

Self-Sabotagers and Misery Addicts Anonymous Meeting Guide

Rev 2021.03.06

*To the leader: Thank you for leading this meeting.
This document is meant to be a guide only and is not “written in stone.”*

*Words in red italics (or grey italics if printed in black & white) or **highlighted** are notes just for the leader and should **not** be read aloud.*

*Areas that are **bolded in blue** (or dark grey if printed in b & w) could be read by others or said by all.*

If this is a video meeting (GoToMeeting or Zoom) please open the chat box and put in:

- 1. DONATIONS can be made on the miseraddicts.org website by clicking on the Donate tab.
Thank you!*
- 2. if you are willing to be a sponsor you can put your first name and initial, phone number and time zone.*

BEFORE the meeting - consider requesting volunteers to do the following:

1. read
 - a. How It Works
 - b. The Welcome Reading if a newcomer is on the meeting (or if you, the leader, wants it read)
 - c. The SSA/MAA Promises
2. You may choose to time the member's shares yourself or ask someone else to do it.

Welcome to this meeting of Self-Sabotagers Anonymous.

My name is _____. I am recovering from Self-Sabotage and 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.**

SSA 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 hopelessness, 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.

Self-Sabotagers and Misery Addicts Anonymous Meeting Guide

I've asked _____ to read "*How It Works*." A version is available in the *When Misery is Company* book Appendix A on page 262 or a more current version is available in the Meeting Guide on the miseryaddicts.org website.

How It Works (12 Steps for MAA/SSA based on the 12-Steps of AA)

1. We admitted we were powerless over self-sabotage and that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could bring 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 thorough self-inventory.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our choices.
6. Were entirely ready to have our God remove any unhealthy character traits and behaviors.
7. Humbly asked our God to remove those traits and behaviors that no longer serve us.
8. Made a list of damage we had caused to ourselves and others and became willing to make amends to all.
9. Made direct amends when possible except when do to so would cause harm.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and took appropriate action as necessary.
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 carry this message to other misery addicts and practice these principles in all our affairs.

Many have 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.

Self-Sabotagers and Misery Addicts Anonymous Meeting Guide

Our description of the self-sabotager and our personal adventures before and after starting recovery make clear three pertinent ideas:

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

The Tradition of the Month is:

*<<Leader reads **only** the tradition that matches the current month>>*

The Twelve Traditions:

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SSA/MAA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God, as may be expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for SSA/MAA membership is a desire to stop self-sabotage.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or SSA/MAA, 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/MAA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the SSA/MAA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every SSA/MAA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. SSA/MAA should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. SSA/MAA, as such, out never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. SSA/MAA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SSA/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 any SSA/MAA birthdays for the month of _____?

Our meeting hosts a short Group Conscience meeting on the first week of the month immediately after the meeting. Please join us, your input is important.

Self-Sabotagers and Misery Addicts Anonymous Meeting Guide

Our Speaker meeting is held on the last Sunday of the month at 9pm ET on the video platform.

Do any Meeting Guardians want to announce information about their meeting?

In keeping with the Seventh Tradition which is “MAA/SSA has no dues or fees, we are self-supporting through our own contributions.”

- Donations can be made by clicking on the Donate tab on our miseryaddicts.org website.
- Being self-supportive through our own contributions does not only apply to money. Service is a mainstay of our recovery. We do service by speaking and sharing at meetings, leading meetings, doing readings, being the time keeper, attending Group Conscience meetings, working the steps, sponsoring, and reminding other members of an upcoming meeting.

Are there any additional SSA/MAA announcements?

<< Wait a moment for anyone to make their announcement >>

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

<< Wait a moment for any newcomers to respond. If there aren't any, it is leader's choice to read it or not. >>

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 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, sex, TV, game playing, over or under use of technology, exercise, clutter, overspending and debting.

Other avoidance behaviors include codependence, caretaking, self-abuse, self-denial, sleeping too much or too little, under-earning or addiction to alcohol, drugs, nicotine, caffeine and other chemicals.

We crave avoidance like an alcoholic craves a drink.

Self-Sabotagers and Misery Addicts Anonymous Meeting Guide

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: Because we were born, our lives have value. We deserve to reclaim our inner, authentic selves. Recovery from 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 by working the Steps – coming to meetings and speaking, listening and sharing, doing readings, being the time keeper, leading meetings and getting a sponsor can all aid our Recovery.

We finally have Hope. Together we can do this. Many have recovered and we can too.

<< End of Welcome Reading >>

Leader: before opening the meeting for member shares:

1. *verify who is on "the call" by requesting their first name and last initial or state the names of people you know are in attendance*
 - a. *FYI: If this is a video meeting, you can see C01, C02 for phone caller01 and phone caller02, but they cannot see their designation*
2. *adjust the share time based on number attending and time available*
3. *appoint a time-keeper if not already assigned or you can opt to do it yourself*

Leader's choice:

Today's topic is << topic of Leader's choice >>

or Does anyone have a suggested topic they would like to discuss today?

or Today we are on page << insert information here >>

or I have selected the SSA/MAA Article titled << insert # of MAA article >>

You are invited to share on today's topic or anything else that is important to your recovery.

- Please give out your phone number and time zone with your share and if you are available to sponsor.

Self-Sabotagers and Misery Addicts Anonymous Meeting Guide

- Each share will be timed and notice will be given at 30-seconds left, so you can complete your thoughts.
- Anyone wanting to share a second time, please wait until everyone else has had a chance to share.
- Background noise is distracting. Please mute yourself when not speaking.
- *<< If this is a video meeting >>* Please turn off your video monitor if your actions might be distracting.
- We encourage speaking from your own experience and refraining from offering feedback, advice or commenting on another member's share. In this sense, **cross-talk is discouraged.**
- 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. Please keep this in mind as you share.

Leader option: you can have members speak up by stating: The meeting is now open for sharing.
Or you can call on members by name to share.

Leader: After everyone has shared on the topic, including you:

- 1. You might want to ask the person who suggested the topic if they wish to share again.*
- 2. if there is lots of time left, you can:*
 - a. ask for a second round on the same topic or*
 - b. find another topic or read and discuss using an SSA/MAA article*
- 3. If there are only a few minutes left, you can ask for a quick round of gratitudes.*

Self-Sabotagers and Misery Addicts Anonymous Meeting Guide

Closing the meeting:

Start closing the meeting a few minutes before the ending time, or when everyone has had a chance to share once.

If there is time: Does anyone have a burning desire to speak another time?

Thank you all for being here. We hope to see you next time. Remember that just by attending a meeting, you do a service for others.

Who would like the benefit of leading this meeting next week or for the rest of the month?

<<Wait a moderate time for someone to volunteer>>

If someone volunteers: Thank you. Please check the miseryaddicts.org website for the most up-to-date Meeting format.

If no one volunteers: If there is someone who has not led a meeting in the last three weeks, would you be willing to lead this meeting next week?

or

If no one volunteers: Then someone attending the next meeting will get the benefit of doing that service.

MAA/SSA has meetings almost every day of the week. The next meeting is _____. Please check the miseryaddicts.org website for times and media details.

Remember, too, that anonymity, like recovery, is a treasured possession. What we say here, what you hear here, when you leave here, please let it stay here. **Hear! Hear!**

I've asked _____ *(or request a volunteer)* to read the SSA/MAA Promises. They can be found on the miseryaddicts.org website.

The SSA/MAA Promises written by us:

- As we live the Twelve Steps, we find freedom from misery addiction and discover our authentic selves.
- Self-sabotage, avoidance, and fear leave us as trust grows.
- Compassion increases as we love and accept ourselves *just as we are at this moment.*
- We no longer use guilt, shame or regret to hurt ourselves or others.
- As we release perfection and control, we become more successful, secure, and happy.
- We find the dreams that are within us and the courage to live them.
- Recovery brings clarity, intimacy and joy by drawing us into harmony with life.

Self-Sabotagers and Misery Addicts Anonymous Meeting Guide

- As good things happen again and again, we experience our Higher Power doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.
- Do we see these Promises coming true? **YES, WE DO!**

Connection with others is essential for recovery. Please let us all reach out by phone, text, email, or any other medium of communication to newcomers, returning members, and each other. Together we get better.

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.

Would all who care to come off mute join me in the “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.

Remember that it works! **AND WE ARE WORTH IT!**

If you care to say it with me now:

WE ARE WORTH IT! I AM WORTH IT! YOU ARE WORTH IT!

Is there anyone wishing to stay after the meeting and chat?