

SO, YOU'RE
GOING TO PRISON?



Introduction

“But for the grace of God ...”

In the First Step of the Sexaholics Anonymous (SA) program of recovery we admit that we are powerless over lust. Our common experience also teaches us that lusting leads to behavior that makes our lives unmanageable. Similar to alcohol, lust is indiscriminate, its use is progressive, and by its very nature, causes us to cross ever more forbidding boundaries. It causes us to betray our beliefs and values. For some of us in SA, this eventually leads to arrest and incarceration. When we in SA see a member incarcerated, however, our reaction is not judgment or turning away. On the contrary, we embrace that member with the understanding that “There, but for the grace of God, go I.”

Though our forms of acting out may differ, many of us have imagined ourselves in the same situation. When we see a friend enter a correctional facility, with their program and fellowship beside them, it is very reassuring. Knowing that SA is there, through this most difficult of times, shows us that the SA Fellowship and program of recovery is available for us at any time. If you are about to be incarcerated, please know that SA is here for you.

If you do not have a home SA Fellowship at this time, or have only limited contact with SA, be assured that SA is here for you, too. Newcomers to SA are particularly



important to us. We realize we can only keep what we have by giving it away. If you reach out to us by mail or phone, you will receive a warm welcome and more information about our program. This will include our Sponsor-by-Mail Program for those who are incarcerated. Through sponsorship you will learn more about SA and will be able to begin your work of recovery while still in prison. We in SA have found ourselves living a new life because of this program. Though we came to SA just to get sober, we have found much more than that. We believe the same can be true for you.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to help those who are about to enter a correctional facility to maintain their sobriety, their connection to the SA Fellowship, and their connection to their Higher Power. This pamphlet provides practical information on incarceration, as shared by SA members who have been incarcerated themselves (“Practical Concerns”); an explanation of the recovery resources that may be available while incarcerated (“Recovery Behind Bars”); as well as stories from SA members about their experiences as they prepared for and entered prison or jail (“Member Stories”). These stories communicate both the concerns of the SA member who is preparing for incarceration and the hope for sobriety and recovery that is available to incarcerated members.

This pamphlet also seeks to assist sponsors or home groups of members facing incarceration. Those of us on the outside usually have even less information on what will happen to members when they are admitted to a correctional facility,

how we might contact them, and how we might be of service to them in their continued recovery. Here we try to address these questions as well.

If you have questions that are not answered here, we encourage you to contact the Sexaholics Anonymous Correctional Facilities Committee (CFC), using the contact information at the end of this pamphlet. CFC members coordinate efforts to carry the SA message to prisoners, including incarcerated SA members who are actively working the SA program as well as incarcerated individuals who have expressed an interest in SA. Answering your questions will both strengthen our sobriety, and help us improve this pamphlet for future readers.

Practical Concerns

Entry and Protective Custody (PC)

After sentencing, your next step will be to report to the correctional facility for your initial processing. Though the details of the processing may vary from facility to facility, as well as from city to regional, to country, you will likely experience a lot of waiting. This is not intended as punishment; it is simply how the system works. Therefore, respect and patience will be valuable assets for you during this period of in-processing.

During your processing, all your personal items may be confiscated except cash. This includes written materials such as



addresses, phone numbers, literature, or any other notes. Your clothing will also be confiscated and it is possible you will be strip-searched upon admission. Everything that is confiscated from you, however, should be returned when you finish your term. Confiscated items may be sent to your home. Cash is the one exception. Cash is often deposited in your prison account under your name, and can be used to purchase items from the commissary. Family members and friends may also be permitted to deposit money into your account.

If you are incarcerated for a sexual offense, your experience will vary according to the customs of your facility. Some jurisdictions mingle sexual offenders (SOs) with the general population. Other jurisdictions segregate SOs into a separate dormitory setting. Still others place SOs into protective custody (PC) or a separate facility. Protective custody means you will be separated from the general population and placed in a part of the facility that is dedicated to PC inmates. The benefit of the PC classification is that you will be segregated with other offenders, and thus less at risk of harm. But you may also spend substantially longer periods confined to your cell (“lockdown”), usually more than 20 hours a day. Remember that the treatment of PC inmates by the prison is not intended as punishment, but instead is meant to reduce potential problems for the prison management. As many members have commented, prison staff members are generally neutral towards prisoners—they are neither your friends nor enemies—

and simply want to get their work done without problems. If you are not classified as requiring PC, some of our members suggest that you seek this classification if at all possible. Other members of the prison population may learn about why you are incarcerated, and sexual offenders can become targets for more violent prisoners.

After your processing, you will be taken to the part of the facility, or another facility, where you will serve your term. There you will be shown your cell or dormitory. It is possible at this point that you will be handed from the correctional officer (CO) to a trustee. Trustees are prisoners who handle many of the day-to-day operations of your part of the facility. Trustees may decide which cell you live in, or which bunk will be yours, and supervise other duties performed by prisoners at the facility. Trustees are a useful resource for questions or difficulties while incarcerated, and our members suggest that you establish respectful and friendly relations with the trustees. In some cases, you may also be able to interact directly with your CO or an assigned counselor and ask them questions too.

Day-to-day life

Incarceration does not come naturally for anyone. Almost all of our members experience a period of depression and anxiety lasting from several weeks to several months after entering prison. All of these members, however, report



that these feelings pass with time, and are replaced by unexpected personal growth and fellowship behind bars. This is particularly true for those who maintain a close connection with their fellows in SA and their sponsors by mail. Prison or jail is not an easy or pleasant experience. But even members who serve terms of multiple years learn and grow. Indeed, this is where many of us begin our recovery journeys, work the 12 Steps for the first time, and experience a sober life. For many others, prison or jail is where they maintain and grow their recovery. At whatever pace you are able to bring recovery into your life behind bars, be assured that your SA fellows will be there to support you at every step.

Protective custody usually includes long periods of daily lockdown, and depending on the facility, you will be in your cell for approximately 20 hours a day. Depending on your facility's rules, you will be free to read, write letters, exercise, and talk with your cellmate. You can also play games, such as cards, with your cellmate or by yourself, and do crossword puzzles, etc. Boredom is the main challenge reported by members, but is always surmountable. Generally, you will have little choice in your cellmate. Violent prisoners may be relocated, but our experience is usually one of uneventful and often fruitful coexistence with one's cellmate.

Letter-writing is the favorite activity of most incarcerated members. If you are already a member of SA when you enter, you may initially find yourself with more mail than you can answer from friends in the Fellowship. Answering these letters is

a great way to pass time and to maintain connections with your Fellowship, your sponsor, and with people who care about you. One member reports that even now that he is free again, his first instinct when triggered is to pick up a pencil and write. Our members also offer one more piece of advice about letter writing: like phone calls on the outside, the best way to receive letters is to write letters.

You will also be given daily periods outside your cell, commonly known as “program time,” and these can be used for any purpose. This is a good opportunity to get physical exercise, and it is usually possible to jog or walk quickly around the available open space. Even a little exercise will give you great rewards in your physical and emotional health. In addition to time outdoors, most facilities have regular study courses, and these are also recommended by our members who have been incarcerated. The facility may have a library from which you can borrow books, often provided by nonprofit organizations. These libraries are a great resource. Members also report the intellectual and emotional benefits of continuing their education while incarcerated, through reading or correspondence courses.

To stay comfortable and healthy behind bars, our experienced members suggest keeping good personal hygiene and cleanliness. Though it may sound elementary, basic self-care like taking showers when possible, brushing one’s teeth, using deodorant, shaving regularly,



etc., go a long way in maintaining emotional sobriety and self-respect. This extends to keeping the place where you live clean. Beyond the immediate benefits to you from this self-care, it also results in more respectful interactions with your fellow prisoners and staff.

It is also important to say a few things about interactions with your fellow inmates and staff at your facility. Our members find that most of your fellow prisoners are, like us, good people who have made bad choices: about one-third are incarcerated for drug offenses, one-third for gang activities, and one-third for sex offenses. However, our members urge caution in who you trust. Caution should also be balanced with respect for your fellow prisoners. An attitude of respect is one of your most important attributes behind bars.

Some jurisdictions conduct mandatory treatment programs for SO's. These treatment programs are not run by SA, nor are they usually modelled on the principals of SA (which can be found in our 12 steps and 12 traditions). If we find ourselves in such a program, we quietly cooperate and discuss any concerns we may have with our sponsor. We remember that God is in charge, not ourselves, and we trust him to bring us peace of mind.

So in summary, learn and pay attention to the system, stay connected with SA fellows, and maintain respectful relationships with your fellow prisoners and the staff. Remembering this: our experience is generally one of an uneventful and sometimes rewarding time

behind bars. This can be a true opportunity for recovery.

Recovery Behind Bars

You and your story

Recovery behind bars can be more challenging than recovery on the outside. Perhaps the most important reason for this is the nature of our disease. Unlike alcoholism or narcotic addiction, sex addiction is not widely understood or accepted and SOs—particularly those whose crimes involved minors—can be targets for physical abuse or harassment in prison. This is the reason for the protective custody classification, mentioned above, and the overwhelming experience of our members is that you will remain safe while incarcerated.

Due to the status of sex offenders, however, SA members recommend that you do not casually discuss the reason why you are incarcerated. Indeed, members who have been incarcerated also uniformly suggest that you have a “cover story” for your incarceration. We realize that there can be no recovery without rigorous honesty, but a level of honesty that requires us to divulge details of possible crimes extends to our sponsors, some professionals, and trusted fellows in recovery, not to people who might use this information to do us harm. Indeed, many SA members on the outside have “cover stories” for work colleagues and others who might want to know what meetings we attend. Discretion in our



answers is always advised. Discretion is doubly important for SA members in prison. We also recommend that you do not say you have been advised not to talk about your offense by your lawyers, as this can also point towards a sexual offense.

We also suggest that you do not casually discuss your membership in SA, and that you do not keep SA literature where others can see it. Rigorous honesty, with caution, is our suggestion. The fact that you cannot freely discuss your story as a sexaholic does not mean that you must deny to yourself your truth as an addict in recovery. The details can be shared with your sponsor. In time, you will learn who you can trust on the inside also.

Recovery resources

In addition to writing and receiving letters from your SA fellows, meetings for twelve step programs such as AA or NA may be your best recovery resource while incarcerated. Though literature cannot be brought in with you, most correctional facilities will have AA literature available in their library. The “Big Book” is the basic text of AA (officially titled “Alcoholics Anonymous”), and contains an explanation of the AA program of recovery, followed by stories of recovered alcoholics. The “12 & 12” (“Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions”) is a more detailed explanation of the AA program of recovery. We strongly recommend these two books to any person starting their journey of recovery, and these texts are the foundation of the SA program of recovery. This literature, and anything else in the library, can be borrowed by you and kept in your cell.

SA literature, if safe for you to have, can be obtained free of charge by writing to SA at the contact information found at the end of this pamphlet. Many facilities will not allow literature to be received in the mail, unless sent from the publisher. Whereas books from friends may be confiscated or returned, books from SA itself usually are allowed. Incarcerated members especially appreciate the quarterly Essay publication, which help them to feel a part of the worldwide fellowship and up-to-date on the life of the SA Fellowship.

If keeping SA literature feels unsafe in your situation, use AA literature. SA is founded upon the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) program and AA literature can be a trusted resource, just substituting the word “lust” for “alcohol.”

Even though SA meetings will probably not be available at your facility, Twelve Step meetings or spiritual study groups are almost always available. In these meetings you can simply identify yourself as an addict in recovery. This is also common practice for those of us on the outside while traveling to a location without SA meetings. Most Twelve-Step meetings, unless designated as “closed,” welcome members from other programs.

Probably the most valuable recovery resource reported by our members is writing and receiving letters. As noted above, the best way to get letters is to send letters! For those who are already part of the SA Fellowship, mail can



usually be sent and received as long as the requirements of your facility are met. All mail sent to correctional facilities is opened and read, so in order to maintain anonymity, senders should use their local SA post office box as their return address. They may also choose not to mention any personally-identifying information. In some cases, correctional facilities may limit mail to postcards, but even under these situations, correspondence is always possible. Every facility has its own rules governing mail. Some do not allow printed material, only letters. Others allow a limited amount of printed literature. Most do not allow any items such as small gifts, or even envelopes and stamps. Some allow last initials, and some require full last names. If you are on the outside, these regulations are almost always easy to find on the website of the institution. Therefore, read and follow the letter writing guidelines.

For those without an SA Fellowship—who discover SA as they are entering or already in jail or prison—SA also offers a sponsor-by-mail program, administered by the SA CFC (SA Correctional Facilities Committee). The purpose of this program is identical to normal sponsorship: to allow a recovering person to receive experience, strength, hope, and guidance from people ahead of them in recovery. Contact information for the sponsor-by-mail program is available at the end of this pamphlet. If you suffer from an addiction to lust or sex and do not have contact with SA, we encourage you to contact us and find out what next steps you can take to getting better.

Some of the limits on your recovery resources behind bars will likely be your inability to make phone calls to members of the Fellowship, and the inability to meet regularly with other SA members face-to-face. Our experience, however, is that the combination of regular communication by mail, connecting with others in jail or prison through AA groups or religious study, and using AA literature, provides ample opportunity to stay connected, sober, and growing in recovery while incarcerated.

Member Stories

Yochanan:

“I’m Yochanan, a recovering sexaholic, and I am making a program call.” Those easy words are a bit harder to say from the inside of a jail cell. Nevertheless, I can get current, I can reach out, I can get out of isolation by just writing this letter. Even though I am stuck in a cell 21 to 23 hours a day, I still have the tools to grow in my recovery and to have a positive sobriety by doing all I can for the sexaholic who still suffers. I can connect with my Higher Power. I accomplish this by daily Bible reading, prayer, and reading recovery materials. I attend any kind of meeting (religious, AA, etc.) whenever possible and I speak the language of recovery to my “cellie,” a recovering alcoholic.

Due to the nature of my charges and due to the nature of the other individuals in “protective custody,” there is very little fellowship and very little openness. This



contrasts so much with the honesty and camaraderie of SA meetings. Nevertheless, I choose to thrive and continue to grow along spiritual lines. Moment by moment, one day at a time, I can surrender every temptation to “numb out” or “act out” with memories or fantasies. Surrender is still the key—in here, or out there. Instead of “white knuckling” or giving in, I choose to surrender. I choose to maintain a firm bottom line. TV shows, magazines, or any memories that may be triggers are immediately surrendered. My daily journaling is also a very useful tool. Maintaining a positive attitude, avoiding all resentments (and surrendering them if and when they come), and fostering a spirit of gratitude are also key tools.

Honestly, some days are harder, some days easier. On hard days and nights, I try to use the tools of the program. I pray for daily sobriety. Yet, I must also admit that sometimes I feel my time here is wasted and there seems to be no point to it all. But I surrender that “feeling of uselessness.” I try to focus on “the promises.” No one ever said this would be an easy path. But as I “trudge this road of happy destiny,” I can only hope that my experience can benefit others. And so I write—praying that this letter can help someone, somewhere, be sober for just one more day. Today, as I celebrate day 595 of my recovery (the last 17 in jail), I thank you, the reader, for letting me be of service. Every single person who reads or hears these words helps me be sober. So I thank you! Thank you for bringing me out of isolation and helping me to be a part of the Fellowship.

I love you, appreciate you, and value you, my dear brothers and sisters in recovery.

P.S. A few weeks before I entered jail, I got a sobriety chip for 18 months, and when I was released, I got my two-year chip. The Program works, if you work it, so work it, because you're worth it!

Merv:

I am a convicted felon and a registered sex offender, and I am thankful that there is such a Fellowship and that I am able to attend two meetings a week, with a group of wonderful people who I can call my friends. Nothing helped me much until I came to SA. I knew I was in the right place after that first meeting! I started attending SA meetings regularly, reading the literature, and working the Steps with my sponsor. I was beginning to learn a lot about myself. Today I am a better person and much more comfortable around people I don't know. I make an effort to be more positive and less judgmental. I don't get angry as often as before; and when I do, I surrender me and the anger goes away. Thank you God, for this wonderful program of recovery!

Chris C:

My worst fears of being publicly humiliated for my actions came true, costing me my marriage, my job, my friends, and my involvement in my children's day-to-day lives. Prison is just the icing on the cake—the rest hurts much worse. I joined SA, a Fellowship of sexaholics like me who



could love me through the worst time of my life. I threw myself into the program with all the energy and honesty I could muster and found all that SA promised could be delivered and more. This group of people was there to catch me and lead me into what has been the greatest period of growth I've ever experienced. Here's what is even more important though: those same people continue to support me today; four years later, three years into my sentence. They aren't acquaintances; they are true friends. I wanted to avoid prison, but it wasn't to be. Instead, I have learned to find thankfulness for all that is right in my life. If I can convey anything, it's this: you are not alone. There is a group of people who have been through what you have and more. We want to help you get out of the vicious merry-go-round you've been on. The risk is very small; your time and willingness are all that is required. In return, you may just receive the priceless gift of life and love that I and many others have received in the fellowship of SA.

When I was charged with a crime and facing a lengthy prison sentence, I was already participating in SA. Here in prison, I am no longer bound in the chains of addiction and I'm freer than I have ever been! I have the support of a number of true friends in SA. Their support has been unwavering and they continue to love me through what seems like one disaster after another. They visit, write, pray for, and accept me for the imperfect man that I am. I had never experienced friendships like that before, and I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for them. Things in the world—and here in prison—are not perfect, and

they never will be. Learning to deal with life on life's terms continues to be a major part of my work in recovery. I no longer have to be chained to the bondage of self that characterized my past. I am free to love my God and the people around me with my whole heart, knowing that I can get through whatever life may bring.

Anonymous:

My healing process began in 2004. While I was at work, the FBI called and told me to come home. I knew exactly what it was about and actually felt relieved, believe it or not. My whole world came crashing in on me. Two days later, after 11 years of work, I was unemployed. I am currently serving 63 months in Federal Prison, stemming from the original FBI charges in my home. We have all heard the rumors of how sex offenders are treated in prison. Some of the rumors are true, but not all of them. As best I can, I keep the reasons why I'm here anonymous, but I do share with people I trust. I attend several self-help groups here and I'm working on expressing my feelings. I don't know what my future holds, but I continue to live one day at a time. The best parts are that I am sober, I can look the world in the eye, and stand free.

Jimmy M:

Feet shuffling, I made my way through the darkened tunnel. I was part of a handcuffed, chained sea of men in orange that was slowly making its way through an underground tunnel toward the



courthouse. I was in shock, floating on a cloud of uncertainty, shame, loneliness, and self-pity. So what was this new feeling of subtle relief inside me? In the midst of trauma, I began a spiritual awakening. After three and a half years, I walked through the familiar doors of my SA home meeting and my joy overflowed with smiles and tears. What a blessing: a privilege to be where God is present, working miracles in the lives of those sitting at the table with me. Today, because of the things I have learned through SA, my level of acceptance and gratitude for God's plan in my life has been forever transformed. It's not that I'm that much different. I can still be self-centered and fearful; but today I am aware of these things. I am accepting of who I am, I empathize with myself and with others in a way that would not have been possible (or even conceivable) prior to working the program. I am a grateful sexaholic, for without the journey into darkness, I would not be experiencing the light of God's grace today.

Todd:

I was home on Spring break. Earlier in the week, I had started an online conversation with a girl who told me she was 13. We agreed on a time and place to meet for a sexual rendezvous. As I arrived at the meeting place, I was met by seven sheriff's deputies with guns pointed at my head. I was so completely insane and powerless that I had knowingly walked into a sting operation and flushed a promising career down the toilet in 15 minutes. I was fired from my job. Television reporters conducted live broadcasts from my school parking lot about the teacher who was a

sex offender. When I walked into my first SA meeting, a weird thing happened: I felt like I was home. The people understood me. When the jail door shut behind me, I felt utterly powerless. I fell on my knees and asked God for help. The message I heard was one of forgiveness, and that I would never have quit if I hadn't been caught. I only hope that I will continue to make every attempt to be thorough in my pursuit of sobriety and recovery. The formula is so simple. Go to meetings, get a sponsor, work the Steps, be of service to others, and rely on God. It's just that easy. Would you like to join me on the road to happy destiny? There's room on the bus. Hop on!

Robert M:

I came into SA two years ago, when I was released from prison after serving four years for indecent exposure. Out on parole for the third time, I attended seven SA meetings the first week. I was arrested by my parole officer for another violation. Not knowing what to do, I turned to God in prayer. But this time I did something different. I did not try to bargain with God or beg Him to get me out of the situation, as I had unsuccessfully done so many times before. Instead, I asked that He would be with me no matter what the outcome, and that He would help me to turn to Him and stay with Him throughout the entire ordeal. Returning to a holding cell, my eyes filled with tears and my heart filled with joy as I fell to my knees and thanked God because He had intervened



and I was being set free. But the main reason for my joy was that He had revealed Himself to me. Looking back on that day, I believe I was given the precious gift of a spiritual awakening to assist me in finding faith in a God Who can restore me to sanity. Thank you, God, and thank you, SA, for guiding me and giving me this new life.

Anonymous:

I spent years wreaking havoc on others until the addiction of internet pornography landed me in jail. I lost my job and my wife. I'm a registered sex offender on probation. SA meetings were my sanctuary, my source of love and support when there seemed to be so little. When probation began, I received approval to attend six meetings per week. Then probation cut it down to two times per week. My defects of self-centeredness, fear, and anger kicked in. I chose to be inappropriately angry with my therapist over the phone, and I lost all SA privileges. What could I do to nourish myself in the program? Isolation and withdrawal were not working. So instead, I took the risk of asking an SA brother if he would like to meet for coffee on Fridays. We haven't missed more than a few in the past year! SA brothers occasionally come to one of my approved restaurants after the morning meeting. I have learned that meeting rooms are wonderful (I look forward to returning), but fellowship is everywhere and anywhere I am able to experience recovery from the powerlessness of my sexual addiction through conversations with others. Surrender is acceptance of the truth. With truth, comes grace. So, I guess surrender

equals grace.

Scott M:

My name is Scott; I'm a recovering sexaholic serving a 6 ½ - 13-year prison sentence for sexual abuse. This place is where society casts its unwanted, those it deems hopeless and worthless. But the truth is that within each one of these men dwells the potential for living a sober, surrendered, and God-inspired life. In the midst of sorrow and sadness, God has given me this purpose. I've seen men rise from the pit of despair to discover hope.

Once, when I could see no way to stop acting out, I put a gun in my mouth. Killing myself seemed a nice shortcut. With my failed suicide attempt, I accepted what appeared to be my fate: a life of misery, harming others and myself, lost in despair. Having been introduced to SA some years before, I knew that my next step was to return. When I first revealed my crimes to my home group, the members did something so unexpected that it tore apart everything I believed about myself. They took me as I was and loved me. With the help of those who had gone before, I summoned my courage and went to my wife, confessing my past. I revealed my past actions to the police. I was incarcerated. Meetings here in prison lack certain things I took for granted in my home group on the outside, but a miracle is taking place right before my eyes: men who were once society's castaways, are now recovering, useful, and alive. The



question remains: will I submit to the truth and use the tools God has so freely provided? Be happy! Be free! Peace be to your hearts.

My greatest shame was that I had molested three of my children, who were the pride and joy of my life. Of all the disgraces I would endure, none could compare to the torture of my own conscience. Lust had promised so much pleasure and escape from pain, but in the last years of its dominion in my life, it delivered only suffering. I became suicidal. Yet even though these had been my deepest lifelong fears, I began to experience periods of peace. I found a sponsor, began working the Steps, and attended as many meetings as possible. After a few weeks, I was formally charged and jailed for a month before making bail. I was sentenced to 6 ½ - 13 years in a state penitentiary. I was frightened. I asked God to help me accept the situation and be able to let go of fear. I surrendered the final destination to Him, asking only that if it were possible, I be placed in an institution where SA existed. I wound up on the one block out of 17, in one of only two prisons out of 30, in which the SA fellowship had been established. This could only be God's grace! Prison life can be tumultuous, but I have found that it is a great proving ground for practicing the principles of our program. I have learned that fear need not dictate my thoughts, beliefs, or actions. Peace, contentment, and harmony aren't contingent on location; they're products of a clear mind, polished through self-sacrifice for others. If I can be restored to a sane and useful life, anyone can.

Some of the Member Shares included here have been published over the years in the Essay Newsletter; some shares underwent additional minor edits for formatting and space requirements.

Contact Sexaholics Anonymous:

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USA

Phone: 866-424-8777

Fax: 615-370-0882

Email: saico@sa.org

Or: sacfc1@sa.org

Web: www.sa.org



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.

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

Permission to adapt and reprint the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions does not mean that AAWS has approved the contents of this publication, nor that AAWS agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in connection with programs that are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, or in any other non-AA context, does not imply otherwise.



SA 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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