demanding love, but pouring it out, because the real gift is seeing it shine back in their eyes.

Happy Father's Day—to every father, father figure, and gentle man who chooses to serve rather than be served.

Bachan A., Kochi, India



Happy,
Joyous,
and Single

the AVAILABILITY to DIVE

*This period of being single has given him time to work
a rigorous program.*

For most of my life, I've been looking for someone to connect with me and make me whole. I felt "inadequate, unworthy, alone, and afraid" (SA 203), always comparing my insides to the

outsides of others. I was terrified of people seeing me for fear that they'd reject me—which was why I never learned to date. It felt too risky.

I began acting out when I was 12 and entered SA when I was 22, so I spent at least a decade lost inside myself. I didn't realize that lust was really my problem; it felt more like my solution. In reality, it was stunting my ability to grow up emotionally, relationally, and spiritually. I couldn't feel my feelings and thus couldn't relate to those around me.

At 22, I moved to Memphis for a training program, came into SA,

and was directed not to get into any relationships until I was at least one year sober. While finding a wife wasn't the first reason I came here, it was on my list, so this was inconvenient, to say the least. Shortly thereafter, I was directed not to spend time around girls at all for 90 days. This dashed whatever hope I had left.

That year felt like a really long time. Looking back, I'm extremely grateful for coming into SA single and having the time to prioritize my recovery and sobriety. I believe being single in recovery has been one of my greatest assets. Here's how:

**It's allowed me
the clarity to
take the Program
seriously for no
one else except
myself.**

It's allowed me the clarity to take the Program seriously for no one else except myself. It's allowed me the time to do the work of the 12 Steps. It's given me the availability to dive into the Fellowship headfirst and begin the painful but necessary process of learning to tell the truth and connect with others honestly. It's given me a safe place to make mistakes and learn from them before getting into a relationship. I think most of all, it's not allowed me to lean

on a relationship as a substitute for my drug.

Being sober has given me the gift of feeling those painful feelings, which I used to medicate. And while that doesn't always feel like a gift, it's opened me up to really live again, single, sad and happy, lonely and joyous, and everything in between.

Luke H, Memphis, TN 

DISCUSSION TOPIC

If single, have you embraced this time in your life to grow?

Luke's share brings to light how beneficial it can be to live single while recovering. While it can also be challenging, the single life can give us the time needed to learn how to

live without our drug and relate to others. This prepares those who plan to sober date at some point.

Have you surrendered the expectation to date after only a few months of sobriety? Have you sought experience, strength, and hope from members who

live a single and sober life? Do you need to surrender the idea that you need a relationship to be whole? Have you considered working the Steps on this topic? Will you use this article for a discussion topic at your home group? Send a story of your own recovery journey to essay@sa.org.

HAPPY, JOYOUS, AND SINGLE: IS THAT HOW IT GOES?



Having God in his life removed the need to have a partner.

I broke up with my last girlfriend when I came to the Program, after a two-year relationship. The reason was my shocking admission to the truth about myself—that I used her, trying to find a sense of self-worth at her expense, satisfy lust, and not feel lonely. This realization was painful, but honest and therefore healing.

I saw that I had always had this kind of unhealthy attitude towards my partners. As long as I remained the same, with prior beliefs, approaches, and behavior, it is naïve to expect a *different* result. The best thing I can do for myself and others is to take a break (for a year and a half) to devote this time to sobering up and working the Program. I needed the internal changes that the Program would provide. It will give me a chance for healthier relationships in the future.

This is what I decided six years ago. I was very relieved. I no longer need to look for anyone, pretend to be someone else, or waste my time in exchange for lust or for the illusion of wholeness. I can and want to dedicate this time to my recovery and to the Steps. This is the right thing to do.

What about relationships? As my sponsor told me, "When a person develops a relationship with God, then the urgent need for a partner disappears." So, I have turned over to God the whole area of relationships. God knows better whether I'm destined to have them, when and with whom, and whether I need them at all. I decided that if this is God's will and blessing for me, then I will go with it. If this is not His will, well, then there is nothing to worry about.

Sometimes, I would get overwhelmed by a feeling of loneliness that felt like it would be resolved by finding a partner. Sometimes, there would be a fear of loneliness in old age, when it seems I'd

feel desperate to have a person alongside me. Sometimes, I would feel an acute lack of intimacy or deep connection with another person. These states are signs that my relationship with God is weak. They keep on pushing me again and again to seek a saving connection with Him and to find comfort, support, and fulfillment in this connection and in connection with other people. For me, these are my close relatives, my son, my father, my friends, brothers from SA, and my sponsor, as well as work colleagues, clients, and simply people I run into. I get a lot of support from working with my sponsees, doing service, and giving of myself.

I remained sober for six years; I worked through the Program. A lot of things fundamentally changed in my life for the better. But a relationship didn't appear. Since then, I have never really looked for a life partner as a conscious choice. I didn't want to anymore.

Also, my view of relationships has changed. Now I don't ask myself, "What is it that I want to get from this person?", but rather "What can I give?" It turns out that I can't give very much.

Am I ready for the enormous spiritual work that goes into relationships? Daily work with defects and egotism is the willingness to sacrifice one's own interests and serve others.

It's intimacy that I'm so afraid of. The intimacy, which for me has always been muddled with lust. And it's sex that I'm also afraid of, without which I have been living so well for the last six years.

I am afraid of what will happen to me—the excessive covering

of feelings, hormonal swings, exhilarating illusions and their painful shattering, and other delights of "romantic chemistry..."

Will I ever be ready for this? Only God knows. I'm 48, and I'm used to living alone. I value my peace of mind and fragile inner balance, and honestly, I don't want any draining and stressful changes at all.

Do I feel lonely because I don't have a relationship? No. Sometimes I may experience this feeling, but in reality, as long as I have a connection with God and other people, I'm not alone.

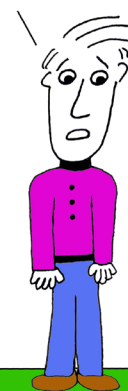
I concluded a long time ago that my inner happiness doesn't depend on the presence of a partner. My inner happiness depends on my beliefs, on how grateful I am to God for what I have in my life today, on how close and trusting my relationship with God is, on how much I can live in accordance with the will of God and with spiritual principles, and on how useful I am to this world.

An anonymous brother
from Russia



Maxey
By Jimmy M.

She broke up
with me...



Now you are
free to be
happy and
joyous!





Being
single
allowed
him
to
devote
his
whole
life
to
God.

I was not put in this program by a spouse. I put myself here of my own volition. I don't have to get found out or exposed because I have the opportunity to expose and find out about myself here in safety and connection with others, united in fellowship all across the world. I may not ever marry. It is possible that I could live a neo-monastic life in spiritual practice and connection with others under God all across the planet, and I'm okay with that. A lot of pain still, but pain when

fully processed becomes wisdom.

In a Twelve-Step fellowship, the focus is always internal, as attitude transcends external circumstances. When it comes to relationships, I cannot choose who will come to sit at my table, but only on what I will bring to it. The focus is on my side of the street and on keeping my own home clean. I have learned from old timers that relationships are about what I can give, as I have no control over what I will be given. I believe that recovery is about

giving, while active addiction is about taking, and it is only through recovery that my relationship with others and God can be good.

Sexaholism is a family disease that goes back multiple generations in my family tree, and it was modeled to me in place of real connection and true union between both spouses and both sexes. The saying is that "there's always 6 people in the bedroom"—husband, wife, and all four parents as children learn to connect with the opposite sex through mother/father relations. For me, there's always about 12 people in the bedroom, and being single has definitely helped me to sort out, uncover, discover, and discard much of what was in my baseline conditioning.

My recovery and time spent being single have offered me uncanny space and clarity necessary to keep from playing out intergenerational family dysfunction through sexaholism.

While I would love to marry, being single isn't so bad when I realize what it's for, as I believe there is a reason and purpose for which all things exist, under my Higher Power.

With no one else in the way, what better time to connect with God?

Being single is a time to reflect upon oneself and God and to find contentment inside oneself that

can later be shared with another. This is the opposite of active addiction, as addiction is about taking, and recovery is about giving.

Whether I marry or not, I can be wed to my own healing process and to helping others heal too. Whether I ever have children of my own or not, I realize that I have a responsibility to pass on all the good I've been given. Whether someone calls me Dad or not, I am meant to set the best example I can for all members of younger generations.

In doing all of this, my instinct to act as a father and as a husband is satisfied.

Hard as it can be, that instinct is truly satisfied.

Lee F., Chicago, USA 

Maxey
By Jimmy M.

Being single
is a drag....



Being single
is a gift....

Smashing the Golden Idol

By repairing the past, through working the Program, he found the freedom of being single.

Throughout my lust addiction, romantic relationships became a golden calf to me. I thought an attractive, emotionally compatible girlfriend would fulfill and complete me. Having a girlfriend became a persistent fantasy, but every time a woman would say yes to my proposition for a date, I would run from the relationship as soon as it took off. I was too emotionally immature to share my heart with someone in a way that was even remotely selfless or healthy. I was afraid the woman would find out who I really was. To protect myself from rejection, like a parachutist jumping from a crashing airplane, I would bail from the relationship as soon as it took off, fleeing to my addiction, where I thought I could never get hurt.


Since June 18, 2024, I have been sober and I have been single. As I repair the ruins of my past, I am just now realizing how emotionally and spiritually stunted and immature I am, thanks to years of destructive sexual behavior. I am just now learning how to forge actual friendships and how to share my heart with people in a way that is "other-centered," with

the unique brand of freedom that the single life offers.

One way I do this is by sponsoring other sexaholics. Sponsorship has been a tremendous opportunity to reach *beyond* myself, to focus on the needs of others, and to *give of myself* to them, just as God *gives of himself* to me. This *giving of the self* has brought me a kind of joy and fulfillment I have never known.

My single life also allows me to grow deeper in my relationship with God with a freedom I might not otherwise enjoy. I "hang out" with God. I take walks with him. I ride my bike with him. I hike with him. I connect with him through the glories of his creation and the treasures of my faith tradition.

I don't know what my lifelong vocation is. But I am certain of my vocation *today*. I am certain that God wants me to stay sober. I am also certain that God wants me to help others. I find, during morning prayer, that when I ask God to send me someone to help, he never fails to do so. When I am in service to others, free from constraint, the opportunities to discover untapped wellsprings of joy are endless.

Joe S., Ohio, USA 

Base Salary Versus Bonuses

God's love and will in her life are all she needs, and anything else is extra.

I grew up with an urge to be a grandmother; I just loved the idea of having a family and children. I would name my daughter after the girl who sits on the last bench in my class. I was in first grade, and I looked at my crush and thought, "If we had a daughter, I would name her after my classmate who's at the top of our class." Cute, right? I chuckle because I was only five when I did this. Does this make me a sexaholic? Was it just an obsession or a childhood first love? Well, I always liked being in the feeling of love. Yes, love... the grass gets greener, and the sun seems brighter. And when I look at him, I love it when he looks back from afar. I love this one-sided melody without any destination. I don't know when it turned into an obsession; I don't know when this foolishness turned into insanity. Now, let me be straight: I am not saying I can't love. I am just saying I am obsessed with the idea of being *in* love. I always need someone who's "husband material."

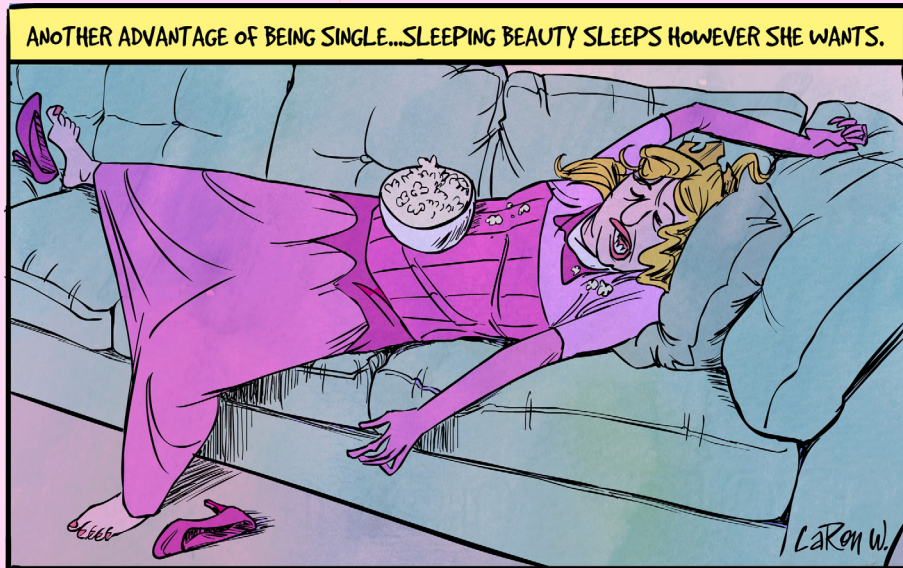
Someone whom I can obsess about having a family with... the Quick Fix. Then, I would be okay. But is that even true? Well, I have fallen in love more than I can count on my fingers, but I realized that love is in needlessness, and lust is in needfulness. This means when I "need" something, it becomes lust. It's not love because I need him, and only him. I make him my higher power. What happens when he is in my life? He fails me, not because he is not capable, but because I can't feed my God-hunger with him. I "need" God, only Him, and He can fill my hunger for love.

So, people are like bonuses, because I don't get my base salary from them; I get it from God. My God, my only employer, pays me and quenches my basic needs, so I don't need to worry about my needs. I can give without lusting for the results. Bonuses are optional. When I have them, it's great, but when I don't, I will always have my base salary, which is my God, and that's what makes life fun for me.

Arpita, Delhi, India 



Sober, Single, and Grateful



She came to accept Higher Power's plan for her.

I had to learn to love myself, not in the way a conceited person does, but as a precious child of God. I had to learn to enjoy my own company and to remember I am a precious child of God. Not a *perfect* one, but a work in progress with my Higher Power molding me to His will. I am not in charge of my life; my Higher Power is in charge. I have to accept that Higher Power knows what is best for me. I accept that Higher Power's plan for me is to be single. Being single is not a failure. I am grateful for the lessons my Higher Power has taught me about loving and liking myself as

a precious child of God. God is for the sexaholic, including me. It took me a long time to believe that. Sometimes I forget but my Higher Power reminds me through prayer, words of another sexaholic, or SA literature.

Being single and female in SA is being part of two minorities within the fellowship.

Being single and female in SA is being part of two minorities within the fellowship. I have always been single. I almost got married in my thirties. I was desperate to be married but my fiancé was a violent alcoholic. My friends and family urged me not to marry him. I was stubborn at first and refused to listen to them. Then, the God of my understanding got through to me, and I broke off the engagement.

I have a good support system of friends and family.

I am content being single. I have a good support system of friends and family. Some of my SA friends are like the brothers I never had, and hopefully, I express gratitude to them for their support on my recovery journey.

I started going to SA meetings in 1992. Four other women were attending the meetings. All four left the Program. I was the only woman for a few years. The SA men treated me like one of the guys or as a sister. When I came to SA, I was still looking for a mate. My sponsor reminded me that I needed to work on my character defects while maintaining sobriety before I could think about dating. She was correct. I needed to keep the focus on myself. I have gone on a few dates over the years, but nothing that was serious. I enjoy having


male friends, and that is enough for me. I find I can talk to men in our Fellowship as a person, not a sex object.

Having boundaries that are healthy is very important for me as a single woman in SA. I need to feel safe in every meeting I attend. I don't hug most men. I shake hands sometimes. This is a firm boundary as most men in SA are married. Program members respect my boundaries. Now, in the Cleveland area, we have six women. I hug them after I check with them that I wouldn't be violating their boundaries. I have triggers, and I am aware of most of them. I am not perfect. When I have a lust hit, I need to surrender it to God as soon as I can and call to talk to someone in SA.

I am grateful to God that I am single and sober one day at a time.

Being single in SA means I can go to as many meetings as I want. I can also choose how much service I participate in on a regular basis. I have the freedom to take phone calls, texts, or emails without it interfering with my family life. I can also choose when I go to a convention.

I am grateful to God that I am single and sober one day at a time.

Peg V., Ohio, USA 

Sobriety has helped him deal with the highs and lows of being single.

I am single. I am not always happy, joyous, and free. It can be lonely. Divorce is painful. I don't feel happy, joyous, and free.

Today, I am 18 months sober—miraculous proof that God can do for me what I couldn't do for myself. I have also been depressed for about a month. I have been officially single for about half the time I've been sober. My wife moved out the same day I went on a bender, two weeks before I went to rehab, which is also two weeks before my current sobriety date.

The White Book has a line comparing who has it easier:

HAPPY?
JOYOUS?
SINGLE.

marrieds or singles. In my case, being single was much easier, at least at first. I no longer had to consider anyone else in making recovery decisions. If I needed to make a call, I made a call. If I needed to attend an extra meeting, I went to it. I had focus. No more roller coaster rides. The ride was called "living with a spouse whom I had hurt deeply and who, at any moment, might turn into a pain-activated version of herself who expressed that pain in ways I did not know how to deal with."

I tell my sponsees, "That's the upside of being single." There is also a downside as I see it. There is spiritual growth in living with someone I hurt so deeply and finding a way to not make it about me. I never learned how to do that. It's harder to learn to do that when I'm living alone—not impossible, just harder. It's the essential recovery ingredient. Of course, God is good at finding the right way to challenge me. Learning how to live for others while living alone has been a blessing, and sometimes I do still miss my ex-wife.

P.S. My pitbull named Pumba wanted to comment on the fact that I do not live alone, and she is always happy to receive more of my undivided attention, especially if it's in the form of food, play, or walking.

P.P.S. Between writing and editing this article, my depression has lifted. Right before the deadline for this article! That means I am happy, joyous, and single, one day at a time.

Pasha F., Washington, USA 

MY HIGHER SELF

SA and therapy helped her discern the part of her that possesses peace and healing.

I have been sober for several years now, and have taken my first steps toward recovery. By "recovery," I don't just mean working the Steps, but that I am literally "recovering." I'm talking about healing and restoration.

This allows me to better discern the voice of my "lower self," but also my "higher self." My lower self wants to take things from the world to make itself happy. My higher self is where my Higher Power resides. It is the part of me where wholeness, peace, and a healing, driving force can be found. God is not up there in the sky, but here within me. When I follow Him, the healthy part of me grows and I heal, slowly but surely.

It is my lower self that always wanted a relationship. After about a year in SA, I noticed that the desire to have sex with someone else or myself had completely disappeared. Yet the desire for a relationship remained for several years. Rationally, I didn't want a relationship, but my heart con-

tinued to long for one.

Last weekend, I was at our annual Dutch-speaking convention. A striking number of fellows shared their desire for a relationship. It was only then that I realized I hadn't felt like that for a long time. That my Higher Power took it away from me. What a miracle! Through the combination of SA and therapy, I am truly recovering. The damaged, wounded child in me is being healed more and more, allowing my true self, my healed self, to become more visible. I control or direct none of this. All I have to do is follow my Higher Power and listen to Him.

Today, I am grateful with both my head and my heart for being single. There is time and space for silence, healing, and discovering who I am. I don't know where God will lead me in the future. But today I am happy and I find peace within myself, and for that I can never be sufficiently grateful.

Nathalie V.,
Mortsel, Belgium 

SOBER, SINGLE, AND DANCING

Surrendering and in healthy activities affirmed that he belonged.

My name is Ryan, and I am a child of my Higher Power. As a former SA sponsor once humorously suggested, “You qualify to be in the program, you are one of us!”

I came to SA in 2017, but after a while, it became clear that I needed to leave the Program. I needed to find a genuine and authentic spirituality—a relationship with a merciful and loving Higher Power. Another reason I left is that I found the meetings I attended too serious! There was no joy, no humor, no levity. It didn’t seem to correspond to my understanding of healthy and life-giving emotional sobriety, so I left.

I tried other programs. While I found many of these programs helpful in many ways, for me, lust is the problem and driving force behind my acting out. Today, I am grateful to have brothers from a healthy SA meeting with whom I can walk in freedom from lust.

Growing up, I had a difficult time finding connections. I was always with my nose in a book and never with hobbies that connected me to others. Years after leaving SA, I tried online dating. Lusting after photographs and profile pictures didn’t do me any favors. At this time, I also attended services and events at church, but there was an unhealthy culture in which men and women did not talk to each other. I felt like I needed a way to meet people, especially women, in a fun, social, and wholesome way.

About six months before returning to SA, a friend came to my rescue with this gem:



“You’ve got to check out a swing dance night!” I was skeptical, since my only dance was limited to a salsa class. That salsa class didn’t feel like a good way to connect with women. I took my friend up on his offer and was instantly hooked! It felt like a puzzle piece that had been missing from my life. I finally found the fun and wholesome connection that I was looking for!

When I am dancing, I am taken out of myself. I’m focused on music and my partner. This stands in stark contrast with the morbid self-obsession that I had in the depths of my dark bondage to lust. Lust isolates me, makes me feel gravely serious, and isolates me.

Swing dancing commensurates with healthy lust-free sobriety! While some forms of dance might be inappropriate, swing dancing is not one of them. It is a wholesome way to find connection with others around you.

I view each temptation as a unique opportunity to grow.

It is impossible to go through life without temptation. A spiritual mentor suggested that I view each temptation as a unique opportunity to grow. Now, when I am tempted, I realize this opportunity. There will never be another moment like this. I then ask what my Higher Power would want for me, which is usually to feel loved and connected. Then, I usually say a short prayer. All of this

brings me out of myself and connects me to my Higher Power and others. Learning to connect with others is a valuable lesson that dance has taught me.

Writing cannot capture all the benefits that this has given me! I learned:

It’s ok to have fun.

It’s ok to be silly.

I don’t have to be perfect.

I can make mistakes and laugh them off.

One of the most important lessons is how to connect with women. Before swing dancing, there was a part of me that was convinced women hated me. This is no longer the case. Dancing played a pivotal role in healing a wound that I had deep inside my heart. I feel more comfortable around people, and women especially, than I ever have.

An unexpected benefit that I gained from dance is connecting with other men, which is something that I didn’t know I needed or even wanted. There is a group of guys that I go swing dancing with— we dance with women. I have found a sense of camaraderie and friendship that has developed over learning how to dance and going to swing dancing events together, which has been a tremendous blessing in my life. Thanks for letting me share.

Ryan, California, USA 

MOVING THE ONE-YEAR DATING LINE



A spiritual experience led to acceptance of God's plan for her personal life.

Sitting in the counselor's office in early 2020, I voiced my biggest fear: that one day my sexual behavior would destroy a marriage.

Fetish-oriented fantasy, masturbation, literature, and pornography had been a part of my life for as long as I could remember, for no apparent external reason. I managed to curb the habit during a one-year relationship in my senior year of college.

The moment the relationship ended, however, my compulsive behavior and thinking were back with a vengeance.

I entered SA in March 2021. After slips, I would return to Step One, believing that I must not have ful-

ly admitted my powerlessness. But deep down, I harbored an assumption that eventually, I would be able to stay sober for that magical year and then be free to date. Each time I reset the starting date, a grain of resentment began to grow, watered by my belief that the "finish line" was continually moving away from me.

Then, in January 2025, I began working the Steps using the clear-cut directions in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

I was asked if I believed, or was even willing to believe, that there existed a power greater than myself (AA 47). Yes, I did believe. I was then on Step Three.

The next ingredient was "to quit playing God" (AA 62). I was told to pour the water of self will out to allow God to flow in. I decided "God was going to be my Director" (AA 62). I made this decision while sitting at my dining room table, the same day that I had taken Steps One and Two. Immediately, I felt new power flow in. I followed this up with a course of rigorous action and completed Steps Four-Eight within a few weeks. Forty-four days sober, after beginning my Step Nine amends, and beginning to practice Steps Ten and Eleven in

my daily life, I started sponsoring. At some point in the following weeks, I commented to my sponsor almost as an afterthought, "You know, before this spiritual awakening, I was really resentful about continually moving the one-year dating line on myself." I hadn't even noticed that feeling disappear. The happy irony is I no longer feel the urge to find someone to date or to marry.

I have realized that my fear of destroying a future marriage came out of an unconscious knowledge of the progressive nature of this addiction.

But today? [I am] not fighting it, neither [am I] avoiding temptation (AA 85). I can't explain it; I just know that whatever happens in this life—even the loss of a marriage, if I were to return to the insanity—God has me, and I will be ok.

Single life is so good today. When I catch myself putting the director's hat back on, the solution never fails to bring me back to being happy, joyous, and free.

God is directing my life perfectly, whether He chooses to play matchmaker or not.

I am just along for the ride, enjoying each day as God brings it!

Catherine H., Cleveland, Ohio 

There I Am Also

Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety.

I began service in SA to practice leadership based on the principles and values I am learning from our Twelve-Step Program and to learn a new sober way of life and functioning in the world. SA service means I am too focused on helping sexaholics find the Program and affirming them in their recovery. The principles and values of SA service leadership are not based on getting attention, gaining approval, or winning. In my experience, the principles and values are quite different from the keys to corporate success that many of us have learned. It is about holding space for options and opportunities while listening for the voice of our Higher Power speaking from within ourselves, and within the voice of other SA members. It involves speaking our truths and humbly being silent while listening.

When I became a Trustee and a member of the Public Information Committee (PIC), I had to reflect on my motive for service. My motive

for service on the Board of Trustees (BoT) and the PIC is not based on “you and me against the world,” “we versus them,” or even “there but for the grace of God go I.” It is about the humble admission “there I am also”; it is about “all of us together.” My motive is to serve, attempting to communicate “hope and our truths” through the marketplace of social media, rampant with toxic addictive lust.

To do this, our message must come from a sober self—in a clear and clean appeal to the heart (the higher self) of both the active and the recovering addict. By higher self I am referring to that incorruptible part of the self that knows truth and goodness when it is heard or experienced. Additionally, I find the “there I am also” motive draws me into fellowship and inspires gratitude, joy, compassion, generosity, and a respectful caution for my own safety and the safety of others in all that we do.

Jack H., California, USA 



Not That Different

OTHERS SHARING FROM THEIR WEAKNESS HELPED HIM REALIZE HE WAS NOT ALONE.

I, I'm Justin, I'm a grateful recovering sexaholic. I came to SA in 2019 when a priest friend introduced me to the Fellowship. I had just started a new job and it was summertime. He invited me to a meeting, gave me the SA White Book, and encouraged me to attend. At that first meeting, I heard other men share openly about their struggles—not just with masturbation and pornography, but with lust itself. I immediately felt connected. For the first time, I realized I wasn't alone. I had just graduated from college and was single, and hearing others share so honestly gave me a real sense of hope.

After moving to Virginia in August 2019, I started working the 12 Steps with my first SA sponsor. I shared a lot of my guilt and shame with him, and through that process, I heard words I'll never forget: “You're not that different. Thank you for sharing.”

That acceptance gave me the courage to keep opening up with other members.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020 and in-person meetings shut down, I drifted away from active recovery. I had been working on Step Nine when the shutdowns happened. As a single man, I wanted to start dating, but I knew deep

down I needed more recovery first. I was also discerning other major life decisions, including a possible “religious commitment” that would require celibacy.

In 2021, I moved to Maine. I continued attending virtual SA meetings but struggled to maintain sobriety. In 2022, I returned to Virginia, reconnected with SA in person, and recommitted to my recovery journey. I completed all 12 Steps with another sponsor and began doing service work: sponsoring men from all over the world, serving as Recording Secretary for the Capital Area SA (CASA) Intergroup, emceeing a CASA workshop on “Service,” and helping at events like Gratitude Day. Gratitude Day is the annual fall SA meetings marathon for CASA. I also currently serve as Treasurer and General Service Representative (GSR) for my home group in Arlington (Crystal City), Virginia.

During my time as a single man in SA, I learned to embrace fellowship.

During my time as a single man in SA, I learned to embrace fellowship. I found joy and connection with other members by simply spending time together: going out for meals before meetings, hanging out afterward, and just being present. Without the pressure of seeking a relationship, I could experience real friendship and support. It wasn’t about getting sober to find someone to marry; it was about building a life grounded in the

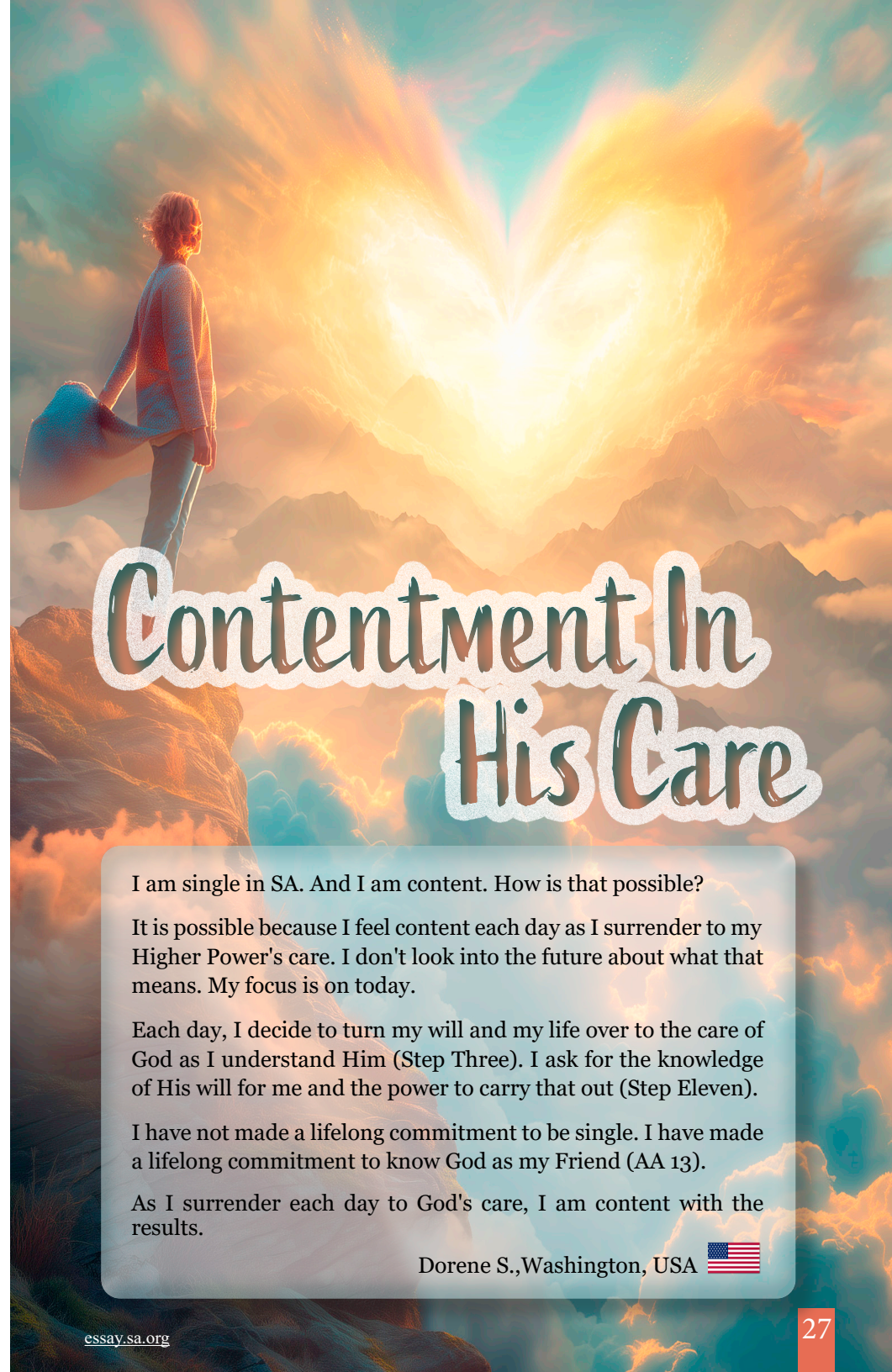
Real Connection, in honesty and recovery. I’m now married for over a year and my wife supports my recovery.

One of the highlights of my journey was bringing a friend into SA. After sharing my story with him, he attended a meeting at my home group—on the same night my sponsor celebrated four years of sobriety.

Since then, that friend has brought others into the fellowship, and the ripple effect continues.

I am deeply grateful for SA. It has saved me from isolation. Even during times when I drifted, the prayers and support of other members helped bring me back to the Fellowship. With that, I’ll pass.

Justin W., Virginia, USA 



Contentment In His Care


I am single in SA. And I am content. How is that possible?

It is possible because I feel content each day as I surrender to my Higher Power's care. I don't look into the future about what that means. My focus is on today.

Each day, I decide to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand Him (Step Three). I ask for the knowledge of His will for me and the power to carry that out (Step Eleven).

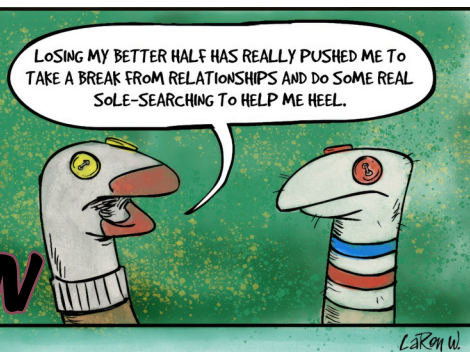
I have not made a lifelong commitment to be single. I have made a lifelong commitment to know God as my Friend (AA 13).

As I surrender each day to God's care, I am content with the results.

Dorene S., Washington, USA 

SA Stories

DEALING WITH INFATUATION



DETACHMENT WAS THE PATH THAT LED HIM TO SEEK WHAT WAS REAL.

Without a doubt, my program is one of progress, not perfection. It has taken me some years to understand how infatuation has kept me bound to lust.


Infatuation, I believe, is a distortion of reality. What begins in me as a natural response, appreciating what is attractive in another person, slides out of reality and into the realm of fantasy. My desire, grounded in lust, changes an appreciation into an unnatural desire to possess. Oftentimes, I don't know much about the person I'm infatuated with. My infatuation is not based on knowledge or the actual qualities of a person, but is based on what I want to see and what I imagine myself doing with that person.

I see infatuation not only as disrespecting the person I'm obsessing over, but also as a complete waste of time. "Fantasy corrupted the real; lust killed love," (SA 203). There is no opportunity to develop a real relationship when I am consumed with lust. How can I be satisfied with only pipe dreams? I will continue to be lonely and frustrated. Once, having met a person at a conference, I carried that image for months despite not having seen that person again in the interim. Finally, I came to my senses

and shared it with my sponsor and other friends in the program.

The path to health lies in detaching from what is unhealthy. Infatuation definitely qualifies for detachment. My Higher Power allows me to see beyond the infatuation to the real person. I often use the short acclamation, "Help me, Higher Power! I am powerless over this lust," and repeat it many times in order to get my thoughts free, and then I ask for Higher Power to bless that person. I trust my HP to lead me to my best interest.

How can I distinguish infatuation from real love? Fortunately, the program gives us tools. Real intimacy comes from knowing each other, and that takes time. If I care about the other, I will give myself time to participate in "neutral," non-sexual activities and appreciate the spiritual side and worthy characteristics of the person. Whereas infatuation does not want to make a long-term commitment to the other, committed love does. When my experience of the other has grown into respect and appreciation of their unique value, then I am ready for love and long-term commitment.

KB, St. Louis, USA 
August 2025

Before SA and recovery from chronic lust and the acting out that followed, I was frequently lost in fantasy, on dating apps, or in an "intimate encounter." The irony was, there was nothing intimate about it. This behavior eroded away my soul and made me feel deeply ashamed. It was also causing aggravation, fear, and intimidation—albeit unintentionally. Like any good ol' sexaholic, I could not stop.

But God started to help me, long before I was ready or wanted that help. Two different counselors mentioned the possibility of sexual addiction. The second counselor referred me to SA in Charlestown, NW Ireland. I went, though I did not want to. I kept coming back through self-righteous judgment, anger, guilt, fear, shame, spite, wanting to control and enjoy it, chronic relapse—eventually, acceptance at a much deeper level, and gradually, recovery. A gift, recovery that is, beyond compare! As it says in "The Solution" in the White book, "And the healing began" (SA 204).

Now I have a lovely life. My wife, whom I deeply hurt before we were married, with my acting out on dating apps and infidelity, is an exceptionally understanding and forgiving woman. Our relationship is happy. Sometimes my emotional immaturity causes problems in our relationship, but that is happening

a lot less often than it used to. I have also been blessed with a kind, gentle, and energetic daughter. I used to worry so much about her, due to my being a sexaholic, that she would have mental health or addiction to deal with. However, the best thing I can do to limit the likelihood of that happening is, as my former sponsor used to say, "Stay sober, work the steps, see what God does."

Besides a happy family life, despite the odds, I have a strong but light program, insofar as possible. This keeps me 'topped up'/ feeling connected and whole. I enjoy fellowship and contact with fellows for coffee, meetings, etc., and it's helping me so much. I have a reasonable degree of freedom from lust. I take good custody of my eyes. I really like the man I am growing into. I cannot believe it sometimes, but currently, I have been sober for over 17 months. Despite my failings, I am a good father and husband. Thanks to God and the influence of the Program, I can be of service to those I love, my friends and fellows, without seeking anything in return. This shift in my attitude, from sneakily acting out as often as I could, without a thought of anyone else, to being able to give to those I care about, is both a freedom and a joy, and fills me with healthy self-respect. Thanks to God and the Program.

Barry O., Charlestown, Ireland 

The Healing Began

This member likes the man he is growing into.



SA CFC

Sober, Joyous, and Single

THIS PERIOD IN HIS LIFE HAS GIVEN HIM TIME TO GROW.

Hi, I'm James D., and I've been incarcerated since January 28, 2022. I've been sexually sober since November 29, 2023—one year, ten months, and one day from the worst day of my life. That day, I experienced the first of many of the best days of my life: the day I entered sobriety.

That same day I got locked up was also the day I became single. I've remained single throughout my incarceration. So today, I stand both sober and single—not the worst thing to be in prison. In fact, it's given me space to grow.

I do hope that someday I'll be able to practice relationship in sobriety, but until God sends the right woman into my life to walk with me on this journey, I'll stay right where I am: sober, joyous, and ... single.

Thank you to everyone who has kept me in their prayers and wished me well in my sobriety, health, and overall well-being. Until next time, I'm James D., and I've been sober since November 29, 2023.

James D., Correctional Facility in the USA 

Worldwide News

THE LIFEBOAT OF THE FELLOWSHIP

THE FELLOWSHIP HELPED HIM ACCEPT HIS DISEASE AND LAUGH WITH MEMBERS.

Ontario's SA Spring Retreat 2025, themed "Acceptance is the Answer", took place from Friday, May 23rd–Sunday, May 25th, coordinated by the Peterborough SA group.

An SA retreat was not where I was expecting to be or even really wanted to be after my 2nd year of university. I thought it was being quarantined with a bunch of mentally sick people! However, I do have a persuasive sponsor who encouraged me to go.

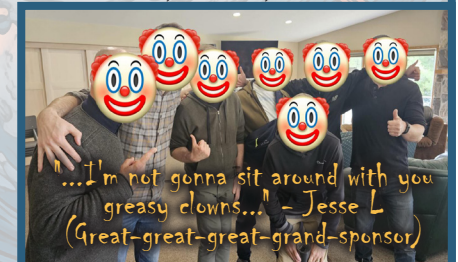
During the retreat, aligned with the theme, I accepted two things I was still struggling with, which meant I wasn't surrendering to God.

Firstly, I accepted that I am a sexaholic and I want to be a part of SA. I found out during the retreat that sexaholics with good recovery are the funniest people I know. For many of these people, having been faced with death through their sexaholism and having progressively recovered from such a state, they are immensely grateful and also don't take themselves too seriously—hence the unbeatable humour. Working the Steps by myself kept me afloat

for a time, but working the Steps while connecting with others puts me in the lifeboat of the Fellowship. I wanted to be a part of this Fellowship, which meant accepting that I am a sexaholic.

The other point of acceptance was that working the 12 Steps is difficult. The actions of lust are easier, but the results produce death in me. The actions of recovery are harder, but the results produce life—the real connection. When my sponsor said the grand-sponsor would be there, I thought that it was some SA title granted upon a certain level of sobriety, like a rank level in a video game. Apparently, he was just my sponsor's sponsor. AND my great-grand-sponsor too! Seeing where they were in their recovery and how they continued to carry the message all the way to me helped me accept that working the Program is worth it. I am charged with carrying the message forward. As I continue working the Steps, I come to experience more fully that accepting hardships is the pathway to peace.

Silas, Ottawa, Canada 





As I reflect on my journey in recovery, I'm filled with gratitude for the AA Big Book and those who have carried its message. Working the Steps as they're written in the Big Book has been the most transformative path to true freedom that I've experienced.

I found SA in 2015, and have since worked the Steps using five different methods. Each method has helped me grow in some way, but my life started to take a new course as I encountered members of Sexaholics Anonymous who embodied the principles outlined in the Big Book. I could see that they were actually happy, joyous, and free, and I desperately wanted the kind of recovery that they had.

Inspired by their example, I knew that I needed to work the Steps through the AA Big Book. However, finding a woman to guide me through this specific method proved challenging. Just as I was losing hope, I was connected with a long-sobber member of AA, and some of my SA brothers began a workshop using the same approach. Suddenly, God was abundantly providing everything that I needed to clear away the things that blocked me from Him.

The simplicity of working the Steps as written changed my life! I used to be filled with fear, shame, and lust. Now I'm overflowing with love, joy, peace, and unimagined freedom. I am a completely different person, and to those who know me, the difference is undeniable. I don't merely have sobriety, I have a life I didn't know was possible. The Big Book puts it this way, "We have found much of heaven and we have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed" (AA 25).

I'm deeply grateful that this message was carried to me, and I'm eager to continue carrying it to others. My former sponsor encouraged me to lead a workshop, pointing out the need for women to share this message within our Fellowship. I'm thrilled that a SA sister and I will begin a workshop for SA sisters and brothers on September 6th. She is a dear friend and sponsee whose life has also been transformed through this approach. We are both excited to continue to carry the message, and we hope others will soon experience this freedom.

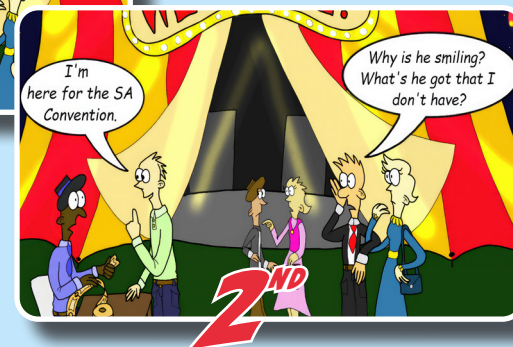
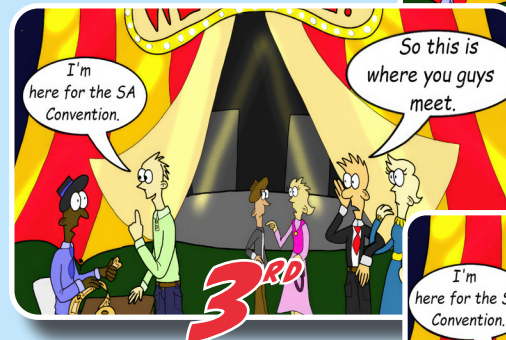
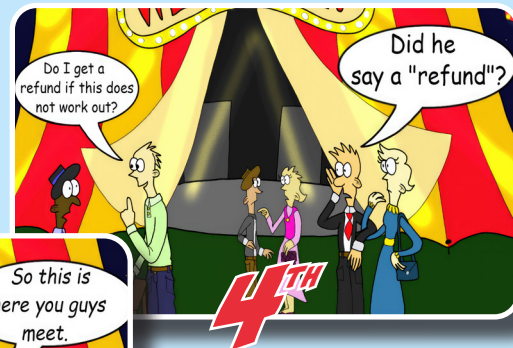
For meeting announcements, please join <https://tinyurl.com/BigBookWorkshop>

Sheri B., Michigan, USA 

August 2025

JOIN OUR CONTEST AND CRAFT THE BEST CAPTION

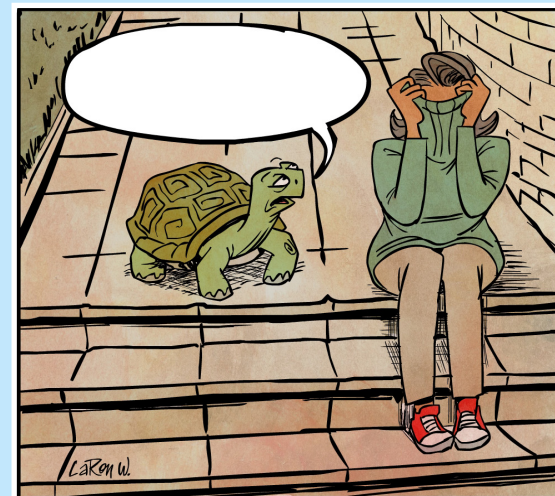
Thank you to all who participated in June's "Closed Caption Competition." Also, thank you to the 40 members who voted on their favorite entry. The winner of June's contest is Nathan G. from Canada. His caption can be



viewed on page three of this edition. And congratulations to an anonymous member, who won second and third place, and to Vince G., who won fourth place. Anonymous and Vince's captions can be viewed above on this page.

ARE YOU READY FOR ANOTHER CAPTION CHALLENGE?

We invite you to craft the perfect recovery caption for the cartoon on the right, centered on October's theme, "Overcoming Fear, Guilt, and Shame." If your caption makes us laugh, it will be featured in the October ESSAY edition. Don't miss out—the submission deadline is September 15. Send your entry to essay@sa.org. Unleash your creativity, and may the cleverest caption win!



NEW SA MEETINGS

NORTH, CENTRAL, & SOUTH AMERICA

Aiken, South Carolina, USA
Glastonbury, Connecticut, USA
Ste Anne, Manitoba, CANADA
Hanover, Pennsylvania, USA
Longandale, Nevada, USA
Columbus, Nebraska, USA
Fitchburb, Wisconsin, USA
Additional Meeting Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA

Northwest SA & S-Anon
Fall Retreat



Let Go and Let God

Special Events
• Sobriety Birthday Celebration
• Variety Show
• Raffle

October 10 - 12, 2025

Ross Point Camp
& Conference Center, Idaho
www.rosspoint.org
Workshops on the Steps and
Recovering Together in SA

SA EMER Convention 2025
Fri 5th to Sun 7th December
with S-Anon Participation
Sanctuary of Our Lady o Banneux,
Belgium



Scan me
to book

"The Greatest Adventure of our lives"
White book p78

For more information contact
emer.conventie.2025@gmail.com
or
bit.ly/emer2025

Help Needed:
ESSAY Proofreaders
We sure could use your help
to review the ESSAY drafts. If
you're interested in this service,
please contact us at
essay@sa.org with the subject
line, "ESSAY Service
Opportunities." Thank you very
much for your service!



HELP!
BY: THE IT COMMITTEE
Help needed for web
designers, artists, writers, project
managers, committee
/subcommittee secretaries, etc.

HELP

Please consider volunteering!

Contact
SAICO at saico@sa.org for an

COMING IN OCTOBER



NEXT EDITION

Our next edition's theme is "Overcoming Fear, Guilt, and Shame." Coming into the Program, many of us experience fear of facing the guilt and shame that the addiction of sexaholism brings to those powerless over lust. The Fellowship helps us overcome this fear by walking with us through the process of finding a sponsor and working the Steps. In doing so, we discover that we are not the things the addiction said we were. We are human beings on a wonderful journey to sobriety and recovery. However, ESSAY is your magazine and 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.

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.

SUBMIT YOUR STORY

October 2025 edition: Overcoming Fear, Guilt, and Shame (Stories due September 1) How has working the Program helped you surrender fear and overcome guilt and shame?

December 2025 edition: The Great Fact (Stories due November 1) What does this fact of a deep and effective spiritual experience look like in your recovery?

February 2026 edition: A Great Caution is Advised (Stories due January 1) How has considering the White Book's caution on disclosure helped those we love inside and outside SA?

April 2026 edition: Humility, Fearlessness, and Rigorous Honesty (Stories due March 1) How has rigorous honesty helped you to become right-sized in sobriety and recovery?

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.

The background is a dark, textured blue-green color. At the top, there are horizontal white lines suggesting a ceiling or light rays. In the center, a white rectangular box contains the text. Below the box, there is a large, dense crowd of people, depicted as white silhouettes against the dark background. The people are shown from behind, looking towards the text box, suggesting they are in a church or a large hall, attending a service or prayer.

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.