



# Creative Recovery

September-October 2009

the Journal

Single issue \$3

# Make an International Difference

All you need to write for the Journal is experience with addiction and S.L.A.A. recovery. Any member of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, new or seasoned, may submit a piece for consideration. Through the Journal, members of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous serve together to carry the solution for sex and love addiction worldwide.

Submitting an article is easy. You can email your submission to the Journal using the email address below. You can upload it through theSLAAJournal.org. We accept all common file types. If you do not have Internet access, you can send a CD (compact disk) to Fellowship-Wide Services at the below address. If you cannot type or do not have access to a computer, perhaps someone who does can take dictation for you. We will also accept manually typed or legibly hand-written submissions through the Fellowship-Wide Services address below.

Please read the writing and submission guidelines just inside the back cover before you begin writing.

We ask that you include your phone number so we can reach you to resolve any ambiguity in meaning and your general location or postal code so we can balance the submissions geographically. Please also include your name as the author. You may use a pseudonym or pen name.

You can, if you wish, include your last name with your submission, but if your piece is published, we will replace it with your last initial for purpose of anonymity at the press level. It is the policy of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous to maintain both anonymity and confidentiality regarding the storage and usage of contact information; It is against our policy to sell it or give it out.

Through the act of submitting a piece, writers waive their rights to compensation in association with the submission and grant all rights associated with the submitted piece to Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, Inc. to edit, quote, print, publish, and distribute the submission in the Journal or publication of collected works. All published submissions are protected under the copyright of the entire issue in which they have been published.

[editor@theSLAAJournal.org](mailto:editor@theSLAAJournal.org)

Help us avoid spam email. Please do not give this email address out to non-members or publish it on the World Wide Web.

Fellowship-Wide Services  
1550 NE Loop 410, Ste 118  
San Antonio, TX 78209

## **First Things First**

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous Preamble	3
The Twelve Steps of S.L.A.A.	4
Letter from the Editor	5
Events and Service Opportunities	6
Question of the Day	11
Answers from Yesterday	11

## **Theme: Creative Recovery**

Creative Recovery	14
The Haunts Past	14
Sky's the Limit	16
Over a Game	18
Brutally Honest	18
Fantasy	19
Dreamwork	25
What is the Journal?	26

## **Share Space**

From an Online Member	30
Thirst	32

The Conference Journal Committee, a service body within Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, publishes *the Journal* for the good of the international S.L.A.A. membership. Oversight and policy is provided in accordance with the Ninth Tradition.

© 2009 Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous. All rights reserved.

Stories, interviews, personal testimony, and other content contained herein are authored by members of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous. The opinions expressed in *the Journal* are not necessarily the opinions of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, S.L.A.A. Fellowship-Wide Services, the S.L.A.A. General Service Conference, the Journal Conference Committee, or *the Journal* production staff. Motions adopted at the 1989, 1990, and 1991 General Service Conferences chartered *the Journal*, but it is impractical for all of the content of a periodical such as *the Journal* to be conference-approved. Each recovery group can determine its own position on the use of content from *the Journal* at its meetings.

The source for references to the Twelve Traditions throughout this publication is *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, pp. 122, 123, Copyright © 1986 The Augustine Fellowship, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc., San Antonio, Texas, U.S.A., and said Twelve Traditions were derived from *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, pp. 9-13, Copyright © 1981 Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., New York, New York, U.S.A.

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous  
Fellowship Wide Services  
1550 NE Loop 410, Suite 118  
San Antonio, TX 78209

+1 210-828-7900 Monday through Friday 9 am to 5 pm CST

Conference Journal Committee Chair	James E.
Outgoing Managing Editor	Douglas D.
Cover Photography	Douglas D.

## **First Things First**

### **Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous Preamble**

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous is a Twelve Step, Twelve Tradition-oriented fellowship based on the model pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous.

The only qualification for S.L.A.A. membership is a desire to stop living out a pattern of sex and love addiction. S.L.A.A. is supported entirely through contributions of its membership, and is free to all who need it.

To counter the destructive consequences of sex and love addiction we draw on five major resources:

- 1 Sobriety. Our willingness to stop acting out in our own personal bottom-line addictive behavior on a daily basis.
- 2 Sponsorship/Meetings. Our capacity to reach out for the supportive fellowship within S.L.A.A.
- 3 Steps. Our practice of the Twelve Step program of recovery to achieve sexual and emotional sobriety
- 4 Service. Our giving back to the S.L.A.A. community what we continue to freely receive.
- 5 Spirituality. Our developing a relationship with a Power greater than ourselves, which can guide and sustain us in recovery.

As a fellowship S.L.A.A. has no opinion on outside issues and seeks no controversy. S.L.A.A. is not affiliated with any other organizations, movements, or causes, either religious or secular.

We are, however, united in a common focus: dealing with our addictive sexual and emotional behavior. We find a common denominator in our obsessive/compulsive patterns that renders any personal differences of sexual or gender orientation irrelevant.

© 2004 The Augustine Fellowship, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc., San Antonio, Texas, U.S.A.

## **The Twelve Steps of S.L.A.A.**

- 1 We admitted we were powerless over sex and love addiction - that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2 Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3 Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.
- 4 Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5 Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6 Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- 7 Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
- 8 Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9 Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- 10 Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
- 11 Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with a Power greater than ourselves, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.
- 12 Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to sex and love addicts, and to practice these principles in all areas of our lives.

The above version of the Twelve Steps was adapted from the Twelve Steps first published by Works Publishing Company in 1939. Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, New York, granted permission to Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous to reprint the above version in 1986. The forward of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc., New York, 1952) states, "... the Twelve Steps can mean more than sobriety for problem drinkers." The fellowship of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous is grateful for the early contributions to recovery made by the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous through the gift of these twelve principles to the public in 1938.

## Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

There are some great pieces in store for you in the ensuing pages, which we hope you will enjoy and find supportive to your recovery. I have taken special care to find articles of creative flare and recovery depth for you.

Some opportunities have emerged for me to do public outreach for S.L.A.A. on a larger scale, and to help round off S.L.A.A.'s suite of literature with some important content, so my role regarding *the Journal* will be changing.

It was interesting to me that we were unable to find creative contributions regarding marital intimacy, healthy sexuality, and singlehood for this issue of *the Journal*. It was for this reason that I had to change topics from what was planned.

This illuminates one of the many needs of the S.L.A.A. fellowship and the corresponding opportunities to assist the Conference committees that handle literature, public information, and member retention in the completion of important projects.

In introduction to this issue, I'm happy to say that our new section, Question of the Day, was a success. The responses certainly helped me remember my own spiritual experiences, and a new Question of the Day was laid down to challenge you and your recovery friends this month.

Our current theme, Creative Recovery, is particularly dear to me, and we start out the Theme section with perhaps the most hopeful article I've received as Editor. The section ends with a wonderful article about this publication and its many uses. We finish up with our usual Share Space containing the thoughts, hopes, and challenges of our readership.

May God bless your days and your nights, that they be filled with great recovery and wonderful personal growth and wellness.

Sincerely,

Douglas D.

Outgoing Managing Editor, *the Journal*

## **Events and Service Opportunities**

### **S.L.A.A. Online is Here**

In addition to the many S.L.A.A. resources now available through the Internet, there will be a new S.L.A.A. group launched by the South Florida Intergroup called e-SLAA. It is located at [www.e-SLAA.org](http://www.e-SLAA.org).

The content and membership of this site is moderated. Members of the Conference Internet Committee are finding that the same mechanisms that make face-to-face meetings safe can be employed in properly constructed e-communities.

Such e-communities provide S.L.A.A. members with positive options for use of the Internet. Some S.L.A.A. members hold positions in their communities or in the world that makes them easy targets for public scrutiny, criticism, or sensationalism. Some just like writing and reading as a part of their recovery experience or want to supplement their current meeting schedule with an e-meeting. There are members who are not located near any S.L.A.A. meetings, do not find the twelve-step fellowships available to them to be helpful, and cannot attend phone meetings for family or work related reasons.

Whatever your reason, e-SLAA may be right for you.  
Visit us at **[www.e-SLAA.org](http://www.e-SLAA.org)**.

### **Twelve Steps Retreat Weekend in the Poconos!**

**SAVE THESE DATES: December 4th, 5th & 6th, 2009**

This retreat is brought to the S.L.A.A. Fellowship by the Greater Delaware Valley Intergroup (GDVI). Visit [www.slaadvi.org](http://www.slaadvi.org).

Villa of Our Lady Retreat House is a beautiful, clean and comfortable retreat facility, nestled in the wooded Pocono Mountains. Single rooms, private baths, meals, meetings, fellowship, and the Sex and Love Step Recovery Booklet for taking all Twelve Steps - this retreat has it all.



Experienced facilitators will lead the retreat. The step booklet is a straightforward, back-to-basics guide to sexual and romantic recovery created by and for recovering sex and love addicts. The Conference Literature Committee is currently working to get the booklet approved. Benefiting from the experiences of many retreat attendees nationwide, the step booklet's third edition has evolved into one of the most comprehensive, spiritually encouraging, and easy to follow step guides available today. Booklets will be distributed at the retreat.

The retreat begins Friday mid-afternoon and ends Sunday late-afternoon. Specifics about retreat pricing and exact start and end times will be coming soon!

Location: Villa of Our Lady Retreat House  
HC#1 Box 41 Meadowside Road  
Mount Pocono, PA 18344

If you have any questions, call the GDVI-SLAA Information Line: 215-731-9760 or enter your question at <http://www.slaadvi.org/contact>, selecting the Corresponding Secretary option.

This S.L.A.A. event was inspired by and is supported in service by members of the Doylestown and Quakertown, Pennsylvania meetings. Many thanks to all involved for the gift of your service to the fellowship.

## **S.L.A.A. is Growing**

*The Journal* is a basic recovery tool for S.L.A.A. groups and individual members, and it is a key outreach tool into areas that do not yet have an S.L.A.A. presence. Tradition Nine states that each S.L.A.A. service entity is directly responsible to those they serve. In the spirit of Tradition Nine, *the Journal* recognizes its responsibility to both its current readers and potential future S.L.A.A. members seeking recovery.

To reach more sex and love addicts that do not yet know of recovery, we're stretching further than ever before. We're looking for people with writing, drawing, editing, layout, outreach, web design, production, and printing skills to assist in the creation of the new, deeper, more refreshing publication. Please assist us in creatively carrying the message of recovery.

## **Executive Director**

The Executive Director of *the Journal* provides a leadership example and oversight of publication functions, overseeing editorial work, outreach, artistic direction, and subscription services. The Executive Director reports the status and health of *the Journal* to the C.J.C. each month and monitors and promotes the self-sufficiency of *the Journal* in keeping with Traditions Seven and Nine. Candidates must have at least one year of continuous bottom line sobriety.

## **Managing Editor**

The Managing Editor of *the Journal* provides a manages the editorial work, performing editorial work as needed if no other volunteers are available as Editorial Assistants. The Managing Editor must possess basic computer skills as most of the creative contributions, most of the editorial communications, and the submission of the final document to be printed and mailed are all done via email. Candidates must have at least two years of continuous bottom line sobriety.

## **Marketing Director**

The Marketing Director (also called the Outreach Coordinator) oversees the network of Journal Representatives in the interest of building *the Journal's* reputation worldwide, building subscription volume, and encouraging creative contributions of writing and visual art. The Marketing Director also cooperates with other S.L.A.A. service bodies to reach out to sex and love addicts throughout the world. Candidates must have at least six months of continuous bottom line sobriety.

## **Fulfillments Manager**

The Fulfillments Manager oversees the printing and mailing of each of the six annual issues of *the Journal*. The Fulfillments Manager also ensures the legibility, aesthetic quality, and durability of the finished copies of *the Journal*. The Fulfillments Manager will evaluate the handling of subscriptions and help execute subscriber retention policy. Candidates must have at least six months of continuous bottom line sobriety.

## Interested?

If interested in one or more of the above positions, visit [www.theSLAAJournal.org](http://www.theSLAAJournal.org), select Contact *the Journal*, and send your contact information to us using the web form. We will treat your information confidentially in accordance with *the Journal's* Privacy Policy. If you do not have web access, you can call the F.W.S. Office at 210-828-7900.

## An Invitation For You

Enlarge your recovery by allowing others to get the same benefit that you get from reading *the Journal*. It is a great way to carry S.L.A.A.'s message of hope and practice the Twelfth Step. The fellowship needs willing volunteers of all skills and levels of willingness and availability.

Some sex and love addicts have no meeting in their area or the meetings in their area have become stale and repetitive. Through the variety available in *the Journal*, you can breathe new life into the groups and individuals that need refreshment. *The Journal* also fosters international unity, the core principle of our First Tradition. Here's what we can do together.

- We can formally or informally become a Journal Representative for our intergroup or home group, encouraging the use of *the Journal* as a source of topics, letting people know that there are Journals for sale, and ensuring that plenty of Journal subscription cards are always on the literature table.
- We can visit a local organization that deals with sex and love addicts in our area, bringing copies of *the Journal* along with a few pamphlets. The institution may be a treatment facility, a judicial entity, a large recovery club that welcomes varied literature, or a hospital.
- We can work with others to design and oversee outreach projects.

- We can help make phone calls to encourage Journal Representatives and intergroups.
- We can design or print bulletins or posters that raise awareness.

If you think that it is time in your recovery to grow to another level, email us at [willingness@theSLAAJournal.org](mailto:willingness@theSLAAJournal.org) or call our Fellowship Wide Services Office during the hours of 9 AM to 5 PM central time Monday through Friday at +1 210-828-7900 and inquire about becoming a Journal Representative for your home group or intergroup.

## **Publish Your Event**

Let us know about your group or intergroup sponsored events. We will help you get the word out to our readership. You can email [editor@theSLAAJournal.org](mailto:editor@theSLAAJournal.org) or submit a press release just as you would a story through [www.theSLAAJournal.org](http://www.theSLAAJournal.org), preferably several months in advance so participants have time to plan to attend. Event notices must be received at least one month prior to the issue date. The event notice deadline is December 1st for the January-February issue, February 1st for the March-April issue, April 1st for the May-June issue, June 1st for the July-August issue, August 1st for the September-October issue, and October 1st for the November-December issue.

## Question of the Day

### Next Question of the Day

How did you first learn about S.L.A.A. recovery?

A response to the Question of the Day can be a personal story or just a short sentence. Please send your responses to [question-of-the-day@theSLAAJournal.org](mailto:question-of-the-day@theSLAAJournal.org) or use the Contact Us page at [www.theSLAAJournal.org/contact.html](http://www.theSLAAJournal.org/contact.html). Responses that are appropriate for publication may be published in the next issue of *the Journal*.

### Answers from Yesterday

The Question of the Day from the last issue was, "What was your most powerful spiritual experience?" Here are some wonderful responses for your edification. They are not presented in any particular order.

#### Answer One

One night, in sorrow and desperation, I took a walk on a moonlit beach, crying and feeling lonely. I cried out to God saying, "I could really use a God shot now." I was standing in the sand, and when I looked down, I realized to

my astonishment that someone had written the word GOD.

- Manny, Los Angeles, CA

#### Answer Two

I've had numerous powerful spiritual experiences. One of the ones that left me deeply affected was when I was driving in heavy rain around twenty miles per hour down a road, crying like mad, wishing my life would end. A car pulled rudely in front of me coming from a cross-street. I had to hit my brakes almost skidding into the vehicle on the slippery road.

I blew the horn, cussing at the driver. At that moment, I saw his license plate very clearly. All it said in capital letters was, "BELIEVE." With the symbolic sign of a church to my right, I was simply floored and cried even more, but now rather because I felt immensely humbled and in a state of awe.

- Birgit W., Burbank, California

#### Answer Three

Once I experienced Samadhi, the direct perception of God. This was a time in my life before finding lasting strength and support with twelve-step recovery, a time when after much soul-searching, I completely gave up sex, drugs, and

alcohol for three years. I white-knuckled it, as they say.

Of course, many major personal changes and moments of spiritual growth preceded this stage, although nothing occurred so spectacular as to set me apart as spiritually deserving. I was quite a wreck on many levels and, to some degree, still am.

I was in the middle of writing my senior project, a multimedia play about a playwright showing up in his own play, which became literally true in this case. The work became very much a looking glass in that I was experiencing what I was writing.

I had just finished a section of the play where I asked the question, "Why make people suffer in my writing, especially since I've come to believe what I write becomes real?" (Art is new reality that's created.) The answer came to me: "So that the audience can be healed."

Now it seems rather trite, but at the time this was a heady revelation. Taking a break from my writing, I sat back and mused on these eternal cycles of suffering and healing, which made me think of life and death too, of reincarnation.

"Is that it? We just go up and down, on and on forever?"

Suddenly I felt like I had to lie down. The moment I closed my eyes, I had the experience of being out of my body and of falling down a bottomless pit. It felt like I had fallen through a foot-and-a-half hole in my heart.

I was aware on some level that I could open my physical eyes at any time and this terrifying vision would be over, that the universe was showing me some kind of representation of the answer to my question. I went with it.

Falling down a bottomless pit, I tried to reach for the visible walls surrounding me but they were too far away. I was free-falling into darkness. This really felt like it was happening, and I was petrified.

I knew there had to be a way out, if not through a physical act, then a mental, perceptual one. Hey, wait a second ... this is a bottomless pit, right? There's no bottom. So why am I afraid of falling down? In fact, I could just as well be flying up!

Instantly, my whole equilibrium shifted with the altered perception, and I soared forward triumphantly. I remember

somehow there was light now, and suddenly - I don't know how to describe this properly but - the walls surrounding me opened up into an even bigger bottomless pit that somehow seemed to be as big as everything I'd experienced up to then. I was falling again, and I was again terrified.

Wait a second. What was it - that thing I did before, that perceptual shift? Oh yeah! Not falling down, flying up!

Instantly I shot forward again triumphantly, and again the walls opened up to another bottomless pit as big as everything up to then. After this repeated a few more times, I didn't even have to consciously make the perceptual shift. Something in me was making this shift for me, and it was like I was riding a rollercoaster that kept unfolding into something bigger and then into something bigger. Then suddenly, with momentum, everything opened up all at once and a thousand flash bulbs went off - and I was in the Center.

It felt like being electrocuted in an Ocean of Light. There was sound, an All-Sound like chimes, or singing, or electrical humming.

The descriptions I'd heard about this state came back to me, particularly the All-Seeing Eye.

Imagine being able to see out in every direction! Close one eye and then open it again and realize how closing one eye limits one's panoramic view. Imagine opening The Eye that sees everywhere all at once!

At first it all seemed like white light, but I remember perceiving more acutely that the light was made up of darkness and light, and it came in vast waves. The overwhelming feeling was that this is what I stretched for every time I moved; this is what I yearned for in everything I did.

You know how we're aware of certain motivations, of our intentions in a given situation? That experience made every and any other motivation I've had null and void. All I was ever seeking was that moment and that consciousness.

- Tom B., Silver Lake, California

## The Theme

### Creative Recovery

I met someone last month. We've spent some time together with others at recovery events and on some hikes upstate. My sponsor is encouraging me forward. I'm shocked. I guess my step work and the other things I do for my recover have paid off. We'll see how this goes. It's probably best if I just stay calm and safely skeptical, but I don't want to break this before it has a chance to work, so I'll just sit back and talk and listen.

This is the second surprise in my life this year. Being awarded a part in a major play was the first. Actually, it surprised my agent a little too, although she tried to hide it. I could tell because of the unmaskable quiver of excitement in her voice on the phone.

I had considered myself an amateur, but apparently the casting agents saw something that I had not yet been able to see. Actually, I'm an actress that's a wanna-be playwright, but last year I was a waitress that was a wanna-be actress and playwright, so who knows? It's one dream at a time, one day at a time, and in my new

work, it's one scene at a time. These principles you've all taught me can be adapted to so many situations.

Now I understand what the women at my home group meant when they said, "There is more to this than just not acting out." There's a world more. Stick around and find out for yourself.

- Anonymous

### The Haunts Past

How do I let go?

Don Henley's 1984 release *The Boys of Summer* have some lyrics that go like this.

*"I thought I knew what love was  
What did I know?*

*Those days are gone forever.  
I should just let them go ..."*

On that same album was another song *Drivin' With Your Eyes Closed*. I didn't heed either warning because I couldn't hear such things.

Caught in addiction, both romantic and chemical, I drove, obsessively looking for her car. It was summer and she was young, brash, beautiful, and daring. Just the night before she had, on an unlit, winding, wooded Rhode Island backroad, turned off her headlights with me in the



passenger seat while traveling at a deadly clip. I'd driven with drunken people, but it was never so exciting as that. Danger was as much the drug as the sex I hoped to get.

Henley's song played on the radio as I snuck off from my parent's beach cottage in search for a sign of the young woman whose name I can't even remember. But I could still smell her. It was the same song that had played at my favorite rock bar in Connecticut, performed by my favorite band - favorite mostly because they seemed to get the hottest groupies.

I had jumped in to play some blues on the keyboard with them that night, hoping to get a piece of the action. The romance of that entire period of time and that particular song was thick and addictive. The pain of that night was even thicker.

Not only did I find the new object of my fantasy, but the bars had closed, and I had no pot to roll. Little did I know that this nameless experience was a simultaneous withdrawal from both drugs, the chemical and the emotional. It took me hours to get to sleep that night.

Had I known that recovery was just around the corner, I would

have not understood, but the next year I was thrust by a series of withdrawal experiences, tragedies, and close calls into the hands of God and then eventually into the community of those who touted the Twelve Steps. That was twenty-one years ago.

The other day, I heard that song again, and I remembered the pain of that night. For a moment, the cry of the guitar - like a crow, off in some far away tree - awakened those old emotional memories. Gratitude for my S.L.A.A. recovery filled my heart. Freedom rarely felt so sweet. Suddenly my eyes welled up as I heard the full meaning of the lyrics.

"Those days are gone forever. I should just let them go."

Something shifted in my mind right then as I heard the wisdom clearly for the first time, although these were lyrics I had known for decades. I let go of the longing for the girl, of the night, of the winding road, and of the band that I later had an opportunity to join but chose not to for recovery's sake - of the song, and of the haunting bend that Henley put on that guitar note to make it cry. But most importantly, I let go of the particularly heightened pain of



# The sky's the limit



that night that I had no idea I had kept through all those years.

We slowly arrive at no regrets, one memory at a time. To let go of another scene from the past is to enter further into the present moment and the life that God had always intended.

It took the pain of then to get to the acceptance of today, but the past has already played out its purpose. It is meant to die a peaceful death, leaving me in the present day to make choices without the backdrop of constant longing and those two terrible words from H.G. Wells' *Time Machine*, "What if?"

- John, Connecticut

## Over a Game

Watts dropped another ball into the corner pocket and then stopped to listen before his next shot. That's what we did for each other, and that is what we did for ourselves. We were co-sponsors back then, and a game of pool had become our normal background activity when we got together to share our truths with one another.

We discussed the fears we had tried to avoid with our addiction. We discussed the choices that were

next in line in our recovery. We discussed bottom lines and top lines, loopholes we had tried to exploit and how to address them. We discussed why the meeting attendance went up and down and whether there was anything we could do about it.

In many ways, it was a deeper friendship than I had experienced with other men. That friendship still goes on today over the long distance lines. That is the blessing that has been delivered and received. Thank God I've come to know a blessing when I see one.

- Anonymously Grateful

## Brutally Honest

God, I'm supposed to be doing the Seventh Step. I'm supposed to ask you to take away my character defects. I'm supposed to know what they are.

I thought I knew what they were when I finished Steps Four and Five, but a few weeks have passed, and now I'm not sure. It was pretty clear that there were some selfish and twisted motives that guided my thoughts and actions. But I've started to question more in myself, and, to be brutally honest with

myself, I'm not really sure just how bad it is.

Do I even have a single untwisted intention? If you take away my character defects, is there any intention left but biological necessities like breathing?

Can I love? Can you teach me that? Can I care about someone without trying to be caring?

Can you do that? Would you? Should you even try?

I suppose I should be grateful to have one honest intention, even if that one intention is simply to someday have another honest intention. That would make two. That would be a miracle.

I won't ask for help because that would imply that I have something to offer to this process, and I don't. It isn't help that I need; it's open-heart surgery.

Now I get those ancient ways. Now things I've heard make sense.

Spare nothing, God, but a pure desire to have a single thought that would not be tragically self-centered. I guess that's my Seventh Step. I can't think of anything else to say.

- Flavia T., Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

## **Fantasy**

My new Parisian friend and I talked, as we crossed the widest river in the world with its many unique species, nearly seventy of which are listed as endangered. As we got to know each other more, it didn't take long for us to realize that we had much in common, especially our struggle with fantasy. Not only did our recovery depend on living in the now, but it depended on our living in reality. We knew that many S.L.A.A. members had unanswered questions related to romantic fantasy, masturbation fantasy, and other forms of fantasy as numerous as the many plant and animal varieties that surrounded us as we drove through.

She opened her spiral bound pad and began to write. I shared about how, as a writer, I had to allow my creative mind to wander down uncharted roads so that stories of interest and originality could emerge. She shared about how her mind would wander into scenes and scenarios that didn't feel healthy, even if she couldn't quite put her finger on why. I related with my own experience. I shared about how fantasy began in primary school as I imagined

myself in situations with classmates. Here's an expanded view of what we came up with.

One of the first steps to take in recovery from fantasy is to separate addictive fantasy from normal and healthy human imagination. How could we tell the difference? We started to list the characteristics of addictive fantasy.

Addictive fantasy tends to be repetitive. We rehash the same thoughts. If an addictive fantasy changes at all, it gets deeper into addiction with each recurrence. When I was a child, I used to fantasize about saving one of the girls on my street from some terrible embarrassment. Being too anorexic to develop any real intimacy, the fantasies tended to be the closest I came to a meaningful connection. As I played that fantasy over and over, the embarrassment that my female characters felt became greater and she would naturally become proportionally more vulnerable and lovingly grateful for my heroism. I never actually performed any heroic deeds during those years, but I must have replayed the fantasy of doing so a thousand times.

Addictive fantasy tends not to lead to any positive, healthy action. Sex

and love addicts either fail to take action according to their mental inventions, as in fantasizing about asking someone on a date instead of doing it, or when we act on them, we act them out addictively. Many of us find it difficult to communicate our feelings toward someone we find interesting. We may have difficulty using the phone or make eye contact. We may fall into any number of anorexic behaviors or inferiority thoughts, but in the fantasy the people we'd rather be come to life, while our real life remains unlived.

Addictive fantasy is secret. When writers have a creative idea for a story, they write it down and then try to get it published. But addictive fantasies rarely get written down, and if they do, it is in a private diary or encrypted computer file or it is shared on the Internet either anonymously or under a pseudonym. We never allow ourselves to be connected to our creations, because we are ashamed of them. Addictive fantasies lie waiting for a time when the urge arises to enter our artificial world and get our addictive hit, with or without a climax, and then we store our fantasy away for the next time.

Addictive fantasy progresses into either selfishness or fear.

Selfish addictive fantasies are distortions of normal human interaction that are designed for our pleasure. These distortions take us into the world of compromise. As we force our characters into roles that support our emotional, social, and sexual objectives, we actually become manipulative, sleazy, disreputable, or even barbaric. When inside the addictive fantasy, we fall into denial about our autocratic control over these imaginary victims. It is no wonder why we can't connect with the real life people we fantasize about; in real life they are unlikely to comply with our string of commands; but in our minds, they are helpless. We may force them to fall in love us with complete abandon, force them to fulfill our addictive erotic appetites, or make them worship us as if we were gods and goddesses. Although we may cast these people as the initiator and we might appear quite innocent in our fantasies, we wrote the script, so our characters are absolutely vulnerable. They must bend to our will, even if it costs them their dignity or their life.

The projection in selfish addictive fantasy is pleasurable, leading to

either a sexual climax or an emotional high, which can just as neurochemically charged. The purpose of selfish addictive fantasies can be to avoid pain or the risk of intimacy. As with most addictive patterns, it becomes circular as we withdraw from reality to live with growing consistency in our imaginary worlds. Our real social life deteriorates to the point where it has little to offer us unless we become willing in recovery to build a more satisfying social life from scratch.

Fear-based addictive fantasies are distortions of normal human interaction that are designed for our emotional security. If we know already the terrible things that will be done to us, we can't be shocked, made into a fool, or otherwise hurt, so we beat them to the punch and hurt ourselves. We may say in our minds, "He will surely leave me, and probably soon." Perhaps we might also think, "I know she is sleeping with someone from work, which is the real reason why she works late on Thursdays." These thoughts thrive in low self-esteem.

We may say to ourselves, "If I approach this person, they will immediately notice my ugliness."

If we imagine the scenario that goes with this belief, it is often a quick fantasy that ends with a snub. We may think, deep down, that we are unworthy or unlovable, or we may be trapped in the cynical belief that human beings (or at least one of the two genders) are incapable of being trustworthy or loving.

Fear-based addictive fantasies are projections of loss, usually in the form of betrayal or doom. The purpose of fear-based addictive fantasies is the avoidance of emotional injury. We grow to expect the worst as a defense. That way, there is no surprise. We are always prepared, but the resulting paranoia always leads us away from trusting relationships, and whenever our projections come out in our speech or writing, we become accusatory.

With the right partner, fear-based addictive fantasies can quickly lead to codependency. Our paranoid fear of abandonment can and invite the other party to degrade us further because of their own fear of losing the relationship. Another type of partner might see our fears as needy or even pathetic and leave, in which case our fantasies turn into self-fulfilling prophecies, and we become even more convinced that our destiny is to finish our life

without ever experiencing bountiful love.

Not all fear-based addictive fantasies occur within relationships. These projections of doom may be the basis for social, sexual, or emotional anorexia, and, as with all addictive fantasy, our connections with other people atrophy. Our social life dwindles to nothing, we lose hope of finding authentic love, and we turn to more pleasurable fantasies to compensate.

Many fantasy addicts suffer from both fear-based and pleasurable fantasies, sometimes using the two forms in combination. You can hear it in the coined recovery saying, "I'm an egomaniac with an inferiority complex."

Addictive fantasy is not focused on the present. Instead, it obsesses on how life should have been, might have been, should become, or may someday be. We may mutate our memories of the past, bending them into what we had wished them to be, sometimes actually changing the memory into something that never happened. We may imagine entire futures with someone we just met or overheard in conversation, or we may have merely seen them out of the corner of our eye.



The addictive fantasy takes us out of our present day reality and the challenges before us. For all the comfort it brings, our body, which is still physically connected with the present, becomes a mere shell of a human being. Those who may see our faces when we have submerged into our fantasy world know that nobody's home.

Another easy method for discovering obvious addictive fantasy is this simple rule: If we are fantasizing about things that are otherwise on our bottom lines, then the fantasy is probably addictive.

To present a balanced view, healthy imagination should get equal time to illuminate creative behavior that is characteristic of recovery. Healthy imagination is the opposite of and the alternative to addictive fantasy. We've all received the gift of a creative mind. We can invent new things and discover innovations that allow us to thrive in our work. We can cherish, nurture, and exercise our artistic abilities, and find professional success through using them.

The healthy use of the imagination generally leads to some type of creation. We may build a friendship, one brick at a time. We may draw a picture, write a short story or poem, decorate a room,

piece together an outfit, put together a little song on our acoustic, or just invent a little jingle in the shower.

In advanced stages of creative recovery, we may do a series of oil paintings, write two or three screenplays, design a home, design a new clothing line, create a massive sculpture, record an album, or start a new career in acting or directing. Perhaps we build a business that is based on an idea way ahead of its time and then create a market value for the goods or services from scratch. We may marry someone that we have known for a few years and has consistently exhibited maturity and trustworthiness in relationships, have children, and raise them according to a newly discovered ideal for enlightened family living. We may start a movement that changes the lives of a large number of people for the better. The sky's the limit.

The important criteria is that after the vision of a better way first pops into our mind, we begin to take action, learn more about it, and map out how to bring this vision into being. The thoughts are translated into tangible form, without the emergence of additive patterns.

Healthy use of the imagination takes courage. As with so many creative acts, healthy imagination often carries with it resistance and the temptation to fall into fear. Overcoming that resistance can cause pain or mild discomfort.

We may fear the embarrassment of failure. We may fear the responsibility that comes with making a commitment to build something. We may fear jealous or flippant criticism or the unrealistic expectations of others that often accompanies success. We may fear the loss of other things as we focus our energy on bringing something we've imagined into the plane of physical reality. In all likelihood, we fear all of it, but the healthy mind overcomes these fears and launches out into new endeavors, pushing apprehension to the side.

Healthy use of the imagination is not rebellious. It cares not whether it conforms, yet it does not seek to be non-conformist. We are led by higher forces than the opinions of others, and we're not looking to be like someone else we admired. We honor the gift of a creative mind in ourselves and others by using our own creativity independently.

Healthy use of the imagination cannot easily be hidden. Although we don't have any interest in

gaining acceptance or acclaim and may try to remain anonymous for humility's sake, others will notice the product of our efforts. They will embrace the results of our work naturally and perhaps only half-consciously. They may not care that we originated what they are enjoying, and we don't care one way or the other. People will be raised to a slightly higher plane of existence because we have been raised higher by the simple exercise of God's gift of creativity for purposes other than to feed our addiction.

If you are stuck with the first brand of imagination, one that is entrenched in addiction, there is a solution for you. The first component of the solution is engagement in the Twelve Steps of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous. Not only do they lead us away from addictive behavior and into healthier activity, but they also transform our thought life.

Another tool for recovery from fantasy is to identify and talk about addictive thoughts in a supportive community of recovery friends. To do this, we must first locate supportive friends who will listen to the bowels of our thought life without judging or breaking confidentiality. Once there is a

friend or a group of friends to whom our inner thoughts can be shared, our fantasy world and all its hidden purposes can finally see the light of day. With the secrecy gone, the addictive fantasy loses its power. The scenes we once held onto so dearly become ridiculous and undesirable.

One of the most interesting experiences in recovery from fantasy addiction sometimes occurs in some of the more mature S.L.A.A. meetings. We share what we had considered to be strange and shameful and the rest of the people in the room, to our astonishment, nod with recognition.

Perhaps the simplest way to stop our imagination from going back into our old addictive fantasy is to use that part of our brain for something else. It doesn't have to be a major project. Something small will do, like gardening, putting up a shelf, or writing an affirmation for ourselves. Even writing a list of things for which we are grateful can get us thinking clearer. A conversation with God is another way to move our mind into a positive activity. It does not matter if we are formally engaging in Step Eleven yet. Prayer and meditation are great tools, even for newcomers. We can focus on any

creative thought that is combined with some productive action.

With spiritual growth comes change. As elements of authentic greatness seep into our recovery lives, nothing remains from which we must escape. Addictive fantasy loses its hold, and a life filled with creative balance grows in its place. The old addictive thoughts no longer carry the same appeal because our lives have become, at least to some degree, satisfying.

- by Douglas, Outgoing Journal Editor

## **Dreamwork**

This is a piece of dreamwork, a recording and examination of one of my dreams.

Only one man remained, and his fate was death, as the huge rectilinear chunks of metal compacted around. He was sure to be crushed like a bug. Each piece of the three-dimensional puzzle moved in unpredictable planes until the entire machine appeared as a single monolithic rectangular platform of immense thickness. No man could survive this ordeal.

But as the sliders moved, often in groups, Torrey moved with them, diligently and proactively working to escape his demise, always

suspicious of every apparent escape, crawling and showing his cunning, which only the machine, if it possessed the capacity, would have witnessed.

As the terrible trap approached its final shape, the onlooker was saddened by the death of this last man because of Torrey's honorable but futile fight for survival, but the man who threw the switch that put the mechanical beast into motion against its victims knew things unknown to the onlooker.

As he narrated the scenario with great respect for both machine and man, it became clear that Torrey possessed cunning of liberating immensity, and the machine, at the end of its compacting operation, left one pocket large enough for a man. The machine's operator, in glowing approbation, now reveals his secret: Torrey will have survived.

Theme: Cunning, the cool escape

Affect: Impossible triumph

Title: The Test of Cunning

Questions:

When am I the onlooker?

When am I the operator?

When am I Torrey?

- Keith M., Boston, Massachusetts

## **What is the Journal?**

*The Journal* is a tool of recovery with many uses. It is a personal tool, a home group tool, and a public information tool. It can be read by candlelight when the electricity goes out, at the pool instead of surveying people in bathing attire, or on a plane as a sweet swap for the travel mags. It can be read by patients in treatment centers or their counselors in between the hordes of paperwork, by prisoners or chronically injured lovers who went places with their addiction that are merely possible futures for the rest of us, or by members of religious communities that will never hear a word of inspiration on their particular issues because some things are just not talked about.

*The Journal* is a personal tool when a subscriber opens the cover and reads the encouraging stories within. It is a portable blessing to be able to read a recovery story from these pages. The story may contain someone's personal strife with sex and love addiction, the change that occurred, the truths that were discovered, and the resulting freedom that resulted. Each story is a tool of a different shape and use. Various creative

contributors throughout the world bring the insights of their culture and their local S.L.A.A. community to the readership, widening their experience of recovery.

The creative contributors to *the Journal* are at varying places in their recovery process too, so we accept each writer, whether young in recovery or substantially matured, as a member with a right to a seat on the great voyage, and each one has something of importance to say. It is in this context that *the Journal* is sometimes called a meeting in print. Of course *the Journal* is not quite the same as a face-to-face meeting, but many of the differences are advantages from both a Twelve Traditions point of view and in terms of personal growth.

The advantage of printed material for the individual in recovery is that people with experience in recovery select, edit, and proofread the contents, typically eliminating rambling, negative thinking, and unnecessary triggering language. There can be no crosstalk because there is at least a month delay between the submission of an article and its publication. The quality of sharing is generally high because it is often people with

plenty of solid recovery that like to share their experience, strength, and hope in writing.

But that is not the only reason that *the Journal* is an important element of the S.L.A.A. community. For many sex and love addicts, *the Journal* is the only thing within reach that resembles a meeting. Most of us do not have an S.L.A.A. meeting within the radius of an hour's drive. Some do not own a car or are homebound for physical, mental, or legal reasons. Some have no Internet access for sobriety reasons or because of location, or they cannot type well enough to participate in online meetings. There are members who, because of hearing or speech impairment, cannot easily participate in face-to-face or phone meetings. *The Journal* may be a primary source of strength for many S.L.A.A. members.

Even for those in areas with densely planted S.L.A.A. meetings, the ability to read at night, in the morning, during travel, or on vacation is of great benefit. During every stage of recovery, *the Journal* enhances the experience and maturity of the recovering S.L.A.A. member, but *the Journal's* usefulness does not end there.

*The Journal*, for many of the same reasons, is a significant tool for home groups, and a year's subscription relatively affordable. As a solid adjunct to the S.L.A.A. basic text and the pamphlets, a collection of back issues of *the Journal* is a wealth of recovery-filled pages containing diverse experiences in both addiction and recovery. It is a quick solution for someone who is coming straight from work to chair a meeting. A subscription is a perfect gift for a new member or a sponsee to get them reading recovery materials between meetings, which leads us to perhaps *the Journal's* most important use.

*The Journal* is a great outreach tool too. Allow me to use fictitious names in a fictional story to describe one of the realities of contemporary mental health care and the opportunities that we have to pass the message of S.L.A.A. recovery forward.

Imagine Jane, who is in an alcohol and drug treatment center. She is not at all happy with losing connection with her rain checks and late night booty bodies. Of course her primary counselor isn't aware of the reason for Jane's anxiety because her counselor belongs to one of the fellowships

that denounces all other fellowships. It is assumed by staff that the reason for her anxiety is cocaine withdrawal, even though there is absolutely no statistical support for this convenient supposition.

Tihra had been given some money by the Atlantis Underwater Intergroup to buy a subscription to *the Journal* for the local treatment centers. She found it easy to get permission from the Program Directors to set up complementary subscriptions, provided that she promised they would never receive a bill. This particular Program Director had been looking for some free resources for the rack in the community room, especially ones better produced than the run-of-the-mill recovery periodicals. Consequently, there was an issue of *the Journal* in the rack when Jane happened to be waiting for her primary counselor to get off a call with another patient's mother who was freaking out. (Those of you who have worked or otherwise frequented treatment centers know that this isn't at all far fetched.)

So Jane, seeing an interesting cover on an unintimidating-looking booklet, picks up *the Journal*. When she opens it

randomly, it opens to the centerfold, since stitched booklets, which are held together by staples, naturally do that. (You can try it with the issue that's in your hand.) Jane finds a cartoon about recovery in the centerfold or a picture of something that stirs her curiosity. She knows that she won't find a Cosmo in the magazine rack, and she can hear the parent yelling through the phone all the way through the door to the counselor's office, so she sticks with *the Journal*.

Suddenly, intelligence rings through her half-dead brain, and she decides to look at the table of contents. The word jumps out: "Fantasy." She opens to the page and starts to read.

It is a little over her head, and she almost goes back to the magazine rack for another choice when she realizes that a man wrote the piece, but some comment about chatting on the Internet kept her on track for a few more paragraphs. That's when she got it. The sentence, "It may lead to a sexual climax or an emotional high, which can just as neurochemically charged," raised a question that she had never asked.

So, after finishing the piece and half of the next story, she is finally beckoned into the office with one

question on her mind, "What is an emotional high?" That becomes Jane's beginning, and the beginning for the counselor too, who later came to realize that more than half of her clients had strong symptoms of sex and love addiction.

That would be the treatment center that, over the next twenty years, refers a fifth of their patient upon discharge to Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous. That is what *the Journal* can become, should we in S.L.A.A. begin to use it in that way.

Don't let *the Journal* flounder. Consider supporting *the Journal's* growth as a publication, as a resource for the individual member, for our home groups, and for key public information and outreach projects.

- Kaleb C., South Florida

## Share Space

### From an Online Member

When I first got into SLAA recovery, I used to have these ideas about Friday and Saturday nights. I used to love going to hip-hop clubs. I was in my late twenties and felt I needed special events to make my life special. If I had no plans on the weekend, I felt like a total loser.

I used to live alone at the time and really wanted to focus on my recovery work. I had to deal with rage, loneliness, and pity. One thing I learned during that process was I was good at the waiting game. I always wanted my friends to contact me first. I didn't use the phone to reach out to others. I was a perpetual baby.

Recovery changed that. I began to develop close friends who lived in other countries and started talking to them on the phone. I also discovered my Loneliness Cycle: If I spend two full days in isolation from people, I become very easily depressed. Discovering this cycle was one of those breakthrough moments for me. This awareness led me to set things up so that I won't end up in that place.

So whether it's work or just hanging out, I made sure that I engage in

face-to-face communication with real live people. If for some physical reason I couldn't do that because I was legitimately tired or had a bad cold, I would pick up the phone, call my friend in Tokyo, my sister in the United States, go over to see my dog at my dog hotel, or ask my cousin to visit me.

This was really crucial for me so that I won't break my bottom lines. For me, loneliness is a mixture of feeling bored and numb. It often leads to feeling self-pity, which is a really tough one for me! Loneliness, by itself, didn't do much damage other than me feeling alone, but it almost always was an indicator that I didn't follow through with some important action. It served as a warning sign that self-pity (pity party) was just around the corner. It's almost like my body was telling me to get some fresh air (like going for a walk), get some exercise, clean the house, go see an art exhibit, or whatever it is that it needs me to do or change.

I wasn't so open about being too spiritual, so it took a while for me to get to the place where when I felt loneliness, I'd go out for a walk around the neighborhood and imagine that this was my date with Higher Power. I'd walk slowly and



just take the scenes in without feeling judgment, I'd feel serene and calm, and my crazy feelings would subside.

I still have times when I feel like I need to get a Love Life, I need a man in my life, or I'm tired of dating and dating and dating and not getting anywhere, feeling like I deserve better ... etcetera.

In the early days of recovery, I didn't believe in a God. It took me many years to work on my understanding of God. I was a cynic and felt God was only going to accept me if I were perfect and didn't make mistakes, and followed his commandments to a tee. It was hard for me to believe a God or my God could be so genuinely loving and so interested in who I was, even with all my faults. Sharing with other members of S.L.A.A. has slowly softened my heart, and my trust in a Higher Power is being restored.

I am not guaranteed everything I want in life, but I do have my feelings, thoughts, and experiences. If I don't remember how to deal with my emotions and I begin to believe that True Love will solve all my problems, I will eventually be reminded that this is not the truth.

My married girlfriends have often told me how lonely and terrible they feel when they fight with their husbands and that the loneliness they feel in their married relationship is far stronger and sharper than the one they felt as a single person. If I remember this, it is easier to stay in the present.

According to Dr. Paul's book *MindOS*, there are only five things you can do in the Present.

- Make decisions
- Take action
- Use our five senses
- Have intimacy
- Use observing ego

Dr. Paul claims in his book that observing ego is the only human skill that allows change, growth, and new directions.

- Jessica, seduction and fantasy addict in recovery

## Thirst

I want more most of the time. Maybe it is a Western curse - more peace, more freedom. For whatever the reason, I seem to be stuck with it. Maybe improvement is an addiction too. I'm always looking to be renewed.

It great, though, that I no longer expect anyone else to fix me. If improvement is addictive too, then my sex and love addiction and recovery has at least that one great byproduct. Certainly my want for growth is better than my want for escape.

Where did I get that idea that I could have drunk up someone else's love like cool lemonade on a hot day and be refreshed? I've never seen anyone succeed with that agenda, except in movies, and living happily ever after on film only lasts for the last minute before the credits. I've never been so naive as to believe in any other free rides. It's just another one of those addiction mysteries. None of the things I was doing and thinking made sense, not to me, and not to those who were cursed with watching me deteriorate.

I know that sex won't fulfill either. That it could seems insane to me now, evidence that sanity has been

restored, even though half the time I still feel insane and the other half the time I'm not feeling much at all.

Maybe wanting is just as much an Eastern curse too. Maybe it is a human curse. Even those monks that strive toward complete detachment from wanting anything only succeed as a result of wanting Nirvana.

Maybe wanting is not a curse at all. It was when I tried to just not care about anything, material or spiritual, that I reached my most pathetic state.

When I met people in recovery, that's when I saw something I could want without sacrificing my dignity or my common sense. Contentment and an honest appreciation for life is what attracted me to you. When I heard people unraveling the tangle in their mind about sex, fantasy, obsession, compulsion, shame, decision, attitude, fear of the unknown, real commitment, and the possibility of authentic love in Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, they had me. And when I discovered that your contentment was real, I stayed.

- Pauline G., London, UK

# Write for the Journal

Please refer to just inside the front cover for writer qualifications, copyright information, and information about submitting a piece.

Submissions may be edited for readability and appropriateness prior to publication. Professional writers often rewrite their pieces several times before submission to avoid placing the burden of correcting spelling and grammar on the editorial staff. Amateur writers would do well to read what they have written and rewrite it until their ideas are expressed clearly, as would their professional counterparts.

Thrift is important; don't say in many words what could be said in a few.

All submissions must include citations for any references or inclusions that require attribution by law.

Writers are asked to avoid commenting on issues unrelated to recovery from sex and love addiction and to maintain their focus on their personal experience. In pursuit of this focus, writers can use the first person singular pronoun, I, and avoid references to specific people and locations.

Pieces with an appropriate tone for publication in the Journal will proclaim what is good and useful rather than what is wrong or improper. This tone will assist the readership in the development of a positive outlook toward growth and personal recovery.

We ask that writers do not use the Journal by name as a professional reference or as a writer's credential. Public disclosure of membership in S.L.A.A. is expressly discouraged.

The 1989, 1990, and 1991 General Service Conferences of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous adopted motions that established the Journal. These charter statements indicate the purpose of the Journal to be the growth of the S.L.A.A. fellowship and its individual members. Because traditionally our common welfare comes first, assignees or volunteers of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, Inc. select material is based on their understanding of the application of this purpose at the time of selection. No guarantees of publication are expressed or implied.

[theSLAAJournal.org](http://theSLAAJournal.org)

