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*God...*

*Grant me Serenity  
to accept the things  
I cannot change...*

*Courage  
to change the things  
I can...*

*And Wisdom  
to know the difference...*

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## **SAA Opening**

(Green Book of SAA, pp. 1-2)

Sex Addicts Anonymous is a spiritual program based on the principles and traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. Although we are not affiliated with AA or any other organization, we are deeply grateful to AA for making our recovery possible.

Our primary purpose is to stop our addictive sexual behavior and to help others recover from sexual addiction. We find a new way of living through the SAA program and carry our message to others seeking recovery. Membership is open to all who have a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior. There is no other requirement. Our fellowship is open to all people, regardless of age, race, religion, ethnic background, marital status, or occupation. We welcome members of any sexual identity or orientation [...]

Our SAA community is a place of welcome and celebrates all expressions of spiritual diversity. Although the steps use the word “God” to indicate this Power, SAA is not affiliated with any religion, creed, or dogma. Members can have any religious belief or no belief at all. The path is wide enough for everyone who wishes to walk it.

## **How It Works**

(Adapted from the "big book" of AA, pp. 58-60)

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program. They cannot develop a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. There are those, too, who suffer from serious emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps.

At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember that we deal with sexual addiction – cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power – that One is God. May you find God now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked God's protection and care with complete abandon.

Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery:

## **The Twelve Steps of Sex Addicts Anonymous**

1. We admitted we were powerless over addictive sexual behavior — 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 God.
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 God 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 God, praying only for knowledge of God's 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 other sex addicts and to practice these principles in our lives.

## **[How it works continued]**

Many of us exclaimed, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines.

The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

1. That we were sexually addicted and could not manage our lives.
2. That probably no human being could have relieved our addiction.
3. That God could and would, if **God were sought**

## **The Twelve Traditions of Sex Addicts Anonymous**

(Green Book of SAA, p. 77)

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SAA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for SAA membership is a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or SAA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sex addict who still suffers.
6. An SAA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SAA name to any related facility or outside enterprise lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every SAA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. SAA should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. SAA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. SAA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SAA 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, TV, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## **Abstinence Statement**

(The Outer Circle Newsletter, Vol. 6, Issue 1, p. 33)

Our primary purpose is to abstain from sexually compulsive behavior and help others to achieve abstinence. In line with this purpose, we feel that a brief statement regarding the meaning of abstinence is in order.

First, we define abstinence in terms of behavior rather than mental states. We do not focus our efforts upon abstaining from mental "lust," but from compulsive behavior. Just as AA focuses on the need to stop the behavior of drinking, and as OA focuses on compulsive eating as the point of abstinence, so SAA focuses on compulsive sexual acting out. The lust of the mind may take years to drain away as one works the twelve steps of recovery; abstinence from the destructive and addictive behaviors, however, can begin today, and is the basic foundation upon which all subsequent personal growth depends. "Progress rather than perfection" is the atmosphere for growth that we seek to promote.

Secondly, abstinence will be different for each member of SAA, depending upon what behaviors are compulsive and lead to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. Some addicts can engage in sexual behaviors from which other addicts find they must abstain; in SAA, we leave the choice up to the individual.

Finally, abstinence does not imply the complete elimination of sexuality from the addict's life, whether married, partnered or single; rather, it lays the foundation for learning a new approach to the experience of sex and relationships which is non-compulsive and non-destructive. Such an approach is possible to all who earnestly desire it.

## **The Promises**

(The "big book" of AA, pp. 83-84)

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through.

We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.

We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.

We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.

No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.

That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.

We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.

Self-seeking will slip away.

Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.

Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.

We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.

We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

...Are these extravagant promises? **WE THINK NOT!** They are being fulfilled among us, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.

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