

AM I TOO YOUNG?



Is SA for Me?

Am I Too Young to be a Sexaholic?

Note: This pamphlet is intended only for those who are legally eligible to attend SA meetings; legal minors are not permitted to attend SA meetings.

What is a Sexaholic?

We sexaholics are men and women who had lost control of our sexual thinking and behavior. Before coming to Sexaholics Anonymous, we were unable to stop the thoughts and actions that continued to bring us guilt, shame, and despair. Some of us were compulsive masturbators, voyeurs, exhibitionists, unfaithful spouses, and viewers of pornography, among many other things. Regardless of the sincerity of our resolutions and other attempts to quit acting out these behaviors, our addiction drove us to do them, even though we knew they were ruining our lives.

“I was baffled by my inability to stop doing something that made me feel bad about myself and that I truly wanted to stop doing.”

“Masturbation and fantasy became huge and compulsive. Eventually I would just get the thought to masturbate and I would have to go do it.”

“I felt angry that I couldn’t stop and stay stopped, shameful at what I thought was



my own weak will, and afraid—always afraid.”

“I came to SA because I felt an emotional pain so bad that I wanted to kill myself but could not bring myself to do it. I found out that I had lost control of my life and that my lust was running it without my permission.”

What is lust?

The book Sexaholics Anonymous says it is “an attitude demanding that a natural instinct serve unnatural desires.” The text continues: “When we try to use . . . sex to reduce isolation, loneliness, insecurity, fear, tension, or to cover our emotions, make us feel alive, help us escape, or satisfy our God-hunger, we create an unnatural appetite that misuses and abuses the natural instinct” (SA 40-41).

In other words, when we use sex for any of these purposes, we are lusting. For the sexaholic, sex is not the problem—lust is, and it is through the program of Sexaholics Anonymous that we have found progressive victory over this destructive obsession.

YET (You’re Eligible Too)

Those of us who came to Sexaholics Anonymous (SA) at a young age often found ourselves surrounded at meetings by people much older than we were. Sometimes we were the youngest in the meeting by two or three decades! This disparity in age caused many of us to

question whether we really belonged in SA. After all, most of us had never been arrested, lost a job, or ruined a marriage as many of the older members had.

“I came to SA as an 18-year-old virgin. I was worried I wouldn’t be accepted because I had never actually had sex.”

“At 25, I called a hotline number for another S program and asked if I qualified as an addict. I was not sure if I had acted out with enough people to qualify, but I knew I wanted to stop my destructive sexual thinking and behavior.”

“All the men I met in those meetings were significantly older than me. All of their stories were much longer than mine. I hadn’t done many of the things I heard them talking about. Obviously I wasn’t like them.”

As we stuck around, however, we gradually realized that this was a progressive illness and that what we could truly say was that we hadn’t gone as far as the others *yet*. Our literature confirms the experience of our older members: “our lust or sexual activity escalated over the years, crossing one line after another, first in our thought life, then in our behavior” (SA 30). We were assured that, should we choose to remain in our addiction, we were likely to cross the same lines and suffer the same dire consequences—jail, divorce, even death—as those who came to SA later in life.

“When I questioned whether I belonged in SA, my sponsor told me I was welcome to go back out and suffer ten or fifteen more years of pain and despair in order to prove I was really a sexaholic. I decided I would stick around.”

Also, even though the specifics of our stories often did not match those of the older members, we discovered that the feelings of isolation, guilt, and shame caused by acting out were common to us all.

“I came to realize that the age differences and the differences in our stories didn’t matter. We were all sexaholics—sick people trying to get well.”

Hitting Bottom

We heard people in meetings talk about “hitting bottom.” What did that mean? Did we have to get arrested in order to hit our bottom? Lose our job? Live on the streets?

We learned we didn’t have to experience any of these things in order to hit our bottom. Our bottom came the moment we admitted our problem was bigger than we were, and that we needed help. Nothing more and nothing less was required of us.

“After my wife found out about my last affair, I finally went to an SA meeting for myself. For the first time, I was completely



honest. I truly realized and accepted that I had nowhere left to go.”

“One Monday morning I found myself sitting outside my office on a curb crying. I was in total despair. I was 24 and I was beat. That was the end; the curtain had dropped and I had no more answers.”

“In August of 2007, when I was 21, I sat in my kitchen crying. I said to my wife, ‘I don’t know what to do anymore. Something’s wrong with me and I don’t know how to fix it.’”

The Twelve Steps

Once our sexually destructive thinking and behavior brought us to our knees, we were ready to accept what SA had to offer. We came to meetings regularly. We got a sponsor. We called other sober members for guidance and support. Most importantly, we worked the Twelve Steps with our sponsor. The Steps put us in touch with a Power greater than ourselves that kept us sober.

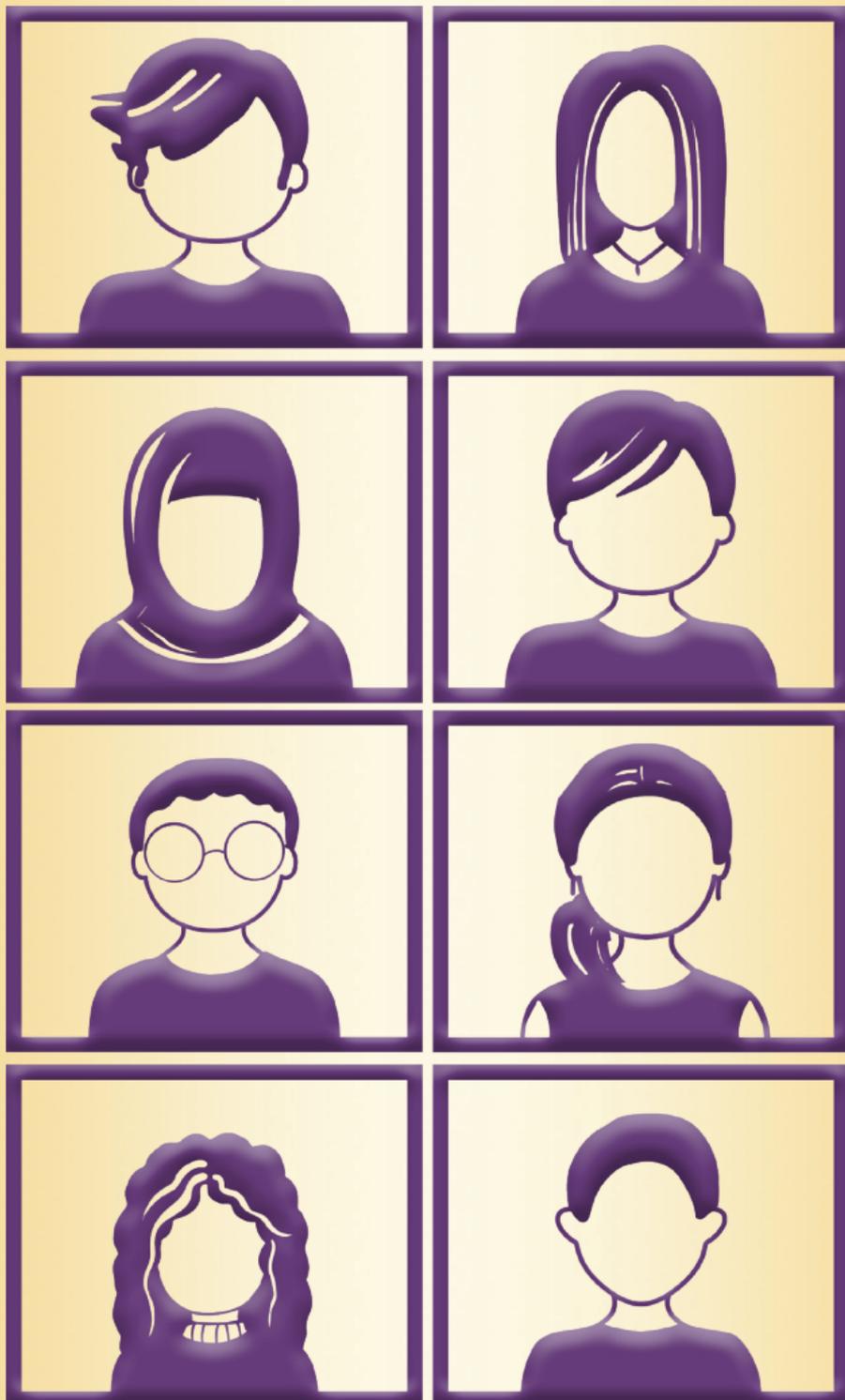
“I learned many useful tools such as meetings, literature, prayer and phone calls when I first came into the program. More than anything, though, it was working the Steps that changed my life from the inside out.”

“After an evening of working the Steps



with my sponsor, I would feel completely free from fear, anger, worry, resentment, or regret, and be filled instead with an intense happiness. That was when I knew the program was working.”

“I worked through the Twelve Steps and started sponsoring others. I attended meetings and got involved in service. Slowly, I began to experience freedom.”



The Twelve Steps of Sexaholics Anonymous

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

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to sexaholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Traditions of Sexaholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on SA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or Sexaholics Anonymous as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers.
6. An SA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.



7. Every SA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Sexaholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. SA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Sexaholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and TV.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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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).

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.



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.

If you think you may have problems with sex or lust addiction, we invite you to join us at an SA meeting. Look for Sexaholics Anonymous in your local phone directory, call SA International Central Office toll free (in the USA) at 866-424-8777, or visit our web site at sa.org. Online meetings and remote contacts are also available.

Additional copies of this pamphlet and a literature list can be ordered from:

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