Self Sabotagers and Misery Addicts Anonymous Face-to-face Meeting Format
Rev. 07/08/18
Leader notes: Thank you for doing the service of leading the meeting. Text in read is not read aloud - it is a note to you.
Text highlighted in yellow is read by a member who has volunteered to read it.

Welcome to the Face-to-face meeting of the Rocketed Into the 4th Dimension group of Self Sabotagers Anonymous.

My name is _____. I am a Self Sabotager Recovering From Misery Addiction and the leader for today. This is an open meeting, and we are glad that you are here, especially newcomers.

Please join me in a moment of silence to reflect on the reasons we are here followed by the Serenity Prayer.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Some details about how we conduct this meeting:

- We are protected by the tradition of anonymity. People in recovery know we must speak the truth to get better. Please do not reveal the identities or stories of the people who are here.
- We are cautious about cross talk at all meetings but given that this is a small intimate meeting, the group conscience is that some level of cross talk is permitted provided that it is consensual and respectful.
    - After the person has completed their share, it's okay to ask if they are open to input.
    - If they indicate that they are, we are free to share about how we successfully addressed the issue by sharing OUR experience, strength and hope.
    - It's very important that we do all of the following:
        - Speak to the group, not to the individual.
        - Use experience sharing words like "I found it helpful to" or "my experience was".
        - Avoid personal advice words like "you should" or "have you thought about".

Self Sabotagers Anonymous is a fellowship where we share our experience, strength, and hope so that we may solve our common problem and help others recover from misery addiction. It is for anyone who is addicted to self-sabotage which results in unhappiness, sadness, joylessness, isolation, avoidance, rebellion, or resistance, or anyone who is fearful of joy, success, happiness, intimacy, or well-being.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop self-sabotage. Our primary purpose is to stay in recovery and to help other misery addicts find recovery.

Who would like to read "How It Works" on page 262 in the When Misery is Company book?

How It Works (12 Steps)

Many Twelve Step meetings include a reading of "How It Works," which is taken from chapter 5 of Alcoholics Anonymous (the Big Book.) The principles in that chapter still work, making a powerful statement about what is required for recovery.
What follows is a translation of "How It Works" for compulsive self-sabotagers.

1. *We admitted we were powerless over self-sabotage - 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 Our God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*
6. *Were entirely ready to have Our God remove all these defects of character.*
7. *Humbly asked Our 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 our 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 misery addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

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 close to 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 description of the Self-Sabotager and our personal adventures before and after starting recovery make clear three pertinent ideas:

- *That we were addicted to self-sabotage, misery and avoidance and could not manage our own lives.*
- *That probably no human power could have relieved our self-sabotage addiction.*
- *That a Higher Power could and would relieve us of this addiction if that Power was sought.*

The Tradition of the Month is: *<Leader reads the tradition with the number that matches the number of the month>*

The Twelve Traditions

1. *Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SSA 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 SSA membership is a desire to stop self-sabotage.*
4. *Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or SSA as a whole.*
5. *Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the self-sabotager who still suffers.*
6. *An SSA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the MAA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.*
7. *Every SSA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.*
8. *SSA should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.*
9. *SSA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*
10. *SSA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the MAA 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 other media of communication.*
12. *Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*

Are there are any visitors or anyone here who considers themselves new to SSA/MAA. If so, please introduce yourself by your first name so that we can welcome you.

If there are any newcomers, someone can read the following Welcome Reading or can ask an experienced member to share a 5 minute version of their story.

WELCOME READING:

When we say we are addicted to misery, it doesn't mean we enjoy being miserable. It means that we are addicted to a pattern of behaviors we have unconsciously developed to protect ourselves. At some point, possibly early in childhood, our wires got crossed and we ended up with a deeply ingrained pattern of choices, behaviors, or blindness to choices, that do not serve our well being.

At the center of this pattern of behaviors we find avoidance, self sabotage and a fear of losing what little we have. This pattern may create a fog. In this fog we miss deadlines, waste opportunities, and see no point in accepting help offered to us. On a very basic level, a part of us has given up.

We may have used other addictions or compulsions to create avoidance. These serve the dual purpose of giving us a security blanket which offers comfort and helps us avoid our misery, fear, and/or hopelessness. Some of our secondary addictions include compulsive use of: food, shopping, illness, work, gambling, TV, game playing, excess technology, exercise,

clutter, overspending and debt. Other avoidance behaviors include codependence, caretaking, self-abuse, self-denial, sleeping too much or too little, under earning and addiction to alcohol, drugs, nicotine and caffeine. We crave avoidance like an alcoholic craves a drink.
We have developed plans that would make our lives better and then suddenly forget or abandon our plan when our pattern of self sabotage takes over. If this happens many times, we experience a loss of self-trust. As our lives become littered with more failures, we may become convinced that we ourselves are failures.
So what's the use?
Here are some good reasons for facing this addiction: We were born for a purpose and our lives have value. We deserve to reclaim our inner, authentic selves. Recovery from all other addictions will be successful when the addiction to misery is addressed. We'll be healthier because as we heal emotionally, our bodies will heal too. By learning to access and embrace feelings of joy and happiness, we will be blessed with an abundance of intimacy, fulfillment and serenity.
What do we do next?
Even if we can't fully embrace the Misery concept yet, we can begin working the Steps - coming to meetings, listening and sharing, leading meetings, doing readings and getting a sponsor can aid our Recovery.
We finally have Hope. Together we can do this. Many have recovered and we can too.

Are there any SSA/MAA birthdays for the month of _____?

Are there any SSA/MAA announcements? *<pause and let others respond first, then make the following announcements…>*

- We are delighted to announce that we have a new meeting every Tuesday at 10:30 AM ET. The topic is Emotional Sobriety and we'll be using the book *12 Smart Things to Do When the Booze and Drugs Are Gone: Choosing Emotional Sobriety through Self-Awareness and Right Action* by Allen Berger. We hope you'll give it a try.

- *During the last 2 weeks of the month, please promote the Sunday Night Speaker meeting:*
  Our monthly Sunday night speaker is held the last Sunday of the month at 9 PM ET.
  See the Meeting Schedule page on the website for this month's topic

- Our meeting hosts a short Group Conscience meeting every month. It's held on the first week of the month immediately after the meeting. Please join us, we'd love to get your input.

- MAA/SSA has no dues or fees, we are self-supporting through our own contributions.
  (Leader passes the basket)

- Being self supportive through our own contributions does not only apply to money. People with strong recovery know that we get out of it what we put into it and service is a great way to strengthen our recovery. We do service by leading meetings, doing readings, attending Group Conscience meetings, working the steps and sponsoring. Another service we can do is to call

or text other members to remind them about an upcoming meeting. It might be just what they need and you'll feel good too.

- Who would like to do the service of leading this meeting next time?
  *Please allow for some silence - **at least 10 seconds**. Sometimes people are hesitant to step forward but given a little extra time, they may find the courage they need. If no one volunteers, move the meeting forward by saying* "someone attending next week can do that service."

Self Sabotagers Anonymous is about living the solution not the problem. Only one of the 12 steps deals with the problem, the other 11 steps focus on the solution.

This meeting is book study meeting where we reference the *When Misery is Company* book. Today we are on page << insert information here>> You are invited to share on today's topic or anything else that is important to you.

Closing the meeting:
<Start closing the meeting five minutes before the ending time.>
Does anyone have a burning desire to speak another time?

Thank you all for being here. We hope to see you next time.

Since our meeting only meets every two weeks, we recommend attendance at our phone meetings. We have a hand-out for newcomers which includes a list of meetings but recommend that everyone visit the web site to take advantage of all the resources available there.

Working the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions with a sponsor is key to quality, sustained recovery. Is there anyone who is available to be a temporary sponsor? If so, please raise your hand at this time so that anyone seeking a sponsor can contact you.

As an additional service to our Recovery, this meeting maintains a group email distribution list for sending a meeting reminder via email 2 to 3 days before the meeting. Please let us know if you would like to be added to it.

Would someone please read The SSA/MAA Promises?

The SSA/MAA Promises

These are the SSA/MAA Promises as they are today. They are still a work in progress and we are open to edits and suggestions. At the end of the promises, the question is asked "Do we see these promises coming true:".
Everyone is invited come off mute and to respond with an enthusiastic "Yes we do!"

As we live The Twelve Steps, we learn to trust our Higher Power and let God do for us what we couldn't do for ourselves.
We find freedom from misery addiction and discover our true selves.

Self sabotage, avoidance, and fear leave us.
We no longer use guilt, shame and regret, to hurt ourselves or others.
Authenticity, intimacy and trust grow. As do security, stability, success and happiness.
As we release the desire for perfection and control, we find ourselves relaxing and enjoying life.
Compassion increases as we love and accept ourselves just as we are this moment.
Our vision clears and we discover the dreams that lie deep within us and the courage to attain them.
Do we see these Promises coming true? **YES WE DO!**

Let us now form a virtual circle. I put my hand in yours and together we can do what we could never do alone! No longer is there a sense of hopelessness, no longer must we each depend upon our own unsteady willpower. We are all together now reaching out our hands for power and strength greater than ours. And as we join hands we find love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.

In closing, I invite everyone to join me in the We version of the Serenity Prayer.

We Version of the Serenity Prayer:

God, grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change,
The courage to change the things we can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.

Thank you for joining us. Know that without your presence there could be no meeting.
Remember that it works! AND WE ARE WORTH IT!
Please say it with me now, We ARE WORTH IT!

Leader:
Before leaving please locate the flyers that are posted in the meeting room and on the bulletin board outside the restrooms.

Please replace the Next Meeting Date by cutting the next block off the meeting date paper and taping or pasting it on the flyer. Also if one of the flyers is missing, please replace it.

The meeting dat paper and spare flyers are is located next to the table lamp. If we are out of date blocks or flyers, please let Alena know and she'll print a new batch.