

THE SA HOME GROUP



What is an SA Home Group?

The SA group whose meetings we attend regularly is usually referred to as our Home Group. Most SA members first experience the benefits of sexual sobriety in their Home Group, where we begin our personal journey in recovery. Our first interactions with fellow SA members are with those who are actively participating in the day-to-day functioning of their Home Group—the member who answered our phone call, members who facilitate meetings, members who give lead shares, members who collect donations to cover group and Central Office expenses, members who set up program literature, and of course, the member who offers to be our temporary sponsor.

The first reading we hear in our Home Group is usually the SA Purpose, which is a synopsis of our 12 Traditions. It is at our Home Group that we learn there is but one requirement for membership—a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober (by SA's sobriety definition)—but that requirement applies to all, regardless of how long we've been attending. We learn we are self-supporting, that the time and effort we devote to service counts as much as our financial contributions. It is at our Home Group, therefore, that we learn we are part of a larger Fellowship; that the primary purpose of Sexaholics Anonymous is to help one another solve a common problem that we couldn't solve alone; that to preserve our Fellowship we must carry the message of our recovery to sexaholics who still suffer.

The Home Group is where we volunteer for service positions, sustain friendships, and develop a sense of loyalty to a new extended family. To this end, many meetings provide voluntary contact lists for members to list their names, contact information, sobriety date (by SA's sobriety definition), and Home Group affiliation.



Listing our Home Group lets others know where we do our primary service work, regardless of how many other meetings we support. It is at our Home Group that we attend business meetings to make sure the group is healthy and functioning in accordance with our Traditions.

Do I Have to Join a ‘Home’ Group?

The only requirement for SA membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober, in accordance with Tradition Three. One of the biggest benefits of recovery, however, is that we learn to identify and surrender selfish thinking and behavior and instead practice being of service to others. For most of us, this process begins in the Home Group. We care about the individuals in the group, and over time, care about the health of the group itself. As we discover the benefits of sobriety and recovery, we become genuinely grateful that others are there, and realize that this gift should be passed on. The Responsibility Declaration says it best: “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.” Service to the Home Group is one of the first tangible ways we begin this life-long process of learning responsibility and giving back.

The Home Group is a Spiritual Entity

A group is more than the meeting(s) it supports. The long form of our Fifth Tradition states that each group “ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose—that of carrying its message to the sexaholic who still suffers.” From this we learn that a group is first and foremost a *spiritual entity*. Spiritual entities continue outside of the confines of a meeting. We also learn that the message we carry is a spiritual message. In short, a group is a spiritual entity which carries the SA message to the sexaholic who still suffers. The primary vehicle for carrying the SA message is the meeting.

Common SA Home Group Issues

Like members of other 12 Step fellowships, SA members generally are grateful for opportunities to serve our Home Group and are willing to make the sacrifices necessary to ensure that it's functioning in accordance with the 12 Traditions. In this respect, however, SA is sometimes faced with challenges not experienced by other fellowships. For example, it may not always be prudent for SA groups to publish the times and locations of meetings. This applies to all fellowships whose members seek personal anonymity, but anonymity can be especially prized by newcomers to SA. When the decision is made to make meeting times and locations public, therefore, it is done only by informed group conscience and with the knowledge of all participants. Similarly, SA Intergroups and websites respect the decisions of groups that do not wish their times and locations to be made public.

The decision whether or not to declare the meeting "Open" or "Closed" is also made in accordance with an informed group conscience. An open meeting is open to anyone who is interested in finding out about the concept of sex and lust addiction, or about the meeting itself. Often, family members and helping professionals are invited to open meetings. Most regular SA meetings are closed, however. That means they are open only to persons seeking their own personal sexual recovery.

Many groups provide breakout or information meetings to orient newcomers. During these sessions, sober members inform newcomers of SA's requirement for membership and our stand on sobriety, i.e., that for the married sexaholic, sexual sobriety means having no form of sex with self or with persons other than the spouse. For the unmarried sexaholic in SA, 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. In SA's sobriety definition, the term spouse refers to one's partner in a marriage between a man and a woman. During these orientation meetings, we give newcomers the opportunity to talk about what brought them to SA and their desire for sobriety.

What is my Role in the Group?

Every member has a role, either explicitly or implicitly. Our regular attendance at meetings and sharing honestly about our day-to-day struggles and victories in recovery from lust and sex addiction is in itself a spiritual contribution that benefits us and the entire group. As we grow in recovery we volunteer for various service positions available in the Group (See the list of service positions below). If newcomers feel at home and are encouraged to continue, they will gratefully assume service positions when they are eligible. We are a spiritual fellowship, and gradually become aware that our Higher Power works with our weaknesses as long as we adhere to the principles of our program.

Group Business Meetings

Issues affecting the group, such as deciding which SA or AA Program literature to read during meetings, are decided during regular business meetings. We use *Discovering the Principles* for invaluable guidance in conducting business meetings and reaching and keeping new members. *Practical Guidelines for Group Recovery* offers much wisdom on how to keep groups focused on recovery and aligned with the Traditions. Other issues, such as group finances, are addressed during business meetings. For example, if there are funds left over after group expenses are paid, how is this money best disbursed?

Many SA groups adhere to the suggested meeting format outlined on pages 197-199 in *Sexaholics Anonymous*. Additional questions include who

leads the meeting and who calls on members to share? Is the facilitator obliged to acknowledge raised hands? Will the group require a minimum period of 30 days of sobriety to share in the first half of the meeting, as suggested in the White Book? For the good of the group, secretaries may caution members to silence cell phones during meetings, dress appropriately, avoid abusive language and explicit sexual descriptions in their shares. We may decide to present chips to acknowledge milestones of sexual recovery.

Much experience has already been accumulated on these issues; each group is encouraged to make this input available to its members for their deliberations, in accordance with the Traditions.

These are just some issues that a Home Group will face, and with the help of a Higher Power, good solutions can always be found which meet the group's unique needs.

Essay Newsletter

At our Home Group, we are made aware of the availability of *Essay*, SA's magazine, often referred to as the Fellowship's "meeting in print." *Essay* is a proven source of appropriate group discussion topics and provides a list of upcoming local, regional and international SA get-togethers and conventions. Groups may obtain discounted group subscriptions for their members.

Service in the Group

For most of us in SA, our home meeting or group is where we discover sobriety and recovery. It is the meeting that feels like home.

The Home Group is also where we first learn to give back to others through service. Service at the group level connects us with our fellow members and expresses our gratitude for recovery. As we say in SA, "Service is gratitude in action."



The SA Home Group

Becoming a member of a group carries the responsibility of service to the group. In fact, the Secretary may make that connection explicit by announcing: "In this group, being a Home Group member means that you attend on a regular basis, take a service position, and attend the regular business meeting." Service positions are usually rotated every six months or yearly. The group decides what trusted servants it needs. It may expand the list of service positions as its membership increases (SA, 174-6).

Trusted servants may include:

1. Secretary
2. Treasurer
3. Literature Coordinator
4. Sobriety Chip Coordinator
5. Recording Secretary
6. Membership List Coordinator
7. Coffeemaker
8. Audio Librarian
9. Essay Rep
10. Greeters

The Group Service Representative to the Intergroup (GSR)

In addition to the service positions listed above, there is also the GSR. The GSR is the primary link between the Home Group and the SA Service Structure. The GSR connects the group first to the Intergroup, and then through the Intergroup Representative to the Regional Assembly, and through the Regional Delegate to the General Delegate Assembly.

The GSR represents the group conscience of the Home Group at the Intergroup meeting and brings back information from the Intergroup to the group. This two-way communication is essential to the formation of an informed group conscience.

In SA's service structure, each group is normally represented at the Intergroup level with one GSR, and each GSR gets one vote.

Group Finances

As discussed above, one common topic in group business meetings relates to how group funds are to be managed and disbursed. Our Traditions and Concepts provide some concrete guidelines to consider. The Seventh Tradition points out that the group should be “fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” This means that all group expenses (such as rent, literature, online platforms, coffee/snacks, travel for trusted servants, etc.) should be covered through the contributions of the group membership.

The Twelfth Concept indicates that the group should “[take] care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power, that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle.”

In their business meetings, groups consider and make decisions regarding a number of financial concerns, including the following:

- Should the group set up its own bank account or is it OK for the Treasurer to cycle funds through his/her own bank account? Some Intergroups with bank accounts make the Intergroup bank account available to groups in its area.
- What amount of prudent reserve is sufficient for the group to maintain? Generally, groups plan out their expenses for an upcoming period of time (e.g., a quarter) and make sure to have enough cash on hand to pay for all planned expenses plus a small extra amount as determined by group conscience.
- What should happen to funds exceeding the group’s prudent reserve? There are many ways money like this can be used. Some groups provide scholarships to members who need them to attend SA workshops and conferences. Some groups use surplus funds



to pay for recovery-related group activities outside of the meeting(s). Examples include fellowship events, Step-study workshops, or sponsorship workshops. Many groups donate surplus funds to their local Intergroup, their Region, and/or SAICO.

- Some groups require their Treasurer to be currently employed or to have a steady source of income in addition to whatever sobriety requirements there may be. This is intended to better heighten confidence between the group and their trusted servant.
- Will the group accept cash only for Seventh Tradition contributions or will a digital payment method be provided for members as well? This question is of particular importance for phone-based, online-only, and hybrid groups.
- If the group has discretion over the amount of rent to be paid for its meeting space, what is the appropriate amount to pay in rent?

Conclusion

Fundamentally, the most important contribution an individual can make to a group is to get and stay sober, show up to meetings on time, and humbly serve where service is needed. We participate. We volunteer. We learn and apply the Traditions. We bear in mind that as members of a Home Group, we are part of a spiritual entity and we endeavor to communicate this to longtime members and newcomers alike. In time, we demonstrate an on-going commitment to a deeper, more intimate recovery from which a much stronger and more powerful message can be shared. We bear in mind our primary purpose: to carry the message of our recovery to the sexaholic who still suffers.

The Twelve Steps of Sexaholics Anonymous

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

The Twelve 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.

The Twelve Steps and Traditions are adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. (“AAWS”).

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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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*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.*