



Fellowship-Wide Services Newsletter

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June 2013

Welcome to the Summer Issue of the Fellowship-Wide Services Newsletter!

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A Letter from the Office Supervisor

Hello Everyone!

It's been an eventful couple of months since our last newsletter. So much is going on! The best news of all is that we have hired a new General Manager! Lisa McGrath starts working in the Office on May 13th 2013. Our efforts to find a General Manager from within the Fellowship were to no avail and so we broadened our search. We found Lisa through an ad on a non-profit association job bank. After a second interview, and an extensive background check, we knew that Lisa was the right person for us! Lisa comes to us highly recommended, has just the experience we need for the job, and will do a wonderful job, I'm sure.

Lisa has over twenty years of experience in various roles in education and nonprofit management. She was vice president of education for KLRN public television and an adjunct professor for the University of the Incarnate Word. She has a Bachelor's degree in Communications from Trinity University and a Master's degree in Education from Northwestern State University. She has lived in San Antonio most of her life and enjoys watching old movies, shopping at local flea markets, and spending time with her family and friends (including her five rescue dogs).

Let's be sure to give Lisa a warm welcome!

F.W.S. Office

- New General Manager Hired! To start May 13th – Lisa McGrath
- BFOC chair/treasurer-SteveB visited office April 15-21st.
Staff Performance Appraisal was done same week:
 - Amanda Alaniz, Copyright Desk Associate (hired Nov 2012)
- New Temp staff Christina Castillo, Office Assistant, hired on May 1st 2013
- Literature updating continues with the help of the Literature Reformatting Subcommittee as inventory becomes low and new pamphlets are ordered. We are working with a Desktop Publisher to put all of our Pamphlets in an up-to-date design format.
- Records were reviewed at the office and labeled in compliance with State and Federal Records Retention Guidelines.
- Sales of books, pamphlets, chips and other items were extremely high in March! \$25,000 in sales, as opposed to the usual 10,000 to 12,000. Kudos to our staff for handling the increased workload so well!
- F.W.S., S.L.A.A. Professional Outreach was made, with the help of the New York Intergroup, at the US Journal Conference. In a collaborative effort with the BPRC the Office secured banners, signs, and stands, and shipped literature to the Conference in a timely and efficient manner.
- Office visit: SusanG to go to Office on Monday May 13th 2013 to start training the new GM. Will be there for the entire week.
- Upcoming Office visits: May 30th – June 4th The entire BOT for Consultation
July 8th? - TomF and Susan
August 1st - 10th BOT ABM

ABC/M 2013

- 27 people have registered for the ABC/M so far
- Raffle drawing was held. Three tickets were drawn and the first Intergroup drawn was notified. Results will be announced at the ABC/M.

Respectfully submitted,
SusanG
Office Supervisor, Trustee

Board Finance and Operating Committee

June 10, 2013

Treasurer's Report

It was an eventful quarter for me as the Fellowship-Wide Services (F.W.S.) Treasurer, including a week-long trip to the F.W.S. office in late April to perform a number of functions, including meeting with the newly hired Attorney, Mollie Cullinane, Esq. a non-profit specialist, meeting with our Insurance Agents and meeting with the San Antonio Police Detective in charge of the complaint we filed against the prior General Manager. There is always plenty to do at the F.W.S. office by the F.W.S. Officers, including providing support, oversight and direction to the office staff. I am always struck by how fortunate we are to have the current team of employees and independent contractors who keep things running smoothly and efficiently in San Antonio.

The last three months also ushered in a couple of important new developments in the F.W.S. office.

The first is that Rita H. has rotated out of the position of Office Supervisor, and the Board of Trustees (BOT) elected Susan G., of Huntington Beach, CA to serve in that position effective April 1, 2013. Rita will continue to serve on the BOT until the end of her term in August and as a member of the Board Public Relations Committee. The timing was based upon a number of considerations, but the change is one that we have all been preparing for over several months. Rita has been winding down her Board service responsibilities, but continues to serve as the Corporate Clerk, a member of the Board Public Relations Committee (BPRC) and is helping Susan learn the details of the Office Supervisor position.

We cannot possibly thank Rita enough for the outstanding service she provided as the Office Supervisor through some extremely difficult times. I personally have never before seen anyone devote the care and attention to a service responsibility as Rita has to overseeing the office since 2009, and I am grateful that Higher Power provided the fellowship with the right person at the right time in Rita. I am also confident that Susan will do also an exemplary job as our new Office Supervisor.

The second development, as detailed in the Office Supervisor's Report, is the hiring of a new General Manager, Lisa McGrath. Lisa comes to us with a background in education and operation of non-profits, and will assume on many of the administrative responsibilities that Board members have been carrying since termination of staff in 2010. Susan G. did an excellent job in leading the search for a general manager and the interview and hiring process proceeded without a hitch, with the help of Chris D., Curtis B and Sam M. from the Human Resource Subcommittee.

The second quarter of the 2012-13 Fiscal Year ended on March 31, 2012. At the end of the second quarter, Fellowship-Wide Services (F.W.S.) held approximately \$218,000 in the various accounts, including a little over \$149,000.00 in the Prudent Reserve Fund (PRF). In reviewing a comparison of contributions for October through March over the past three years, I note that they have been consistent, but have not significantly grown. For all three years, contributions (including groups, intergroups and individuals) for the first half of the year have hovered at around \$63,000.00.

Included in this Newsletter are both the Second Quarter (March 31st) Balance Sheet and the 6 month Profit and Loss Comparison, including the Fiscal Year-to-Date Totals. Any question on the Financial Statements can be directed to me at <http://www.slaafws.org/contact/SB>.

Board Finance and Operating Committee

The members of the Board Finance and Operating Committee (BFOC) generally meet by teleconference every second and fourth Monday of the month for an hour and a half. On the first Monday, we generally review subcommittee reports and on the fourth Monday of the month the Committee reviews the financial reports from the preceding month. Other business is taken up after completion of those regular tasks.

Highlights of business conducted by the BFOC since my last report include:

1. Authorizing the purchase of new desktop computers for the office.
2. Reviewing and giving input on a new Phone Calls policy that originated with the BPRC.
3. Reviewing of various cost reports designed to follow expenses such as shipping supplies and website fees.
4. Approving of the appointment of Sarah C. as the Local member of the ABM/C '13 planning Committee.
5. Recommending to the Board of Trustees a draft of the Translation Agreement prepared by the Copyright-Translations Subcommittee to offer to the German Speaking Intergroup.
6. Approving a Policy and standard letters to use with requests received to republish the S.L.A. A. Steps, Traditions and Characteristics.
7. Working on a comprehensive policy on Retention of Records, designed to comply with state and federal record maintenance requirements as well set out a destruction schedule of private information, when appropriate.

BFOC Subcommittees

The BFOC oversees four subcommittees on its own and one in conjunction with the BPRC (The Web Team). All of these subcommittees have been very busy over the last several months, with too many details to list here. Suffice it to say that the ABC/M 2013 Planning Subcommittee has been in full swing as we approach the 2013 Meeting in August in San Antonio; the Human Resource Subcommittee was instrumental in the General Manager hiring process; and the Copyright-Translations Subcommittee continues to deal with the numerous copyright, trademark and intellectual property issues that come up. I want to express many thanks to the dedicated members who give their time and expertise to these various aspects of F.W.S. operations.

In Service,

Steve B.
Board Finance and Operating Committee Chair
F.W.S. Treasurer

March
Balance
Sheet

Mar 31, 13

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

10000 · BofA ABM/TEF-0426	4,862.19
10100 · BofA Checking	64,013.28
10401 · Vanguard Short-Term Fed Fund	149,269.84
10900 · Petty Cash-Rita	172.51
10901 · Petty Cash-Pamela	221.09
10902 · Petty Cash-Joy	0.00

Total Checking/Savings 218,538.91

Accounts Receivable

11200 · Accounts Receivable	5.51
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Total Accounts Receivable 5.51

Other Current Assets

12000 · Undeposited Funds	1,978.05
12100 · Inventory Asset	49,751.43
13000 · Prepaid Expenses	6,568.01

Total Other Current Assets 58,297.49

Total Current Assets 276,841.91

Fixed Assets

15000 · Buildings and Equipment	40,450.99
17100 · Accum Depreciation	-34,150.00

Total Fixed Assets 6,300.99

TOTAL ASSETS 283,142.90

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable

20100 · Accounts Payable	0.00
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Total Accounts Payable 0.00

Other Current Liabilities

25000 · Sales Tax Payable	58.35
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Total Other Current Liabilities 58.35

Total Current Liabilities 58.35

Total Liabilities 58.35

Equity

32000 · Unrestricted Net Assets	247,060.70
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33000 · Unrealized Gain/Loss	1,070.58
Net Income	<u>35,028.27</u>
Total Equity	<u>283,159.55</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>283,217.90</u></u>

FWS Profit and Loss Report-2nd Quarter

	Oct 12	Nov 12	Dec 12	Jan 13	Feb 13	Mar 13	TOTAL
Ordinary Income/Expense							
Income							
40000 · ABC/M Income							
40200 · ABC/M Registration	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,215.00	2,215.00
40300 · ABC/M TEF Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	450.00	450.00
Total 40000 · ABC/M Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,665.00	2,665.00
42000 · Contribution Income							
42100 · Groups	3,438.66	5,352.12	2,760.81	4,697.37	5,207.62	3,882.25	25,338.83
42200 · Individuals	340.00	12,858.20	5,258.51	1,585.80	694.10	397.69	21,134.30
42300 · Intergroups	1,214.98	7,162.72	1,696.66	3,258.34	1,644.08	1,808.61	16,785.39
Total 42000 · Contribution Income	4,993.64	25,373.04	9,715.98	9,541.51	7,545.80	6,088.55	63,258.52
49000 · Sales Income	13,323.41	17,705.98	13,253.98	13,725.83	16,815.83	24,654.28	99,479.31
49100 · Shipping	2,094.80	1,626.56	1,604.84	2,304.13	2,415.12	2,937.63	12,983.08
49902 · Dues, Fees, Licenses, Royalties	10.18	0.00	1,091.00	200.00	0.00	0.00	1,301.18
Total Income	20,422.03	44,705.58	25,665.80	25,771.47	26,776.75	36,345.46	179,687.09
Cost of Goods Sold							
50000 · Cost of Goods Sold							
50900 · Shipping Expense	1,946.21	1,421.45	1,248.35	2,308.51	2,385.64	2,405.81	11,715.97
66800 · Journal Printing & Mailing	0.00	1,160.35	0.00	973.42	0.00	998.15	3,131.92
70000 · Inventory adjustment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.78	8.78
50000 · Cost of Goods Sold - Other	2,216.56	2,545.95	2,270.46	1,927.02	2,601.22	5,870.88	17,432.09
Total 50000 · Cost of Goods Sold	4,162.77	5,127.75	3,518.81	5,208.95	4,986.86	9,283.62	32,288.76
Total COGS	4,162.77	5,127.75	3,518.81	5,208.95	4,986.86	9,283.62	32,288.76
Income Before Regular Expenses	16,259.26	39,577.83	22,146.99	20,562.52	21,789.89	27,061.84	147,398.33
Expense							
60000 · BOT							
60100 · BOT Accommodation	0.00	1,911.78	0.00	1,957.08	0.00	0.00	3,868.86
60200 · BOT Per Diem	462.00	0.00	0.00	1,452.00	528.00	0.00	2,442.00
60400 · BOT Travel	213.27	875.26	0.00	1,531.65	1,091.38	1,823.32	5,534.88
Total 60000 · BOT	675.27	2,787.04	0.00	4,940.73	1,619.38	1,823.32	11,845.74
62000 · ABC/M Conference Expenses							
62200 · ABC/M Other	73.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	73.40
62400 · Conference Committee							
62408 · InterFellowship (CIFC)	0.00	0.00	0.00	222.94	0.00	0.00	222.94
62414 · Prison Outreach (CPOC)	14.14	20.04	9.78	10.56	0.00	43.89	98.41
Total 62400 · Conference Committee	14.14	20.04	9.78	233.50	0.00	43.89	321.35
Total 62000 · ABC/M Conference Expenses	87.54	20.04	9.78	233.50	0.00	43.89	394.75
62100* · Contract Services							
62110* · Accounting Fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8,421.90	0.00	8,421.90

FWS Profit and Loss Report-2nd Quarter

62140 • Legal Fees	1,825.00	275.00	60.00	0.00	105.00	0.00	2,265.00
63300 • Webmaster Services	2,400.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	8,400.00
63400 • Contract Services - Labor	6,402.55	6,109.95	9,001.75	1,260.35	2,121.00	2,729.30	27,624.90
63500 • Contract Services - Other	1,926.00	2,767.85	2,731.55	1,907.00	4,594.01	1,904.00	15,830.41
Total 62100* • Contract Services	12,553.55	10,352.80	12,993.30	4,367.35	16,441.91	5,833.30	62,542.21
62800 • Facilities and Equipment							
64200 • Rent	2,941.36	2,941.36	2,941.36	2,916.34	2,916.34	2,916.34	17,573.10
64300 • Telephone	295.78	276.86	197.38	316.87	273.19	266.90	1,626.98
64400 • FWS Website	5.00	5.00	448.57	-100.90	289.91	266.20	913.78
64500 • Equipment Leases	0.00	-466.77	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-466.77
Total 62800 • Facilities and Equipment	3,242.14	2,756.45	3,587.31	3,132.31	3,479.44	3,449.44	19,647.09
65000 • General Office Expense							
65100 • Bank Charges/Fees	75.00	75.00	60.00	72.00	60.00	60.00	402.00
65200 • Vendor Fees	543.93	635.82	1,175.89	648.73	624.66	709.76	4,338.79
65300 • Dues, Fees and Licenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	125.00	100.00	225.00
65400 • Federal and State Tax	1,013.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,013.04
65500 • Insurance - Liability	0.00	0.00	0.00	700.00	0.00	0.00	700.00
65700 • Gifts & Honorariums	125.00	0.00	325.00	60.00	0.00	0.00	510.00
Total 65000 • General Office Expense	1,756.97	710.82	1,560.89	1,480.73	809.66	869.76	7,188.83
65000* • Operations							
65670 • Office Supplies	118.12	328.25	29.75	434.65	238.28	592.83	1,741.88
65030 • Printing and Copying	0.00	50.50	0.00	0.00	49.10	0.00	99.60
66100 • Computer Supplies	230.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	149.00	127.00	506.00
66500 • Packaging and Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	65.00	0.00	65.00
66600 • Postage, Mail Services	29.28	148.30	20.83	60.03	72.73	228.33	559.50
66900 • FWS Outreach	296.00	0.00	0.00	49.70	55.77	189.38	590.85
Total 65000* • Operations	673.40	527.05	50.58	544.38	629.88	1,137.54	3,562.83
67000 • Payroll Expense							
67300 • Payroll Accounting	0.00	0.00	0.00	75.20	75.20	75.20	225.60
67400 • Payroll Tax Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00	154.22	212.40	211.96	578.58
67500 • Salary Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,016.00	2,052.00	2,048.00	6,116.00
67600 • Unemployment Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00	54.43	0.00	0.00	54.43
67700 • Workman's Comp Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00	214.00	0.00	0.00	214.00
Total 67000 • Payroll Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,513.85	2,339.60	2,335.16	7,188.61
Total Expense	18,988.87	17,154.20	18,201.86	17,212.85	25,319.87	15,492.41	112,370.06
Net Ordinary Income	-2,729.61	22,423.63	3,945.13	3,349.67	-3,529.98	11,569.43	35,028.27
Net Income	-2,729.61	22,423.63	3,945.13	3,349.67	-3,529.98	11,569.43	35,028.27

F.W.S. S.L.A.A. Professional Outreach

1st International Conference on Sex & Love Addiction

April 4-6, 2013

Brooklyn, New York

The 1st International Conference on Sex & Love Addiction: Global Advances in Clinical Treatment was held this year in Brooklyn with approximately 300 healthcare professionals attending. The Board Public Relations Committee (BPRC) coordinated with the Greater New York Intergroup to host an exhibit booth, which was offered by the event organizers at no expense. The "*S.L.A.A. Introductory Letter to Healthcare Professionals*" was also included with the conference kits for all attendees.

Thank you to the four volunteers -- Whitney, Laura, Doan and Roger -- who handed out "*For the Professional*" pamphlets and blank S.L.A.A. business cards with the F.W.S. Website URL, as well as fielded questions from about 20 healthcare professionals each day. One volunteer was surprised how many healthcare professionals were not familiar with 12-Step recovery for sex addiction. There were several requests to purchase literature and for local meeting lists so S.L.A.A. members could catch a meeting while they were in town. The volunteers ended up hosting an impromptu 12-Step meeting attended by S.L.A.A. members from around the world from as far as New Zealand and Slovenia.

Our new 6-foot banners were on display (see the picture below) -- the 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions, and basic S.L.A.A. information (these three banners will be on display at the 2013 ABC/M!) The feedback from attendees and volunteers was enthusiastic and indicated that participation in this event in the future would be positive.

National Association of Certified Sexual Addiction Specialists

Annual Conference

May 9-11, 2013

Nashville, Tennessee

The National Association of Certified Sexual Addiction Specialists (IACSAS) hosted their annual conference in Nashville with approximately 150 attendees. IACSAS is a faith-based group that addresses the problem of sex addiction in churches and communities. They offered to distribute the S.L.A.A. "*For the Professional*" pamphlet at no cost with the conference kits for all attendees.

Sincerely,

Tom B., BPRC Chair



The S.L.A.A. exhibit booth at the 1st International Conference on Sex & Love Addiction in Brooklyn from April 4-6, 2013.

**The Augustine Fellowship,
Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous,
Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc.**



ANONYMITY, THE LAW AND S.L.A.A.

Reviewed, and amended by the Board of Trustees May, 2013.

During the years of The Augustine Fellowship, S.L.A.A., Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc.'s existence, several inquiries have come to our attention regarding disclosure of illegal or dangerous acts by members or to members. As we are all governed by our own conscience, we do encourage members to study and understand the Traditions of our program to assist in group conscience/ individual decisions on matters associated with crimes/illegal activity. Various scenarios/hypothetical have been posed:

- A member tells us that s/he is HIV positive and having unprotected sex with people.
- A member reports that s/he has committed a sex crime against an adult.
- A member reports that s/he has committed a sex crime against a minor.
- A member reports that s/he is committing incest.
- A member reports that their spouse/partner/child is committing crimes or engaged in illegal activity.
- A member reports that s/he has committed a crime or is engaged in illegal activity.
- A member commits a crime or illegal act at a meeting or against another member of the program.
- A member tells their story, which involves an illegal act, to a sponsor/sponsee or at a meeting.
- A member reports that s/he is a recent or ongoing victim of a sex crime, incest/molestation, or illegal activity.
- A member is arrested due to a crime and the police are asking members outside of the meeting for details about the person/crime.

In all cases, the following is suggested:

- People must remember when they are sharing at a meeting, with their sponsor/sponsee, or fellow members, that anonymity does not exempt them from repercussions for their actions. Also they must understand that anonymity IS NOT the same thing as a legal privilege.
- Although, people at the meetings are attending for their own recovery, we are powerless over an individual's moral conscience and the choice of that person to report such acts to the legal authorities.
- Depending on the law of the country/state in which you are, meeting attendees/listeners may be found to be liable in a civil action for failure to act on information.
- Meetings should check with the laws of their state/country as to what the responsibility of each individual may be in reporting crimes or illegal activity.
- If a crime or illegal activity is happening currently, it is the policy of the F.W.S. office to advise the victim to contact the police or legal authorities accordingly.
- There is a distinction between the individual members, the groups, the Conference and F.W.S. They are all separate entities and are responsible only to themselves.
- Members should remember that there might be individuals attending the meeting who are mandated to report crimes/illegal activity including: social workers, teachers, and law enforcement personnel (this has recently been expanded in at least one U.S. States to include anyone, not just certain professionals – check your local laws to ascertain if you are under a duty to report).

Some groups have chosen to include a statement within their format to specifically address this issue. An example follows:

"The Foundation of Anonymity

Anonymity is the foundation of our program. It is essential if we are to continue the 12 Step work of S.L.A.A. ... However even this basic principle may give way to the pressure of individual consciences or legal requirements. Therefore we, the members of this S.L.A.A.

meeting, make clear to newcomers and old timers alike that speaking of any potentially illegal activity, especially relating to minors, endangers the speaker and lays a burden of knowledge on others that they may not be willing to assume. This includes statements made individually to members, including to your sponsor, which is not a legally protected relationship."

This represents the BOT and F.W.S.'s recommendations, considering the Traditions in conjunction with our attorney. The BOT does not discourage legal compliance or the reporting of criminal activity. Nothing in this Statement should be interpreted to imply otherwise.

CARRY THE MESSAGE

PRISON INMATES ARE SUFFERING FROM VARIOUS SORTS OF SEX AND LOVE ADDICTION; THEY ARE ASKING FOR US TO HELP THEM RECOVER

SOME OF THEM ARE INCARCERATED DUE TO THEIR ADDICTION; OTHERS HAVE DISCOVERED THEY HAVE A PROBLEM AND WANT TO CHANGE

YOU CAN HELP!

STEP 12 TELLS US TO "CARRY THIS MESSAGE", TRADITION 5 TELLS DEFINES OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE, "TO CARRY ITS MESSAGE TO THE SEX AND LOVE ADDICT WHO STILL SUFFERS"

THESE PEOPLE ARE IN NEED OF A RECOVERY PEN PAL TO GUIDE THEM AND HELP THEM BUILD A GOOD FOUNDATION PRIOR TO RELEASE

CAN YOU COMMIT TO ONE LETTER A MONTH TO HELP ANOTHER?

IF YOU ARE READY TO STEP UP AND HAVE AT LEAST 3 MONTHS SOBRIETY, CONTACT US AT

<http://www.slaafws.org/contact/cpoc>

CONFERENCE PRISON OUTREACH COMMITTEE NEWS

The Conference Prison Outreach Committee (CPOC) continues on with a record number of requests from inmates seeking support in recovery from their sex and love addictions. As these people begin to work on their other issues which led them to incarceration, they have come to realize that they are suffering from some sort of sex or love addiction.

We continue to reply to their requests for help and provide support in the form of literature and pen pals. We are seeing some good progress as the men begin their journey with working the Twelve Steps. Those who are applying themselves in working the Steps are building a solid foundation for the time when they are released.

Due to the high volume of requests for help we continue to have a great need for pen pals to work with these people. The vast majority of these people are men, some of whom are convicted sex offenders.

Our Women's subcommittee members continue to reach out to the female institutions in their various geographical areas. At the moment some members in California are working towards getting the security clearances necessary for them to conduct meetings in a local jail.

Meanwhile, some members in Florida have received their clearance to enter the institutions as volunteers and are currently in the process of trying to set up meetings for one of the institutions.

These regional prison outreach committees can be a great asset as they carry the message within the walls of correctional institutions. We encourage local Intergroups to become involved and find out if the institutions in their areas are open to allowing them to come in to conduct meetings. We will do our best to aid any regional outreach efforts, but these do have to be instituted and supported in the local area.

For the past three or four years we have been working on a simple English version of the Twelve Steps from chapter 4 of the Basic Text. We have finally completed the draft and will be assembling our work so that it might begin its journey through the Literature Process prior to going to the conference for approval.

If you have members in your groups who are facing incarceration or have been incarcerated, please have them contact us through the FWS office so that we might help to provide continuing support for these members.

If you would like to serve with us as either a committee member or as a pen pal for inmates, we welcome your service. You will find a flyer included in this issue of the FWS Newsletter. You may contact us at <http://www.slaafws.org/contact/cpoc>.

In Service,

Garry K, CPOC Chair

Conference Steps and Traditions Committee

ANONYMITY BREAK IN A SHARE

Q. "During the getting current portion of a recent meeting, one member began to share about other members of the program who are currently suffering with their sex and love addiction issues. If he had just shared in a very general way that he knows of certain members who are currently struggling, I would have had no problem with what he was saying. However, he gave enough pertinent information regarding these individuals that everyone present knew the identity of the persons about whom he was speaking.

I feel that by sharing that information, he was definitely gossiping about another member but also violating the anonymity of the persons who are currently struggling. I might add that both of the persons spoken of had recently visited this particular meeting.

I am asking for some feedback regarding this incident."

The comments below were given by various members of the Conference Steps and Traditions Committee and do not represent a group conscience of the entire committee. The opinions expressed here are solely that of the person giving them. Take what you like and leave the rest.

This is a very delicate situation which the group will have to deal with very carefully. I know of many groups who have a statement which is read at the beginning of the meeting that says that if someone is sharing something which is inappropriate or triggering, that anyone may quietly hold up their hand so that the person might be aware and change the manner of sharing. Every meeting I have ever attended has a

statement at the end of the meeting which says that the things which we have heard at the meeting should stay at the meeting.

The heart of the matter is that to share about another's struggles in such a way that everyone knows who is being referenced appears to be a violation of Traditions 11 and 12 regarding anonymity. Although I do not make any secret of the fact that I am in S.L.A.A., I still do not want any difficulties which I might be experiencing spread around to other meetings by a member who does not regard the necessity to keep these matters confidential. This sort of behavior seems to fall into the area of being gossip which could be seen as a violation of Tradition 1 because it disrupts the unity of the group. In spreading gossip or rumors about another member, we would appear to also be in violation of the spirit of Traditions 4 and 10 regarding personal inventory, not a public inventory. The only inventory I am qualified to do is that of me and no one else.

If this sort of activity were going on at a meeting I attend, I would be hesitant to share anything which I am struggling with due to the fact that what I had shared would likely be shared at another meeting. We all need a place where we can feel safe in sharing about our difficulties and where I can go for the support of the group; to not have that available to me puts me in jeopardy of acting out. I realize that some members have very poor boundaries, but we cannot allow our meetings to become weak or even sick because of one individual.

I believe that a Group Conscience is in order for a situation such as this and that two or three members speak with this individual in order to attempt to rectify the situation. The reason for multiple members meeting with the individual is for the safety of the spokesperson and to demonstrate the unity of the group regarding the matter of safety and security.

For me, the first tradition hit by such a situation is Tradition Twelve, about anonymity being the spiritual foundation of all our traditions. I believe that in every way we share we should, of course, place principles over personalities, but also respect any other member's anonymity. Practicing this spiritual principle might be a good vehicle for recovery, while ensuring security in the group.

Also, Tradition Three could also be concerned. Since the only requirement to belong to the fellowship is to want to stop living out a pattern of sex and love addiction, I don't think anyone should be allowed commenting on anybody else's recovery or struggles.

Finally, with regards to Tradition One, in order to support unity in the group, security of the group ought to be fostered as much as possible.

This might have to be discussed in group conscience (Tradition Two) in this particular group, but many groups have as a guide to share about one's own experience and stick to an "I" message. Furthermore, once such invitation is provided before the shares, members can also be invited to raise their hands to allow the Chair to intervene if someone does not respect the request for anonymity, or, as another example, if someone is being too explicit about what they are going through. The Chair could then gently remind the member to come back to an I message, as, if one needs to talk about somebody else's path, it really is usually because something in being triggered in that person. In raising his/her hand to express discomfort in such a setting, the member takes responsibility for oneself while receiving support from the Chair. Also, I believe it can teach members in the group that you have some power on protecting the meetings environment and sense of safety.

I have personally raised my hand a few times in such circumstances and was respected. Eventually, we had a group conscience to discuss how we could discourage discomforting attitudes or behaviors and, either modified a facilitator's guide or designated some member to talk personally to a person who might share in an inappropriate way in a recovery group setting.

BOTTOM LINE BEHAVIOUR DEFINITION IN A LEADERSHIP ROLE

Q. "In a group, one member considers that having sexual relationships with a married person is sober behaviour. Since that person serves as the Chair of the meeting, there was strong preoccupation about the impact it might have on a newcomer. Members in the group thought it was not appropriate, but did not know what to do and are seeking counsel."

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To me, this question presents a moral dilemma. In the Judeo-Christian world, this would be considered as a violation of morals; although that is not the focus of the response, you should know that I am highly influenced by these standards.

From the question it is difficult to ascertain whether or not this behavior is a Bottom-Line behavior for the inquirer. This is one of those situations where we must tread lightly due to the feelings of many within our rooms.

This sort of behavior could be a violation of Tradition 1, regarding "personal recovery depends on S.L.A.A. unity." The fact that the group is divided on the issue, indicates to me that this is considered to be inappropriate behavior and could have a negative effect on both the newcomer and the long-timer.

Tradition 2 speaks to the ultimate authority: a loving God as this power may be expressed through our group conscience. If the group were to determine at a group conscience meeting that this is a behavior that is either wrong or inappropriate as a subject to be discussed within a meeting, every member should respect that decision and refrain from discussing this situation in a meeting.

Since the only requirement for S.L.A.A. membership is the desire to stop acting out in our personal bottom-line behaviors, according to Tradition 3, if having sex with married individuals were a bottom-line behavior for one member, the group should respect that as a boundary which should not be crossed by those who would not be opposed to this sort of activity.

By means of comparison, if we have members who have Internet pornography as a bottom line and there were one person in the group who could view it on occasion and not be affected, that one person should have the respect for other members for whom this is a difficulty. Another example would be masturbation; for one member it could be a bottom-line; but for others, it could be a healthy behavior.

We cannot dictate the bottom line of another member, but we should respect that member's bottom-lines and not to encourage behavior which would have a negative effect on their recovery. Common sense and good judgment should prevail in the meeting in order to maintain the unity and focus of the opinion. If

someone were to defend one of my bottom-line behaviors at a meeting, I would have to look for another meeting in which I would not be triggered.

That's my opinion regarding this question; you may disagree, but please respect my right to hold this opinion, just as I respect your right to your opinion.

Questions about individual definitions of bottom line sobriety have always been left to the conscience of the person who has them. The Basic Text reminds us that any short-sighted definitions of sobriety will surely result in that individual being drawn back into the addiction again. We do not answer to each other, but to the addiction itself. The autonomy of each individual in defining their own bottom lines has been an important principle in preserving unity in our fellowship (Tradition 1), because the disease of sex and love addiction has so many forms in which it may appear. Our focus has always been on sharing as individuals the message of how we use the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions to get sober and to preserve that sobriety.

The second concern about the individual in a leadership role in a local S.L.A.A. meeting openly representing sex with a married person as sober may suggest a need for some action to be sure newcomers do not come to believe that standard in some way has the stamp of S.L.A.A. approval. In my opinion there is no way to address this directly even when others do not agree with that individual's own bottom line definitions. However, I might share at a meeting how important it is in my own sobriety to be aware of others who may be hurt by my behavior, as well as the need to honor my own standards for sobriety. The question of hurt comes when I am dishonest about what I am doing. If I feel that it is bottom line sober to have more than one sexual partner, I believe each one needs to know that I am not being monogamous and am currently sexually active with more than one person, and about what precautions I am taking to prevent any transmission of disease. Honesty with ourselves and others is a basic spiritual value, so they are free to make their own choices. Deception of others, even with the pretense that such secrecy protects that person from harm who is being deceived, under any spiritual principles, is not honest.

If both, or all, sexual partners were fully aware that there were other sexual partners of mine, and were not hurt or troubled by that reality, I might consider it sober. Then my concern would be whether the pursuit of sex in those relationships was honoring each of them as whole, spiritual beings, preserving their dignity and my own as such. Finally, I would want to be sure that I was not neglecting some other important area of my life to pursue these multiple relationships. My time and activities must include an honest day's work, other family members, my community, and my personal growth as an individual. My sober life needs to consider all my needs as a complex human being, including my own spiritual growth, and all my values and important areas of my life, work, family, and obligations to my community and my recovery family, should be in reasonable balance.

I might also want to share that about myself to newcomers, but without seeming to be accusatory or referring to the other members. Newcomers cannot be led into sobriety by any one individual's conception of sobriety and recovery from sex and love addiction. They will always have to make the decisions themselves what they have decided they want in our Fellowship, and whose examples they will choose to follow. I did my own pre-recovery research on multiple sexual partners and deception. No one could have sold me on the idea that recovery involved the same behaviors.

In S.L.A.A., since Tradition 3 allows for belonging to the Fellowship only on the basis of the desire to recover and since the definition of sobriety stems from self-defined bottom lines, it becomes difficult to judge such definition.

Of course, moral standards in a said society will influence the view on somebody else's bottom lines, but I see that it is true that what is triggering for somebody might not be for somebody else.

There is also the question of honesty towards our powerlessness and sobriety itself. Step one warns us about various strategies Sex and Love Addicts might resort to in order to avoid admitting total powerlessness and surrendering. But such issues will usually evolve with step work and continued recovery and would be most likely addressed in a sponsor/sponsee relationship or through individual sharing.

However, as I understand from the preoccupation expressed in the question, the group feels threatened by the impact of someone in a "leading" position with a sobriety definition that is not seen as sober on a newcomer.

That's when I think this becomes a unity issue that should be considered with respect to Tradition one which is, in turn, usually addressed through group conscience.

However, it is a delicate issue, and Tradition 3 about the sole desire to recover in order to belong should be considered carefully. Maybe the group conscience could address the issue through using *Triggers as a resource*. Personal communication with the member can also be used.

Finally, a Chairs position in a group is usually a one month term only. The impact might be minimal. Although I believe loving flexibility and guidance can be used, traditions 1 and 2 allow for the groups to discuss their position about such an issue. For example, the group might want to set general standard on occupying a leading position with regards to personal bottom lines' sobriety, again with the guidance of a loving Higher Power.

That was not a simple and easy question to answer. I just humbly shared my view on it today with my today's level of recovery. May it be of some use for your reflection?

I think each member sets their own bottom line and determines their sobriety themselves.

It seems to me like the group might be selecting which newcomers they want and which they do not.

What about an older person who has adult children and grandchildren, but is gay or bisexual and no longer interested in having sex with their spouse. Can they make an agreement to each have sex with others, but remain married for a large number of financial and social reasons as they enjoy living together and having their children, grandchildren and many friends come to visit their home?

Why should they have to get a divorce or have to be celibate? Perhaps their religion suggests this. But in SLAA religion is an outside issue. Perhaps their religions permit being legally married to one person and having sex with another.

I have friends who are not in 12 Step programs, who will soon be celebrating 40 years together. They are both male and one is still legally married to his wife after 40 years living with his male partner and not with his wife. They go to church and their church accepts there relationships. If one of them soon became a newcomer to SLAA what would the Steps, Traditions, and bottom lines say about their relationships? In my opinion there is nothing to say. Their relationships and sobriety are of their choice. SLAA has nothing to say about their relationships which are an outside issue.

A number of years ago I attended an SLAA meeting where, regularly, every week, a man shared about having sex with a married woman. No one ever said anything to him and as far as I could tell no one ever said anything negative about it to anyone. It was considered something which was his business and his business alone and no one discussed it positively or negatively.

I believe that some newcomers would feel safer if the chair of the meeting shared about having sex with a married person. This might vary depending on the religious values of the newcomer. Do we cater to newcomers with certain religious values? I think we should not.

Tradition 1 is about unity. I do not think we can have unity if we pick, choose and discriminate regarding the different religious values of our members, accepting some and trying to change others.

Tradition 3 is about membership requirements. I do not think we can require specific religious values of our members.

Tradition 4 states that each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or S.L.A.A. as a whole. I think creating requirements about religious values for chairs would affect S.L.A.A. as a whole and would therefore be in conflict with Tradition 4.

Tradition 10. S.L.A.A. has no opinions on outside issues; hence the S.L.A.A. name ought never to be drawn into public controversy. I think having sex with a married person, all by itself, is an outside issue. There might be reasons to not have sex with a specific person, who happens to be married. However, some people are in committed monogamous relationships and are not married. So the legal or religious status of being married is an outside issue. There are many reasons to not have sex with specific people; the status of marriage is not a defining factor that applies in all situations.

The CSTC is a group of volunteers, some of whom were ABM delegates, and others who volunteered out of interest. We do not represent a group conscience of S.L.A.A., but are committed to bringing thoughtful discussion and study of 12 Step Fellowship literature and experience to the questions that are brought to us. Other non-S.L.A.A. literature, such as AA or Al-Anon literature may have been accessed in order to see how other 12 Step Recovery Fellowships have addressed these issues. We offer this summary as the result of our discussions. We present the major points of concern in the hope that wider discussion in the Fellowship will help us evolve our customs and practice of the S.L.A.A. program of recovery to better represent the loving guidance of a Higher Power. Always we affirm the autonomy of each group and the need for each individual to follow her/his own conscience. No decision of this group, or any other, is ever forced upon another, even when we believe a practice is clearly in conflict with the Steps and Traditions.

Invitation from

The Conference Healthy Relationships Committee

To writers or people who have an interest in contributing to a proposed booklet called:

Tools for Maintaining Healthy Relationships

This project has been ongoing for years and deserves to be completed since we all desire to have healthy relationships and this is one way of encouraging and sharing our hope and experience with others. This is a great way to do service that can be customized to your desire/ability to contribute.

The outline is:

- 1) Recovery
 - a) Individual-*Recovery starts with me*
 - b) Relationship-*My recovery in long-term relationship*
- 2) Service
 - a) How I move forward in the world
 - b) How I grow in relationship
 - c) What I bring to others

Contact CHRC through the S.L.A.A. website at <http://www.slaafws.org/contact/chrc>

Special
ISSUE

the Journal

Attention S.L.A.A. Members Worldwide

S.L.A.A. includes members in forty-three different countries and the seven core documents of S.L.A.A. have been translated into seventeen different languages. A special issue of the Journal is in the works, collecting submissions from members of the fellowship worldwide. The Journal is S.L.A.A.'s meeting in print. This issue will include entries in the native languages of the authors as well as English translations of each share. Suggested topics include: recovery through translation, local service outside the US and international service at the Annual Business Meeting, on Conference committees and/or the Board of Trustees. Submissions on other topics will be accepted as well. Please write in your native language and also provide an English translation if possible. We can translate if necessary. We look forward to hearing from all of you. We can't wait to learn from the experience of members around the world. Please send your submissions by December 31st to: <http://www.slaafws.org/contact/ctc>



International Issue of the Journal



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FWS Newsletter Submission Format

It is very exciting to see how many of you are interested in submitting articles and reports to the FWS Newsletter. It is even more exciting to know the number of readers continues to grow. In order to maintain the integrity of the FWS Newsletter, I would like to encourage you to read and use the following guidelines when submitting articles and reports to the FWS Newsletter.

- Please use the email address created specifically for submissions to the FWS Newsletter, <http://slaafws.org/fwsnews-submit>
- Please make submissions in a .doc or .docx file, with the exception of flyers created for specific events or requests. Doing so helps the editor to make changes (usually for increased readability and continuity of print, minor grammatical errors) to the document. If you send a .pdf, please be sure to proofread and edit the text.
- Please remember to maintain anonymity. Use First Name and Last Initial.
- Please follow the motion passed to place periods between the initials in our abridged name in any written material that is made public. It should look as such: S.L.A.A.
- Please submit your articles and reports in a timely fashion. In each edition of the FWS Newsletter, the deadlines are published.
- Please remember that the FWS Newsletter is not a recovery-oriented publication. It is not to be confused with the *Journal*, which publishes articles of recovery. All submissions must have the mission of the FWS Newsletter at its center, which is to publish items related to S.L.A.A. business, committee, office, and BOT news, and to share this information as widely as possible in order to keep all members, near and far, up-to-date with the business happenings of the Fellowship.
- The deadlines are:
 - August 11, 2013
 - November 10, 2013
 - February 9, 2014
 - May 11, 2014

If there are any concerns, questions, or comments re: the FWS Newsletter, you may contact the editor, Deb W., <http://slaafws.org/contact/newseditor>

Respectfully submitted, Deb W.