

SA Breakout Descriptions

Surrender, Serenity, & Miracles

Seattle July 12-14, 2019

10th Step Workshop (A) and (B) *

Finish your day with an inventory. *“Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them and discuss them with someone immediately”* (Alcoholics Anonymous 84-85). See also The Real Connection July 3rd.

11th Step Guidance (A) and (B) *

Alcoholics Anonymous pg 85-88. Start your day by asking God to direct your thinking, for inspiration, the intuitive thought or decision.

A Long Period of Reconstruction

“Yes, there is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We must take the lead. A remorseful mumbling that we are sorry won’t fill the bill at all....The spiritual life is not a theory. We have to live it...Our behavior will convince them more than our words. We must remember that ten or twenty years of drunkenness would make a skeptic out of anyone” (Alcoholics Anonymous p83). How has our behavior changed during the “long period of reconstruction”. How are we living a “spiritual life”?

Abstinence In Marriage

“Married members discover they can go into periods of voluntary abstinence to recovery from lust and find them surprisingly effective and rewarding experiences” (Sexaholics Anonymous p. 31). *“During periods of voluntary sexual abstinence we came to realize that true union could not be based on sex or dependency, of whatever sort. During those times we discovered we were actually closer together, on a deeper level”* (Sexaholics Anonymous p154). Learn about the value of abstinence in marriage.

Acceptance is the Answer *

“And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, situation--some fact of my life--unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God’s world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; unless I accept life completely on life’s terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes” (Alcoholics Anonymous p417). See also The Real Connection July 1st. How has focusing on what needs to be changed in me and my attitudes helped me in daily life? How has acceptance become my answer?

An hour with an Oldtimer (A) and (B)*

"I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly" (Alcoholics Anonymous p180). Oldtimers will be available for 1 on 1 or small group discussion (subject to availability). Get the opinion of an Oldtimer on the challenges you are facing in your program. Find out how they got sober and stay sober.

Anatomy of a Sober Day: * Step 11

"As we go through the day we pause..." (Alcoholics Anonymous pg. 87-88). See also Sexaholics Anonymous pg. 158-168 (18 Wheeler), Step 11 prayer. *Recovery Continues* analyzes "The Anatomy of a Look"... Let's share experience strength and hope around exactly what a day may be like as we begin to turn to a Higher Power rather than lust.

Being Responsible vs. Being In Charge Step 5

"We take responsibility for our own recovery but we don't remain isolated and 'in charge' of it. We surrender to God and take direction from the sponsor" (Sexaholics Anonymous 73). *"There's a difference between taking responsibility for our recovery and being in charge of it. When we take responsibility, we've stopped saying 'Fix me' and are willing to take the actions necessary to get well. We're willing to take direction and work the Steps.... When we remain 'in charge,' however, we're shutting ourselves off from the light and help of other recovering members"* (Sexaholics Anonymous pp. 186-187). What is your experience of letting go of being "in charge" of your program and assuming "responsibility" for it?

Best Things I Learned in SA *

"I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly" (Alcoholics Anonymous p180). Based on the title of a recent talk at a Seattle SA/S-Anon speaker meeting. What has worked for your recovery?

Carrying Our Message: Working Tradition 5

Just as our groups have one primary purpose to carry the message, so we have one primary purpose. Working the 5th tradition in our daily life is to remember that sobriety *"is not an end in itself. Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us"* (Alcoholics Anonymous p77). How has this looked in your experience?

Common Welfare Trad 1 (collaborative)

Reaching For Personal Freedom, p 68-71.

Coping with the Outside World: SA, S-Anon, & S-Ateen coming together in support of a shared vision of recovery and the solution. The White Book meeting format says our meetings are about *“how to apply the Twelve Steps and Traditions in our daily lives.”* The focus of this meeting is how to apply Tradition 1 to our daily life: whether I am with family, work, or some other group, when I work for unity in that group by seeking the common welfare it frees me from the bondage of self so I begin thinking of what we could do for others, of what I could pack into the stream of life.

“We have no right to save our own skin at another person's expense. Such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected. The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others” (Alcoholics Anonymous 74). Please focus on the solution and be considerate in your share, as many members of S-Anon/S-Ateen will be affected by explicit sharing of the problem. Keep in mind that there are members of all 3 fellowships present including minors. Sharing that deviates from these guidelines may be moderated.

Convention Committee Debrief (collaborative)

The current Convention Committee members will share their experience, strength, and hope about this convention with those who will be hosting an upcoming convention.

Correctional Facilities Committee (open SA)

“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” (SA Service Manual pg 79).

Members of the Correctional Facilities Committee will share about the work of the CFC and how you, too, can be the hand of SA when those in prison reach out for help.

Correctional Facilities Committee: writing workshop

Service opportunity: learn about and participate in the CFC's sponsor by mail program.

Daily Reading from The Real Connection (A) and (B)

Based on the daily 6am Ravenna “On Awakening” meeting (one of Seattle's most widely attended meetings), start your day with sharing on the daily reading from The Real Connection.

Dealing With Free Time *

“Though a robust man at retirement, he went to pieces and was dead within four years” (Alcoholics Anonymous 32). How do we navigate the “slippery slope” of “unstructured time”? Is constant and unrelenting Twelfth Step work our only hope for staying sober and continuing life-long recovery?

Dependence on God

“Job or no job, wife or no wife - we simply do not stop drinking so long as we place dependence upon other people ahead of dependence on God” (Alcoholics Anonymous p98). Turning things over through Surrender is the path to letting God do for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Emotional Sobriety

“God willing, we members of Alcoholics Anonymous may never again have to deal with drinking, but we do have to deal with sobriety every day. How do we do it? By learning – through practicing the Twelve Steps and through sharing at meetings – how to cope with problems that we looked to booze to solve back in our drinking days” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions 106). See also Alcoholics Anonymous p. 55, Sexaholics Anonymous p. 88. How is the program making a difference in our emotional sobriety?

Father & Son in SA

“Lust, like alcoholism, I later came to see, is a family disease. Everyone tied to the sex drunk is affected” (Sexaholics Anonymous p15). *“Healing in the family begins by staying sober, going to meetings, and working the Steps...My own attitude and recovery are the key. They open the door to recovery and spiritual life in my family”* (Sexaholics Anonymous pp. 154-155). A panel of fathers will share their experience of having a son share the joys and challenges of both working the SA program.

Fear as Defect Activator

“The chief activator of our defects has been self-centered fear...” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, pg. 76). If we look beneath our greed, selfishness, anger, and negativity, we will discover fear as the driving force. We learn that the path away from fear is the path toward humility.

Fellowship: A Key to Sobriety* Step 0

“We participated in the fellowship of the program. No one seems able to stay sober and progress in recovery without it” (Sexaholics Anonymous p63). How has participating in the fellowship made a difference in our recovery?

First Things First: Not Diverting from our Primary Spiritual Purpose working Tradition 6

When ventures outside spiritual recovery go sideways and fail to meet perfection we have often gone to the other extreme and resorted to our drug again. So these misadventures *“implanted a deep-rooted conviction that in no circumstances could we endorse any related enterprise, no matter how good”* (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p157). Individual members are free to be involved in any cause they choose, but applying this tradition to our daily lives implies that we remain single minded in our attention: work while at work, family while with family, and so on. The transferable concept of this tradition helps me to identify and stick to my primary purpose in each context. Different from the old idea of compartmentalizing our life, this is a matter of priorities. First things first reminds us to stay present with our current surroundings.

Forgiveness: Step 8 1/2

“Somewhere between making the list and making the amends, there’s an unwritten requirement that we forgive” (Sexaholics Anonymous p125). See also The Real Connection p. 311. And what if forgiving is a huge obstacle? I work the steps and I get help from my sponsor, others, and my HP. There is a way if I’m willing.

Freedom From Self Will *

"...any life run on self-will can hardly be a success" (Alcoholics Anonymous pg. 60).
Hear how surrender invites us back into the human race.

From Resentment to Connection: Step 4

"We were not in the habit of honestly looking at our own strengths, our weaknesses, or our problems relating to others..... Step Four was a tool to use any time we were emotionally disturbed and assailed by resentment, fear, shame, guilt, remorse, self-loathing, self-pity, or pride.... We were learning what must change if our relations with others were to improve" (Step Into Action p.57 and p. 60) Step Four is the "How To Guide" for untangling the mess of our lives by reducing the events and feelings to bite size. We do our best and turn over the rest.

Fully Self-Supporting Trad 7 (collaborative)

Reaching For Personal Freedom pp. 95-98

Coping with the Outside World: SA, S-Anon, & S-Ateen coming together in support of a shared vision of recovery and the solution. The White Book meeting format says our meetings are about *"how to apply the Twelve Steps and Traditions in our daily lives."* The focus of this meeting is how to apply Tradition 7 to our daily life: to be self-supporting I must throw off unnatural dependencies which leads to greater emotional sobriety. Allowing others to be self-supporting helps me to know where I end and where others begin.

"We have no right to save our own skin at another person's expense. Such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected. The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others" (Alcoholics Anonymous 74). Please focus on the solution and be considerate in your share, as many members of S-Anon/S-Ateen will be affected by explicit sharing of the problem. Keep in mind that there are members of all 3 fellowships present including minors. Sharing that deviates from these guidelines may be moderated.

Getting Past Chronic Relapse

Sexaholics Anonymous pg. 158-168 (18 Wheeler). For some of us, the sobriety definition was a pipe dream for a long time, and suggestions like we found in the "18 Wheeler" felt like stop gap measures at best. Let's share experiences of gradually finding day to day grace in our program despite these challenges or even of finding sudden grace after years of discouragement. What concrete steps can we take to stay sober one day at a time?

Gift of Service: Step 12

“Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is our twelfth suggestion: carry this message to other alcoholics!” (Alcoholics Anonymous p89). *“Practically every A.A. member declares that no satisfaction has been deeper and no joy greater than in a Twelfth Step job well done. To watch the eyes of men and women open with wonder as they move from darkness into light, to see their lives quickly fill with new purpose and meaning, to see whole families reassembled, to see the alcoholic outcast received back into his community”* (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p110). What does a change in attitude from “getting to giving” do for us as we watch people recover? Do desires or purpose change? If so what/how?

God sightings in recovery

“We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves” (Alcoholics Anonymous 84). This promise is about much more than just sobriety. Here's an opportunity for sharing moments of discovering God in recovery.

Gratitude: Open Mic

“A genuine gratitude for blessings received, and a willingness to try for better things tomorrow will be the permanent assets we shall seek” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p95). Open mic to share gratitudes.

Growing in Gratitude

“Learning daily to spot, admit, and correct these flaws is the essence of character-building and good living. An honest regret for harms done, a genuine gratitude for blessings, received, and a willingness to try for better things tomorrow will be the permanent assets we shall seek” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p. 95). *“What are you grateful for today? (Gratitude is an antidote to lust.)”* (Step Into Action p54). What have we learned about gratitude in the program? How can we experience more of it?

Half Measures Availed Us Nothing *

“Half measures availed us nothing” (Alcoholics Anonymous p59). Opportunities to share something of the journey, by fits and starts, toward, or back again toward, embracing our utter powerlessness and finding complete surrender to a Higher Power who will lead us from half measures into wholeness.

Having and Using a Sponsor *

“What we call the person doesn't matter; and we don't have to call them anything. Asking for help and accepting suggestions are what bring results” (Sexaholics Anonymous pg 72-75). Here's the tool that everyone with long term sobriety employs again and again. It's a no brainer but why do we so often refrain from using this resource? One's pride activated by fear perhaps? Remember the second phrase of the Serenity Prayer, “Courage to change the things we can”.

Healing in my family; The miracle I didn't expect (collaborative)

“Healing in my marriage and in the family is one of the most blessed areas of this new life, even though it isn't always a bed of roses” (Sexaholics Anonymous 24). Let's share some of the wonderful blessings our new life in sobriety and recovery have brought to us. “We have no right to save our own skin at another person's expense. Such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected. The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others” (Alcoholics Anonymous 74). Please focus on the solution and be considerate in your share, as many members of S-Anon/S-Ateen will be affected by explicit sharing of the problem. Keep in mind that there are members of all 3 fellowships present including minors. Sharing that deviates from these guidelines may be moderated.

Healthy Sexuality

“I discovered in sexual sobriety that I was not inclined to touch my wife except when it was a sensual, erotic, or sexual thing. I never touched her simply as a person, a spiritual touch, if you will” (Sexaholics Anonymous p164). See also Alcoholics Anonymous p. 68-70. Can I work my program, find progressive victory over lust and still reach for and experience true physical intimacy with my spouse? Can I make healthy living amends to my spouse even here? We will still adhere rigorously to the SA sharing guidelines about sexually explicit descriptions in this session; please share appropriately.

How Do I Surrender? * Step 1

“Since we had something to do with becoming what we are, we can assume responsibility for the change of attitude-surrender-that will allow healing to begin. We can become willing to see and surrender what we know we're doing wrong. The Fellowship and the Program of the Steps take it from there” (Sexaholics Anonymous p57). “I became as a child, teachable, having to reject my way of doing and thinking for a new way of life based on surrender of my will to God” (Sexaholics Anonymous p23). For the newcomer it's a new way of dealing with lustful thoughts. Surrender is neither fighting back nor indulging in the behavior. It's the third option and it works.

How Professional Help Benefitted my SA Recovery

“But this does not mean that we disregard human health measures. God has abundantly supplied this world with fine doctors, psychologists, and practitioners of various kinds. Do not hesitate to take your health problems to such persons. Most of them give freely of themselves, that their fellows may enjoy sound minds and bodies. Try to remember that though God has wrought miracles among us, we should never belittle a good doctor or psychiatrist. Their services are often indispensable in treating a newcomer and in following his case afterward” (Alcoholics Anonymous p133). Many of us are greatly helped by professionals. What effect has this brought to our SA recovery? The traditions, which remind us to never endorse any outside enterprise, therapy, treatment center, doctor, etc. in our sharing in meetings, will be upheld.

How to Host a Convention (collaborative)

Learn how you too can host an International Convention. Presented by members of S-Anon's ICC and SA's ICC.

Intimacy: The Real Connection

“Our habit made true intimacy impossible. We could never know real union with another because we were addicted to the unreal” (Sexaholics Anonymous p 203). *“We began practicing a positive sobriety, taking the actions of love to improve our relations with others...We were learning how to give; and the measure we gave was the measure we got back. We were finding what none of the substitutes ever supplied. We were making the real Connection. We were home”* (Sexaholics Anonymous p 205). How do we nurture those connections that truly bring us life? How do we recognize true connection when we have been so disconnected our whole lives?

Is S-Anon for me?

Find out if you qualify for S-Anon. Find out how you might benefit by working the S-Anon program. Led by “double winners”.

Issues with Minors

“Notwithstanding the great necessity for discussing ourselves with someone, it may be one is so situated that there is no suitable person available. If that is so, this step may be postponed, only, however, if we hold ourselves in complete readiness to go through with it at the first opportunity” (Alcoholics Anonymous p75). Here is that opportunity to relate with others who have a common problem that is often perceived as too shameful to bring up.

Joy of Living

“It is a design for living that works in rough going...We commenced to make many fast friends and a fellowship has grown up among us of which it is a wonderful thing to feel a part. The joy of living we really have, even under pressure and difficulty” (Alcoholics Anonymous pg 15). *“The joy of living is the theme of A.A.'s Twelfth Step, and action is its key word. Here we turn outward toward our fellow alcoholics who are still in distress. Here we experience the kind of giving that asks no rewards”* (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p.106). We experience the joy of living by working this design for living in all our affairs.

Let Go and Let God: Working Tradition 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” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions pg 133,134). Working this tradition and applying it to my daily life means that I let go of my authority, and let God work. Since God expresses himself through the group conscience rather than only through me, God may speak through anyone. In order to have a chance to hear God, I must practice ego deflation and treat others with respect and listen to them.

Letting Go of Old Ideas: Step 2

“Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely” (Alcoholics Anonymous p. 58). See also Alcoholics Anonymous p568, p13. How have recovered sexaholics identified the “old ideas” that keep us in the addiction and impede recovery? How have they been able to let go of these absolutely?

Live and Let Live: Trad 4 (collaborative)

Reaching For Personal Freedom pg 82-86

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“We have no right to save our own skin at another person's expense. Such parts of our story we tell to someone who will understand, yet be unaffected. The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others” (Alcoholics Anonymous 74). Please focus on the solution and be considerate in your share, as many members of S-Anon/S-Ateen will be affected by explicit sharing of the problem. Keep in mind that there are members of all 3 fellowships present including minors. Sharing that deviates from these guidelines may be moderated.

Miracle of Humility: Step 7

“We heard story after story of how humility had brought strength out of weakness. In every case, pain had been the price of admission into a new life..... We began to fear pain less, and desire humility more than ever” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p.75). The word humility gets a bad wrap in our present culture. How does humility serve as the foundation principle of each of SA's 12 Steps?

Miracles In Recovery: SA Oldtimer Panel (SA only)

“The age of miracles is still with us. Our own recovery proves that!” (Alcoholics Anonymous 153). A panel of Old Timers will share their experiences about miracles in recovery (no Q&A).

Moving Past Gossip and Oversharing working Tradition 11

“Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions pg 180). Applying this tradition to my daily life means to surrender promotion of myself, my ego, and forms of negative promotion by tearing others down. Let people see what difference this design for a living has worked in our life. They need no promotion.

Night Owl: Top Plate (A) and (B)

Recovery Continues pg 49

Over 30 years ago members of SA met just 60 miles north of this spot near the city of Stanwood and began to share honestly and openly about the issues of lust, resentment, fear and dependency that were impacting their lives in recovery. They coined the phrase “top plate” as an analogy for uncovering, discovering, and discarding our defects like taking the top plate from a spring loaded plate stack in a cafeteria: there’s always one more. This is your chance to unpack any extra baggage from the day before heading up to your room for a night of good sober rest.

No Strings Attached working tradition 12

“These experiences taught us that anonymity is real humility at work...” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions pg 188)

How do we let go of the strings of the ego which seek to rob us of the depth of humility which unearth the true gold of working the program?

Obstacles to Recovery *

“If we are honest with ourselves, most of us will identify with any number of these inhibitors to recovery and will also see them in others” (Recovery Continues p80).

Experience strength and hope in dealing with inhibitors to recovery including dishonesty, dependence on others and attempts to control.

Overcoming Complacency

“At the first sign of relief from the obsession, we may get complacent. Once we’ve learned to live without the most obvious stuff, we may sit back and relax----take it easy” (Sexaholics Anonymous p69). *“It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do for alcohol is a subtle foe. We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition”* (Alcoholics Anonymous p. 85). See also The Real Connection January 23rd. How do we keep ourselves involved with and growing in recovery? What do others say and do to keep fresh?

Overcoming Self-Pity

“What happens when we wallow in depression, self-pity oozing from every pore, and inflict that upon those about us?” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p. 81). *“Every time we feel, overwhelmed, our sponsor can point the way out of self-pity, resentment, or fear and onto right thinking, helping us say, ‘I thank God for the good and the seemingly bad as necessary for my growth. Thy will, not mine, be done’”* (Sexaholics Anonymous p. 75). *“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”* (BB p. 84). Probably all of us have found ourselves mired in self-pity both before and after entering the program. Share experience, strength and hope in finding our way out of it.

Phone Meeting Meet & Greet

"...using the three-way calling feature available in many cities" (Sexaholics Anonymous pg. 64) Opportunity for members who use phone meetings to meet and connect with one another.

Practical Guidelines for Group Recovery

Sexaholics Anonymous pg. 185 and see the SAICO pamphlet with this title. What our experience has shown us about creating and maintaining safe and healthy meetings that truly welcomes and nurtures the newcomer.

Prayers that work *

"The persistent use of meditation and prayer, we found, did open the channel so that where there had been a trickle, there now was a river which led to sure power and safe guidance from God as we were increasingly better able to understand Him" (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p109). See also March 5 in The Real Connection. Learn prayers to use in moments of temptation, and to stay connected to God throughout the day.

Quit Playing God: Step 3

"First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn't work. Next, we decided that hereafter in this drama of life, God was going to be our Director. He is the Principal; we are His agents. He is the Father, and we are His children" (Alcoholics Anonymous p62). Until our insanity finally catches up with us few of us readily admit to playing God. How do I catch myself back in the driver's seat today? Do I play lip service to giving up the steering wheel yet continue insanely to babble on in my head in the role of backseat driver? How can I practice Step 3 in the real world where I live one day at a time?

Recovery Speakers Panel (collaborative)

"I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly" (Alcoholics Anonymous p180). The SA and S-Anon mealtime speakers will host a moderated Q&A session. Questions must be submitted ahead of time to the Ask-It-Basket at the concierge table, or online at bit.ly/SiSPanel

Rescue vs Recovery: Step 6

"We needed a different attitude from the old pleading that some of us did with God: 'Help me stop acting out!' or 'Save me from my jealousy!' or 'Don't let me rage again!' In those prayers our self-will was looking for a magical answer. We were looking for rescue, not recovery" (Step Into Action p91). *"Everything begins with sobriety. Without sobriety, there is no program of recovery. But without reversing the deadly traits that underlie our addiction, there is no positive and lasting sobriety"* (Sexaholics Anonymous p. 77). *"Instead of that subconscious and insidious attitude, 'Please fix me!' as though some other person or group could do the recovery for us, we take responsibility for our own recovery. We start working the Steps"* (Sexaholics Anonymous p. 72). How has working step six helped us change the traits that underlie our addiction and take responsibility for our own recovery?

SA Archives and History (SA is 40 years old!)

“Then they commence to watch us with speculative eyes, pick up a fragment of A.A. history, and soon have the solid facts.” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p132). Archives and History is a new SAICO committee. Members of the committee will present the questionnaires compiled by the A & H committee used to interview an oldtimer. Q&A follows.

SA International Committee

The session is dedicated to raising awareness of the IC's work abroad as well as encouraging members in search of service opportunities to get involved. Several committee members will share about the IC's work and leave time at the end for Q&A.

SA Today

Delegates will present the current motions, new work, and status of the fellowship after the General Delegate Assembly has concluded.

SAICO Literature Committee (A) and (B)

Service Opportunity: 18 Wheeler #8 tells us to *“Use the literature of the program”* (Sexaholics Anonymous p 161). Well, this is where it comes from. Find out about current projects underway and provide service by writing, reading, giving feedback.

Same sex issues

“Notwithstanding the great necessity for discussing ourselves with someone, it may be one is so situated that there is no suitable person available. If that is so, this step may be postponed, only, however, if we hold ourselves in complete readiness to go through with it at the first opportunity” (Alcoholics Anonymous pg 68). See also Sexaholics Anonymous 16. Here is that opportunity to relate with others who have a common problem that is often perceived as too shameful to bring up. Note that one's sexual orientation is an outside issue in our fellowship. Leave that debate outside. This session is about lust manifesting itself in relation to others of the same sex whatever our orientation and however we feel about sexual orientation.

Setting Aside Judgement working Tradition 3

The old timers wrote *“Intolerant you say? Well we were frightened. Naturally, we began to act like most everybody does when afraid. After all isn't fear the true basis of intolerance? Yes, we were intolerant”* (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p140). These spiritual truths are just as relevant today.

Sober Dating

“...we were starting to talk and touch as friends” (Sexaholics Anonymous p153). Experience, strength and hope in approaching dating with a sober attitude.

Staying on my side of the Street: Working Tradition 10

"We are there to sweep off our side of the street..." (Alcoholics Anonymous p77). *"...we must never, no matter what the provocation, publicly take sides in any fight..."* (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p176). Why does SA not take on the porn industry head on? Why have we no public policy regarding legalizing or regulating prostitution? Is it sober for an SA member to be active in such causes and participate in such debates as long as we keep such activities outside the meetings?

Staying Present in the Present*

"...we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives...In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle." (Alcoholics Anonymous pg 86). *"As I trust God, I can live in the reality of the here and now, be present to others, and at peace with myself"* (June 11st from The Real Connection). How do these quotes speak to you about living in the present? Are we staying in the present moment - the only place where we can hope to actually live life to the fullest? This session is an opportunity to do just that and share the joy of the present with our precious fellowship.

Stop Feeding The Obsession *

Sexaholics Anonymous pg 158 ("18 Wheeler" #2)

The Sexaholics Anonymous lists much in culture and the world that we use to feed our obsessions. This session is an opportunity to begin to let go of the ones that are plaguing you today.

Surrender Leads to Serenity *

"What a marvelous freedom and joy it brought" (Sexaholics Anonymous p75-76). See also Alcoholics Anonymous p68. As we surrender our obsessions, resentments and fears one to another we will enter a space of serenity and freedom.

Surrendering All Forms of Lust *

"I can take that first drink again any time I want, inside my head, without so much as batting an eyelash!" (Sexaholics Anonymous 24). *"We stop feeding lust. We get rid of all the materials and other triggers under our control. We stop feeding lust through the eyes, the fantasy, and the memory"* (Sexaholics Anonymous 64). *"What we strive toward is not only the negative sobriety of not acting out our sexaholism, but progressive victory over the obsession in the looking and thinking"* (Sexaholics Anonymous 193). What are we learning about how to surrender lust in all its forms?

Taking Actions for an Attitude Change *

“The more we realize that our behavior was the manifestation of inner attitudes and thoughts. To put it another way, our attitudes enabled the addiction” (Sexaholics Anonymous p.50). *“Lust-the attitude itself-becomes the controlling factor in the addiction”* (Sexaholics Anonymous p41). Seeing physical actions was not enough but needed to see the despair of spiritual consequences which bridged the gap between the physical and the spiritual aspect of our sexaholism.

The Dark Past is the greatest possession we have

“Showing others who suffer how we were given help is the very thing which makes life seem so worthwhile to us now. Cling to the thought that, in God’s hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have--the key to life and happiness for others. With it you can avert death and misery for them” (Alcoholics Anonymous p124). What is our experience of using our dark past to help others find life and happiness?

The Indelible List: Step 8

“...we see that the amends process is a healing one...” (Sexaholics Anonymous p123). Who and what does and does not belong on our Step 8 list of amends to be made? What are the benefits of having this list down on paper even before I’ve begun making my Step 9 amends? How do I become willing to take the actions?

The Miracle of Untwisted Relations: Step 9

“...it is from our twisted relationships with family, friends, and society at large that many of us have suffered the most” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p53). Let’s share successes we’ve enjoyed as we have worked the Steps, especially the mended and healed relationships that Step 9 has made possible.

The Third Option *

“On the one hand, we expressed our obsession by acting it out. On the other hand, we tried suppressing it by drinking, drugging, eating or by fighting it with white knuckle willpower.... Both options made it worse; we were between a rock and a hard place. We never knew there was another option--surrender” (Sexaholics Anonymous p84). After years playing tug of war with sexaholism, we have started letting go of the rope, and found new freedom from the obsession.

Unreasonable Demands

“We now clearly see that we have been making unreasonable demands upon ourselves, upon others, and upon God...Living upon the basis of unsatisfied demands, we were in a state of continual disturbance and frustration. Therefore, no peace was to be had unless we could find a means of reducing these demands” (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p76). *“The real problem... seems to be what we call lust--an attitude demanding that a natural instinct serve unnatural desires”* (Sexaholics Anonymous p40). Lust is non-sexual and manifests itself in many unreasonable demands. Inventory and surrender!

Using Slogans *

"I found myself saying and thinking things that a short time ago I would have condemned as platitudes!" (Alcoholics Anonymous pg 132). See also The Real Connection May 3rd. Our literature and our program are full of slogans which help us through the tough times and celebrate the victories: "Live and Let Live." "Easy Does It." "Let It Go." "First Things First." "Once Day At A Time." "Let Go and Let God." "Turn It Over." "Yet."

Using The Essay

Let's talk about *Essay*, our "Meeting in Print"

- Use it as a tool for personal recovery by reading fresh stories and humor from members around the world.
- Share how you use *Essay* with your home group.
- Learn how you can add to the creative and healing process by submitting stories, step-work ideas, art, cartoons, meditations, and poetry to *Essay*.
- Visit with the editor about what's being planned for the future issues.
- Support the Correctional Facilities Committee with your paid subscription.
- Download new and select older issues of *Essay* free at sa.org/essay today!



Our Meeting in Print

We Are Not A Glum Lot

"But we aren't a glum lot. If newcomers could see no joy or fun in our existence, they wouldn't want it. We absolutely insist on enjoying life.... But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others... So we think cheerfulness and laughter make for usefulness." (Alcoholics Anonymous p132). Share the power of laughter and good cheer.

We Don't Do Life On Our Own*

"But the moment our mental or emotional independence is in question, how differently we behave. How persistently we claim the right to decide all by ourselves just what we shall think and just how we shall act" (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions p37). *"If you still think you are strong enough to beat the game alone, that is your affair. But if you really and truly want to quit drinking liquor for good and all, and sincerely feel that you must have some help, we know that we have an answer for you"* (Alcoholics Anonymous p181). *"The fellowship gave us monitoring and support to keep us from being overwhelmed, a safe haven where we could finally face ourselves"* (Sexaholics Anonymous. p61). Not doing life on our own starts when we come out of isolation and begin to connect with other members of the program.

What is a Life of Rigorous Honesty? * Step 10

"...we continue to take personal inventory and continue to set right any new mistakes as we go along. We vigorously commenced this way of living, as we cleaned up the past. We have entered the world of the Spirit. Our next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness. This is not an overnight matter. It should continue for our lifetime. Continue to watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resent, and fear. When these crop up we ask God at once to remove these. We discuss them with someone immediately and make amends quickly if we have harmed anyone. Then we resolutely turn our thoughts to someone we can help" (Alcoholics Anonymous p84). "More than most people, the alcoholic leads a double life...We must be entirely honest with somebody if we expect to live long or happily in this world" (Alcoholics Anonymous p73). We know that rigorous honesty is neither gentle nor brutal, but what exactly is it? What does it look like in our day to day experience?

What is Progressive Victory? *

"We found that if we tried surrendering our lust while holding on to our resentment, anger, pride, or dependency, for example, it didn't work" (Sexaholics Anonymous p80). For a Change of Heart our surrender cannot be abstract. These character defects needed attention to detail.

What is Sex with Self? *

This first article in Practical Recovery Tools (p13) underlines for us some of the ways that our *"cunning, baffling and powerful"* addict draws us into the isolation of self-obsession even when we somehow manage to avoid "The Big M". See also Recovery Continues p. 3-4. We'll encourage each other toward taking progressive victory over lust just a bit more seriously in the hope of breaking through to greater joy in recovery.

Women in SA

Sexaholics Anonymous "Mixed Meetings." WISA will share experience and resources of women members. This meeting is open to both men and women.

Women in SA Meet & Greet

Opportunity for Women in SA to meet and connect with each other.

Working the Steps on Our Family Members (Open SA)

"Finally, we begin to see that all people, including ourselves, are to some extent emotionally ill as well as frequently wrong, and then we approach true tolerance and see what real love for our fellows actually means" (Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions pp. 92-93). Many of us have painful experiences from our childhood that may still affect our relationship with parents, siblings, spouse, children, or relatives. Hear experience on working a program of recovery when dealing with such family members today.

Writing 7th Step Prayers (workshop)

Alcoholics Anonymous pg 76, Step Into Action Step 7

Let's take an hour to write, share, and begin to memorize Seventh Step prayers based on our own individual step work.