



the Journal

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The Year's Achievement

Characteristics of Sex and Love Addiction

1. Having few healthy boundaries, we become sexually involved with and/or emotionally attached to people without knowing them.
2. Fearing abandonment and loneliness, we stay in and return to painful, destructive relationships, concealing our dependency needs from ourselves and others, growing more isolated and alienated from friends and loved ones, ourselves, and God.
3. Fearing emotional and/or sexual deprivation, we compulsively pursue and involve ourselves in one relationship after another, sometimes having more than one sexual or emotional liaison at a time.
4. We confuse love with neediness, physical and sexual attraction, pity and/or the need to rescue or be rescued.
5. We feel empty and incomplete when we are alone. Even though we fear intimacy and commitment, we continually search for relationships and sexual contacts.
6. We sexualize stress, guilt, loneliness, anger, shame, fear and envy. We use sex or emotional dependence as substitutes for nurturing care, and support.
7. We use sex and emotional involvement to manipulate and control others.
8. We become immobilized or seriously distracted by romantic or sexual obsessions or fantasies.
9. We avoid responsibility for ourselves by attaching ourselves to people who are emotionally unavailable.
10. We stay enslaved to emotional dependency, romantic intrigue, or compulsive sexual activities.
11. To avoid feeling vulnerable, we may retreat from all intimate involvement, mistaking sexual and emotional anorexia for recovery.
12. We assign magical qualities to others. We idealize and pursue them, then blame them for not fulfilling our fantasies and expectations.

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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.

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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.

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.

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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.

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader:

December is the time of year for reflection on the past year's accomplishments. My parents and their friends always send out Christmas newsletters to celebrate all that they have done. I always joke that I wish I could send out a SLAA newsletter because that's where most of my accomplishments are. But a couple of weeks ago I had two sponsees decide they didn't want to do the work anymore. It had nothing to do with me and one of them even showed up for my 9-year SLAA sobriety celebration. But I took it personally for a while and life started to seem like work. And with the holidays and the recession, I started the pity party in my head. But I did the work anyway.

I met with a sponsee one night and we did her second-step work and started walking to a meeting. We were crossing at a crosswalk when I heard my sponsee yelling "stop" and I think she was yelling my name. Before I knew what hit me, I was flying into the air. A woman had been making a left turn and hit me with her SUV. A tearful reunion with my husband and a three-hour emergency room visit later and I was released to my warm safe home.

Gratitude for my life has been overwhelming. My husband and I sit and talk about the past few years and how great our lives are. There's a famous quote from T.S. Eliot: "I will show you fear in a handful of dust. We do not actually fear death; we fear that no one will notice our absence." I know that co-workers will notice my absence. But the greatest gift has been realizing that my husband and the fellowship of SLAA would notice my absence. I have a support system and people that I love and a wonderful life. My sponsor called it my Jimmy Stewart moment. If that's all of my accomplishments for the past year, that's enough for me!

Lisa C.

Interim Managing Editor, *the Journal*

Other S.L.A.A. Resources

In addition to the many S.L.A.A. meetings and *the Journal*, resources are now available through the Internet and Phone. Such email and phone communities provide S.L.A.A. members with positive options to personal meetings. 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, reading or listening as a part of their recovery experience or want to supplement their current meeting schedule with such a meeting. There are also members who are not located near any S.L.A.A. meetings or do not find the twelve-step fellowships available to them to be helpful. In the spirit of the 12th step, we are happy to share this information with our readers

On-Line Resources

SLAA Online Group: www.slaaonline.org

SLAA-ALT Group: stopover.ky.us.starlink-irc.org/cgi-bin/irc.cgi

International SLAA Online Group:

www.internationalslaaonline.org

SLAAsupport Group: <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/SLAAsupport>

South Florida Intergroup e-Group of SLAA: www.e-SLAA.org

Phone Meetings

There are numerous phone meetings. A good place to start is the SLAA

FWS website: http://directory.slaafws.org/intl_phone

In addition, there is a special telemeeting series, **Skills for Healthy Loving**

2010-11 Telemeeting Series - Skills for Healthy Loving

Presented by: Conference Healthy Relationships Committee

Event Date: Saturday, February 19, 2011

Event Date: Saturday, March 19, 2011

For Inquiries: <http://www.slaafws.org/files/Healthy+relationships+flyer%202010-11%20series.pdf>

These 7 one-hour telemeetings will be on Saturdays, at 9:00 a.m. Pacific / 12:00 p.m. Eastern / 5:00 p.m. London. SLAA members may attend any or all meetings without RSVP

Upcoming Events

Spiritual Retreat - Besinnungswochenende

Presented by: German Speaking Intergroup. Where: Herz-Jesu-Kloster Neustadt an der Weinstraße. Event Date: Feb. 4, 2011 to Feb. 6, 2011. Join us for a reflective weekend of workshops, theme and speaker meetings, as well as quiet time and fellowship at a monastery in the Palatinate Forest region of Germany. The event is held in the German language. For Inquiries: <http://www.slaafws.org>

7th Annual You Are Not Alone Get Together for Valentine's Day

Presented by: New England Intergroup (NEI). Where: Grace Episcopal Church, Newton. Event Date: Feb. 12, 2011 For Inquiries: NEI at activities@slaanei.org or 617-625-7961. Link: <http://www.slaanei.org>. This is an OPEN MEETING for you to come hear what it is like to be sober on such a day and share your experience, strength and hope with those who need the support ... ALL OF NEI members will be selling baked goods, fruit, and refreshments to help raise money to send local representatives to S.L.A.A.'s Annual Business Meeting in San Diego, CA.

Northeast Ohio Winter Day of Sharing - Marching to the Steps

Presented by: Northeast Ohio Intergroup. Where: Strongsville, Ohio. Event Date: March 05, 2011 For Inquiries: <http://www.slaafws.org>

S.L.A.A.-Fruehjahrstreffen 2011

Presented by: German Speaking Intergroup. Where: Ilbenstadt, Germany. Event Date: April 08, 2011 to April 10, 2011. More Info on www.slaa.de.

Guided Meditations

Seeking original writing contributions of 10-minute guided meditations on the theme of "Power in Surrender" (or any theme of your choice) that represent the principles of recovery as expressed in the SLAA basic text. Pending group conscience, selected guided meditations may be published in the Journal and read aloud* during meditation meetings and possibly recorded for a CD of SLAA-related Guided Meditations for sale through the FWS store, all proceeds benefitting SLAA. Guided meditations are simple medi-

tative instructions read aloud asking participants to focus on breathing, visual imagery, ideas, prayers, affirmations, and/or creative visualizations. The result is usually to bring participants to a relaxed and receptive state ideal for silent meditation.

To submit your original writing, please visit <http://slaafws.org/journalsubmit>

*Selected material will be read, and possibly recorded, by individuals selected by name submission followed by group conscience.

Service opportunities for *the Journal*

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.

We are pleased to announce that many of the service positions for *the Journal* are filled, but we are looking for a managing editor and we continue to seek the assistance of an internet technician. In addition, if you are interested in the organization and duties of the individual staff, please go to <http://www.theslaajournal.org/> and click on service structure.

Managing Editor

The Managing Editor oversees and approves form, content, and style of the *Journal*. Delegates responsibilities leading to production of a print-ready electronic master for each issue. Approves press proof (1st copy of each issue).

Editorial Assistant

Each Editorial Assistant assists the Managing Editor with the editorial proc-

ess for each of the six annual issues of the Journal, including form, content, and aesthetic presentation. Candidates must have at least one year of continuous bottom line abstinence.

Fulfillment Manager

The Fulfillment Manager oversees the printing and mailing of each of the six annual issues of the Journal. The Fulfillment Manager also ensures the legibility, aesthetic quality, and durability of the finished copies of the Journal. The Fulfillment 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.

Journal Representatives

There are five things that Journal Representatives can do to honor Tradition Five in carrying the message to a world of need.

- They get subscription cards for the Journal out to members of their home group, other groups, their intergroup, local mental health care institutions, therapists, and recovery friends.
- They bring to the Marketing Director's attention any information that would help improve the Journal's outreach activities and the quality of the Journal itself.
- They help find S.L.A.A. members who could contribute creative writing or art for publication in future issues.
- They make sure that the Literature Representatives of the groups in their area (or the groups themselves for the those that have no Literature Rep) provide copies of the Journal for sale and for use as a source of meeting topics.
- They help build the awareness of the Journal as a tool for individuals and groups to enhance recovery and provide a bridge to the therapeutic, judicial, and religious communities to reach more sex and love addicts with the hope of recovery.

Internet Technician

The Internet Tech manages the Journal website, and works with the Marketing Director to update website content. As the CJC has voted to offer online subscriptions in the future, we need someone computer literate with proficient web design skills interested in developing the e-Journal. There is no sobriety requirement.

Interested?

If interested in one or more of the above positions, visit 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.

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 or submit a press release just as you would a story through 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. Please see www.SLAAJournal.org for details.

**Question of the Day
& Answers from Yesterday**

The Question of the Day from the last issue was, “What has been your biggest achievement in SLAA recovery this year?” Here are some wonderful responses for your enjoyment and edification. They are not presented in any particular order.

**WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT IN
SLAA RECOVERY THIS YEAR?**

Feeling better.

— JAMES E., SEATTLE

Realizing it was exceedingly possible to maintain sobriety and more rewarding was the experience of filling in the void of my addiction with positive activities.

— DAVID N., PHILADELPHIA

First and foremost, I have remained sober and committed to my program amidst a year of tremendous growth and courage. I moved in with my girlfriend – a first – and I’m learning how to cohabitate with love. I was promoted at my job and now have four people I am managing – huge opportunity to communicate with kindness and clarity. And finally, I confronted my perpetrator from childhood. Above all, I feel profoundly blessed and grateful – I live a life of happiness, joy and freedom.

— JENNY D., LOS ANGELES

Sponsoring;
Manifesting a loving,
intimate relationship;
Chairing the CLC;
Participating on the CCC;
Starting a step study
for our local area;
Moved 5 men through
Step 5; Writing the
Measuring Progress
pamphlet, the *Triggers As
A Resource In Meetings And
Beyond* pamphlet, and
the Tools booklet.

— SAM A., SANTA CRUZ CA

My biggest achievement in SLAA recovery lately has been my ability to accept and love people who have differing opinions from me. I asked God, once I knew it was a character defect to be judgmental, to remove this character defect and I have been successful this year.

— ALICE D., LOS ANGELES

Reaching my 24th wedding anniversary with my spouse. When I came to SLAA, I thought the marriage wouldn't last. I didn't think I could stay and didn't know how to leave. But through SLAA I have found ways to have intimacy and have self. I have found healthy ways to express my needs and my spouse has responded.

— KIM B., BOSTON

My service work this year has been my biggest achievement in SLAA recovery. I went from being a grumbling newcomer to an ABM delegate. I also started a phone meeting with another member and have made friends all over the world.

— KATY B., NEW YORK CITY

I have been able to use the tools of recovery to love myself more consistently than at any time in my life. I have to practice this every day, and it's not always easy. Today I really do love myself.

— BRIAN R., WEST PALM BEACH FL

Finally accepting and being grateful about being a husband and father. In the past I had feared commitment and responsibility.

— TED A., NORTHRIDGE, CA

My biggest achievement this year in SLAA recovery is entering a relationship with a woman that I am not addicted to and working through our issues by using communication rather than just running from the relationship. This could only be possible because I have not acted out with internet pornography the entire time we have been dating and is therefore the first relationship that I have been faithful in. This took 3 years of SLAA recovery to achieve and I am incredibly grateful.

— GABRIEL G.,
BOCA RATON, FL

I decided to be of service by being involved in a conference committee, sponsoring and taking a commitment at a local meeting. But I also let go of some service commitments as well when it became apparent it was healthy for me to do so. I am learning to say yes to service, but also to say no when it is healthy for me to do so. Finding balance in service has been a wonderful blessing.

— MONIQUE S., VENICE, CA

A more natural capacity to realize that what I feel is about me. So much freedom comes from it, from owning my stuff. It actually gives me a sense of self-worth. I also finally completed my 4th and 5th Steps and got involved as Chair of Intergroup, a major commitment that I become more and more comfortable with.

— CHRISTINE L., MONTREAL, CANADA

Realizing that the group power is an alternative to accepting God.

— TOM H., HOLLYWOOD, CA

My biggest achievement in SLAA has been to admit that I was molested when I was 6, and that it wasn't OK. And that the event greatly influenced sexual situations in my teens. My boundaries were all confused and screwed up. I was able to admit this to a kind and accepting group of people.

— ANDREA, EL SEGUNDO CA

I no longer indulge my desire to fantasize, and that is a huge achievement and truly life-changing.

— RORY, LOS ANGELES

7 months without masturbation without going insane.

— GREG G., HOLLYWOOD, CA

Deeper trust of my Higher Power. Handing over situations that trigger my feelings of resentment, frustration, and needing to be in control. Stronger resolve to believe things will work out for the best.

— JOANNE, HOLLYWOOD, CA

I overcame my fear and resentment toward my family. I was working on my fourth step while also working on a slideshow for my stepmother's birthday. I used to feel a lot of resentment toward my stepmother. When I was growing up with her, I hated her and I hated myself. Because of the work I have been doing for my fourth step, I was able to release my resentment toward her and feel that I honestly wanted her to enjoy my gift. I now feel that the dysfunctional family I grew up with is gone, replaced by a family that cares about me.

— RAMON S., CHATSWORTH CA

Not giving up!

— NICK, WEST LOS ANGELES, CA

My compulsive behavior has all but diminished. I also really came to believe I am powerless.

— JOSH N., LOS ANGELES

Being asked to be a delegate for the ABM was an honor. And I know my hard work in recovery is a blessing.

— SUSAN L., HOUSTON TX

Going back to Step 1 where I can continually admit powerlessness as opposed to beating myself up when I have thoughts or feel like I am not working a perfect program. And I keep shedding light on these problem areas. It's not that I need to hide these thoughts, I just admit to the fellowship I am powerless.

— JOHN, LOS ANGELES

I believe that my sobriety is a gift— a gift I must work very diligently to maintain. That being said, my biggest achievement in recovery this year would be my practice of being available to life and my growth. I am more able to be open, but I still draw boundaries and maintain them.

— RICK B., TAMPA BAY FL

Complete and total honesty with myself, then with God... and then with others.

— NEAL, LOS ANGELES

By turning over my will to God as it pertains to my relationships (work, family, friends,) I have become a more compassionate, understanding, loving and tolerant person. This is particularly true in situations where others are not always acting in a loving manner towards me. I have become more aware of when I need to clean my side of the street. I have also learned to set boundaries and not play the victim.

— GINO P., CLEARWATER FL

Monogamous for 4 months, something that hasn't happened for 12 years!

— ANTONIO, LOS ANGELES

Building and maintaining a healthy, successful relationship with my husband. I have been a member of SLAA since Feb '07. My husband and I were separated due to my acting out. We reconciled and continue to work on our relationship. We celebrate our 5 year anniversary with a vow of renewal this October.

— JESSICA G., HOUSTON TX

A relationship ended and I didn't spend one single minute curled up in the fetal position!

— ETHLIE, LOS ANGELES

Twice in One Year

A year and a half ago, I was a mess and in denial about it. It was the second time I had two lovers in addition to my husband, and none of them knew about each other. I hated myself for this behavior.

I confided the whole story to one former student that I knew was able to keep a secret. After telling my story, my student asked one question “Why do you need three men to be happy?” I did not answer right away. All I could think was, “What makes you think I’m happy?” Eventually I blurted out the other half of the truth. “I am involved with three men in case two leave.”

I knew how pitiful I sounded. I then remembered someone telling me about love addiction. After some surfing around on the web, I found a meeting for love addicts located about an hour from my house.

I went that week and knew I was on to something. But I couldn’t stop from comparing myself to others even though at the beginning of the meeting they warned us not to do that. Part of me wanted to believe that some good could come out of the group, but I hated the word “addict.” It stirred up images in my mind of someone sweating,



paralyzed, and bruised in some doorway of a housing project.

Chairing the meeting was a very attractive professional woman who shared that she had recovered from serial affairs. It was the first time I ever heard anything like that. She gave me her phone number.

One of the other women was from the suburb next to mine. She told me about SLAA, but I didn’t want to listen to her suggestion. The word addict was bad enough and sex addiction sounded even worse. Now the guy I imagined shivering and sweating in the doorway had on a creepy overcoat. But then a miracle happened.

One of my lovers started calling the house. I lied to my hus-

band for the first time, or so I thought. Back then I did not count omissions as lies. He took one look at me, and I could tell that he knew I was lying. That night was the SLAA meeting. I was terrified, but I went.

There were no people in trench coats and there were more women than men, similar to the love addict meeting. I found out later that it was an unusual coincidence. The group usually has about twice as many men as women.

I finally accepted what they told me. I believe that the group is some kind of higher-powered plan. The woman who invited me was not there, but I listened. I learned that much from the other meetings.

The thing that clicked for me was actually what I heard from one of the guys. He said that his lover seemed more interested in the timing of the sex than he was. I related to that. I was much more interested in getting things to happen at the right time than my husband or either of my lovers. My husband did not care what happened for me, and one of my lovers seemed to only care if my experience was real. The other one did not seem to care about anything. For me, it bothered me when things did not happen simultaneously, and I

would move through the circle of men until that happened.

When I listened to this man share, I identified with his statements and suddenly realized that I wasn't just a love addict. I was a sex and love addict!

The woman who invited me showed up the next week to the SLAA meeting, and she became my first sponsor. I put together an initial bottom line, no extramarital sex, and started Step One. I did not complain because I was scared, but I had no idea what was going to happen.

When I vomited at work for no apparent reason, I shared about it that night at another meeting. Someone told me to read the withdrawal chapter of the SLAA book. I took direction and read it. I had to watch three movies in a row after reading that chapter just to stay calm. Everyone thought I was sick. The truth is that I was coming out of sickness for the first time.

I went to five meetings a week and made another half-dozen phone calls every day. It did not take long for me to realize that I had to change my cell number. Text messages were too emotionally triggering. I imagined throwing a coworker into a storage closet and jumping on him. I had strange dreams of marriage pro-

posals, including a nightmare about being married to a Siamese twin, and the one I wasn't married to wanted to kill me.

After about two months I could breathe. The triggers came at me every two weeks or so. My husband was complaining because I wasn't available physically or emotionally. He was right, but I was not capable of being present at that time.

I was still on Step One. My sponsor wanted me to surrender. I didn't understand the concept of surrender even though it was explained to me twenty times. I stopped trying. I missed three of my home group meetings in a row, and my sponsor stopped immediately returning my phone calls.

I relapsed by calling one of my two former lovers because, "He at least took care of me physically." Clueless, I convinced myself this was a sign of true love. He dumped me unexpectedly for another woman, and I went into shock but not withdrawal. I wanted nothing to do with anyone. A month passed and I had two encounters out of desperation, one with a woman, another with someone at work. I was fearful and too embarrassed to say anything to anyone.

One day I got a phone call from a member of one of the

online SLAA meetings I had regularly attended. He told me that another woman in the program who lived near me was going to a recovery picnic and asked if he could give her my phone number.

I was skeptical about his motives, but he had never said anything out of line and he told me that the woman had some similar experiences to mine, so I gave permission. She called and I reluctantly agreed to go to the event. The event was boring because I didn't really know anyone. There were two people there from my old home group, but I did not have much to say because I was far from sober.

One day this past April, I was thinking about how totally worthless my life was, and I scared myself, because I felt like my thinking was moving in a negative direction that I had never previously experienced.

I looked for phone numbers and called the first one I found. It was the same guy who called about the picnic. I was not sure if I was looking to act out or get sober, but he called back that afternoon. Before the call was over, I asked him to sponsor me. He said, "All of my sponsees work the 12 Steps, go to at least two SLAA meetings a week, and are completely honest with

me. I won't do it otherwise." I said I can do that, no problem. Then he said some things I will never forget.

"There are three more things."

I felt like hanging up the phone, but I didn't move.

"Okay?"

"The first thing is, you will introduce me to your husband over the phone. Second, our sponsorship relationship must stay absolutely free from flirtation, intrigue, and fantasy. Finally, when you get to Step 12, you have to sponsor other women. Take a day to think about it and we will talk tomorrow."

I said I could agree to that then, but he wanted me to sleep on it.

My withdrawal started that night, and I started Step One over again the next day. The first writing assignment was grueling, but I kept at it. Step 4 was even worse, but I kept remembering the two withdrawal experiences and some of the insane thoughts I had when I relapsed. So I scheduled some time to write, and finished in two weeks.

I have just finished Step 6, which was really interesting to me. I never realized why I could not change myself. Now I am clear that I actually get payoffs

from my character defects, just like from my acting out. And I realize that I am powerless over more than just my addiction.

Looking back, I don't remember why I could not fully surrender in Step One with my first sponsor. I think it was just too new for me at the time.

My marriage is still crippled from my past behavior, but I try to focus on my own recovery. I am just starting to understand that I am emotionally anorexic. I have been advised not to make any major decisions for a while, so unless my husband leaves, I will work through whatever comes up. He seems angry but supportive at the same time and he likes my sponsor which really annoys me for some reason.

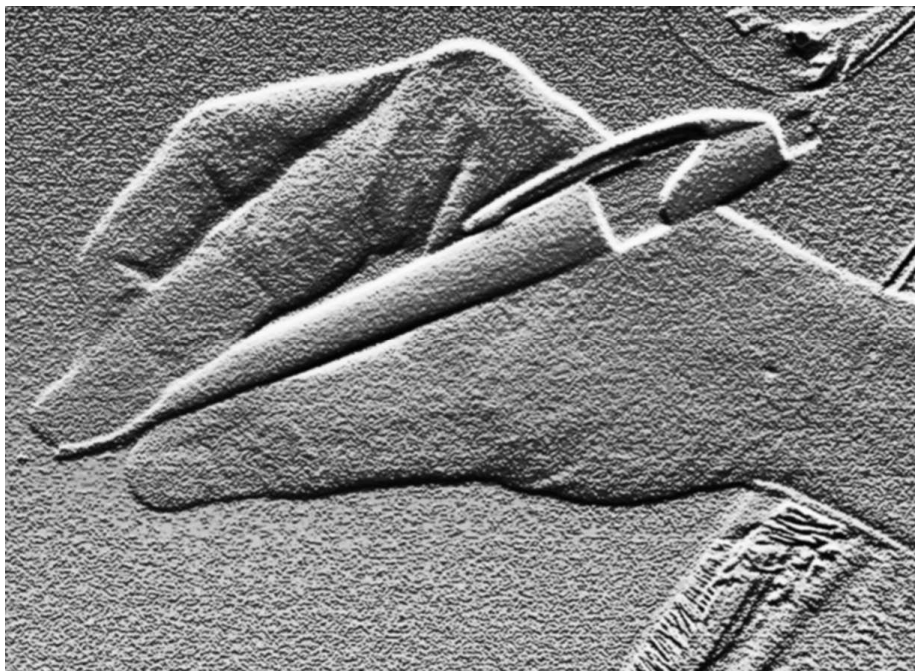
I hope to go to a couple of big recovery events that my whole sponsorship chain keeps talking about. I did not think I would ever be sober and I am really grateful for today.

It took a long conversation to get me to write this story, but I just shared the other day in front of a bunch of people I mostly did not know, so I really did not have a good excuse. Now I am glad I did it.

If you are new, go to meetings, get a good sponsor, do the steps, and do not give up.

—ABBY K.

Writing and Knowing Myself



It seemed like a very difficult and somewhat fruitless year, but for my own recovery and as a service gesture toward *the Journal's* readership I decided to write on my personal accomplishments over the last twelve months. I decided to start by writing a few things down, feeling some negativity around the task. Here's what I wrote.

I went to a bunch of SLAA meetings, made even more phone calls, stayed current, and

stayed sober. I prayed and meditated frequently, not because of difficulties but because I truly love input from a Power greater than myself. I started or helped start six new SLAA meetings, three of which are fully independent of me already. I finalized the creation of a platform that provides a meeting venue for those throughout the world with special anonymity needs, mobility issues, or a lack of meetings within their city or country.

I started and managed a musical band with a spiritual focus; I had fun, wrote music, and encouraged others to write and improve musically. I respectfully and compassionately filtered out those who were not able to stay within healthy boundaries set by the band. We played at several different venues and have recently begun to record an album. I built a local progressive organization from scratch that provides spiritual support and steers clear of many of the annoying and inauthentic characteristics of organized spiritual institutions.

I was present for and supportive of a family member dying of cancer. I supported the rest of the family without getting enmeshed in codependent behavior. I walked through the family confusion surrounding inheritance. I processed and continue to process the loss of the person who was the most supportive of me throughout my life.

I followed through on my service commitments to the best of my abilities, even when they were uncomfortable, and even through great loss of a close family member and the surrounding emotional chaos. I kept my cool under pressure and have no foul statements to regret or retract. I remembered that biting criticism, false accusation, and gos-

sip are part of other people's process, but that I should listen and gleam whatever I can from it that may actually promote my own growth. I grew spiritually and emotionally from practicing the self-discipline required.

I led my businesses through the provision of world class technical and management services to high-tech mobile phone research and development organizations, helping those organizations achieve success.

I provided world class technical and management services to three international publishing organizations. Two of those organizations commended me, but I did not feel much from the commendation because I already knew what I did and what I could have done better.

I opened myself up to accepting and encouraging a new roommate from India.

Without any intention of ever sparring, I started light mixed martial arts training because it is fun and good for my body.

I allowed myself to love someone and accept love through a whole bunch of practical constraints and challenges, maintaining clean communication and openness.

I reevaluated aspects of the value systems of the Recovery Community, my family, and other institutions of which I am

a member. I determined and committed to the values that my Higher Power has been leading me to adopt, whether or not they aligned with the value systems of others.

Now that I've jotted a few ideas down, there's very little else to write other than a brief closing.

Sometimes in life, I forget. I forget to appreciate big things, like my two bright cousins, who were like sisters to me growing up. I forget to appreciate the brilliance of God's plan.

It's easy for us to compare

what has happened with what we expected to happen and call a year a failure.

It is easy for us to see only the negative aspects of depression, frustration, loss, and failure. It is easy to forget that a seed must die before a plant can be born.

Even after twenty-one years of recovery, it is easy to judge my life based on an impossible standard. I will not quickly forget this writing exercise, and maybe it will make my next few days easier and more joyful.

— DOUGLAS D., SOUTH FLORIDA

Putting my Sobriety First

Because this was my third time in the SLAA program, I began to ask myself "what would I do differently this time? Why wasn't I able to stick with the program before and keep my bottom lines? What can I do to maintain my sobriety this time?"

Now I'm getting in the middle. Today I have a sponsor, friends in the program and service commitments. I have gone to SLAA events like the eating meeting and I am planning on

going to the SLAA roundup. I have integrated the twelve steps of SLAA into my life. In the past, I always said I was putting my sobriety first, but saying it and doing it are two different things. Today I do my best to maintain my connection with my Higher Power and my connection with SLAA. I am a sex and love addict who has found a better way of life and has hope today thanks to sponsorship, service, steps and sobriety.

— JASON P



Reflection After Three Years

After three years of attending SLAA, I decided to look back and see how my life has changed since my addiction came to light. On September 2007, three years ago, the world I knew ended when I was caught using a work computer to look at porn.

Because I was in the navy and using a government computer, I

was sent to Non-Judicial Punishment (NJP) and received a negative evaluation along with other punishments that would keep me from being promoted and my gold stripes were reverted back to red.

For those not familiar with the navy, after a sailor completes 12 years without getting in trouble they wear gold stripes for the remainder of their career to

demonstrate their continuous good behavior.

However, if they ever receive an NJP or a court-martial then they revert back to red stripes until they achieve 12 consecutive years of good behavior. Everyone in the service understands this is the real "Scarlet Letter." I am not saying I did not deserve what I received, but when you screw up in the military, everyone knows you made a mistake and in many ways you keep paying for it. I did.

I did not know at the time of my acting out that my wife was thinking about leaving me. With the repercussion from the navy after my behavior was revealed and my wife about to leave me, my world as I knew it was at an end. I was smart enough to understand I needed to talk to someone and I sought out a counselor.

I spilled my guts to the counselor. She assured me I was not crazy, nor alone, but that I was a sex addict. She gave me the "40 questions for self-diagnosis" pamphlet from SLAA. When I answered, I found the majority vote going towards the addiction. I realized that I had a problem, and it was not just a weakness in trying to control my behavior.

She helped me to understand

how this addiction works. She provided me with my first order help and most important -- she was someone who did not judge me and who I was able to talk to. She provided me with Patrick Carnes' books and told me about SLAA. I attended my first meeting. I, like many others, had a hard time walking into a meeting and admitting that I am a sex addict. But now I look forward to attending these meetings no matter how big or small the group since I always leave feeling better.

My wife decided to stay with me as long as I am willing to work on my addiction, which has been a big part of my recovery. Together, we decided that it was time to retire from military service. I am very grateful that I was able to obtain a great second career opportunity. The transition from the Navy after serving for over 20 years, and searching for a second career in a bad economy was more than I thought I could handle and I had my latest slip. With a high stress level and uncertainty at that point in my life I did not use my tools - I did not use the phone or work the program.

I have always considered myself a religious person. Since I could not control my *problem*

before I understood that it was an addiction, I thought I had to perform extra service to balance the bad actions in my life so I could get to heaven. I learned that will not work and am now able to grow in my faith and can follow my religious beliefs to the best of my understanding. This has helped me in my recovery, understanding that I can trust my higher power and not try to balance the scales to get to heaven.

In these three years the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde life went away and my life did not end, but started to get better. I am not saying I do not have bad days or days that I feel the pull of this disease, but I have a lot of tools, most importantly the SLAA fellowship and a loving family who continue to enable me to make progress in this addiction.

Over time, I learned more about myself and was able to break down the barriers of denial—barriers that were unbelievably high and thick. I began to grow and achieve some sobriety.

I had slips, but I used these to learn what I was doing wrong and regain sobriety. I listened to

many addict's stories, cried for myself and others, and shared my life with these people who I now call brothers and sisters.

I can now admit to others in these rooms that I am a sex addict, share my emotions and be willing to help others. Doing all of this helps me in my recovery. I have grown from hearing everyone's stories, understanding that I have a mental disease and most of all knowing that I am not alone.

I peeled back the layers of this onion and learned more about myself than I would have ever wanted to acknowledge before my denial of this disease ended. Giving service allows me to not only help the group but to also learn more about myself and continue to grow in my understanding of this elusive disease.

As of this writing, I have been sober for six months. I am still a good person making progress, and I understand I am not perfect. I keep working the steps, attending meetings, and increasing my tool bag to make the next day, week, or even the next six months possible. Even writing this article is part of my growth and development of my sobriety.

SCOTT B., DANBURY, CT

Share space

Nice and Easy

I took my youngest son to our neighborhood swimming pool today and I watched a father with his 5-year-old daughter. He was teaching her how to swim. I listened as he repeated the words to her “nice and easy,” as she kicked through the water. I began to wonder, if my father would have been around to teach me to swim when I was a little girl, would he have used the same expression, “nice and easy?”

I have 6 months sobriety from my bottom-line behaviors and I am just now beginning to realize that ALL of my dysfunctional relationship issues have revolved around the fact that my father was absent from my life and there wasn't any father-daughter bond between my step-father and me. In fact, being traumatized at an early age from two teenagers in my life and the neglect of my mother, has left me with the idea that men could not be trusted and that I would have

to fend for myself.

I am retracing my childhood and beginning to feel the emotions that I should have felt in those early years. I'm letting my inner-child feel sadness, hurt, loneliness, anger, and grief for the events that took place.

A fellow SLAA member shared with us that we should analyze and examine our fantasies through our inner-child. I'm beginning to do that and learning that if I am stressed about a life event, my inner-child will fantasize about someone coming to rescue me. This goes back to my father. I wanted him to rescue me when I was a little girl and he didn't. And I felt abandoned.

Today I am letting myself forgive my parents, and I am also learning to forgive myself for all those years of acting out. I love me and I could be alone and be happy. In my recovery, I would say that I'm taking it “nice and easy.”

— SANDRA W., TAMPA, FLORIDA

The Enigma That Is Me

... a life of contradiction

Iwrote the following story 3 days before attending my first SLAA meeting.

I have just last week earned -- with lots of tears and support -- my 30-day chip.

I am confused and content

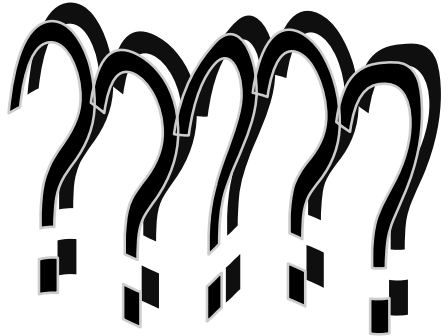
.... The lines between right and wrong, pleasure and pain, reality and fantasy are all blurred and warped -- blending together into a sick emotional mixture of unidentifiable nothingness.

Defining the boundaries now is impossible... They are forever mixed in an assortment of crap that has become my life. I know who I am and I know who I was.

What I can't do is justify the vast difference between the two.

... I have not become self-hating... self-loathing...

Don't misunderstand, I actually enjoy the person I am today much more.



I am more me than I have ever been and I am astonished at the exhilaration in the freedom while still feeling secure in the restrictions I have created.

Restrictions bound tightly for any who desires to open them... I am here for the taking, all things visible.

... I am one who will give until there is nothing left of self.

I am self-sacrificing to degrees not seen very often, a gift, a curse I have had since the beginning.

If you dislike the true me you can walk away. And I have no desire to present myself as something that I am not in order to

temporarily smooth over your broken ego and make you feel secure in the falsehood of my being.

... I'm real and if that disturbs you then you are the one that must deal with that insecurity.

How did I get here? Was I pushed into being or gladly led to my current state?

I have never been able to wear the masks or play the games... I never understood it really ... I mean why present a false front only to disappoint later?

It seems like such an act in futility and deception... And yet I have always been drawn to those that do just that.

In masterful ways I have been seduced and I whole-heartedly listen as the web of deception is spun, buying into whatever is being sold and basing my reality on the falsehoods and fabrications.

Is my life just one large act of

futility or am I self-destructive in ways that I can't even see? I have always found those that tell lies (lie) and then leave.

It is the one unbroken pattern in my life.

When the realization hit that I loved but never knew them at all.

... I think this is the saddest part of this repeated pattern.

... Left with a ghost of whom I loved, whom I desired, whom I never really knew standing in front of me — a counterfeit — a constant reminder of what never really was.

... And yet my silent scream continues.

... And all I can hear is the echo of my unanswered cries falling on ears too jaded to hear — ears too deafened by the desire to protect themselves from the truth that I am breakable.

— MELISSA L

The Bottom Again

While in jail for alcohol-related insanity in 2008, my girlfriend, who had been with me for six years at that point, read my journal and found out about my sexual and romantic liaisons. This was not the first time my infidelity and sex and love addiction came up. I had admitted to visiting massage parlors and had broken up with her to sleep with a woman I had met in AA.

But by the time I was released, she had forgiven me and welcomed me back into her house and into her life. A year and a half later, I had begun keeping another journal and documenting my compulsive thoughts and behaviors.

Somehow, I had left it for her to read AGAIN at some point. I can only imagine that on some level, I must have done this on purpose. Three nights ago, she read it and now I'm back in the morass of self-pity, shame, guilt and self-loathing. Writing this is the only way I can begin to fully grasp what a deep betrayal I have put her through. I don't un-

derstand. I think I love her, but apparently I'm incapable of that. The way I feel right now, with all my secrets out and knowing how much I hurt her, this being just the accumulation of many years, I want to die. She says I've ruined her young adult life, as she's been with me from the age of 19 to 27. She says I'm a predatory monster, preying on women with my manipulation and charm.

She says I'm a sociopath. I might be. I can't believe that I engage in compulsive sexual behavior like I do, and that I actually write it down in my journal and leave it for my girlfriend to find!

That seems so twisted. So I need help. I don't want to hurt anyone else. She says she'll need therapy for years to heal her self-esteem and insecurity.

I don't feel any hope because it's been years since I went to my first SLAA meeting. I love reading the book, but it hasn't changed my behavior. This, combined with my alcoholism, is so painful. I need a lot of help.

— BRANDON M.

Never Too Young

My name is Matt and I am a sex and love addict. I attended my first SLAA meeting at the age of 20. My first girlfriend had left me after two months because I wouldn't stop smothering her.

Then I stayed in a relationship with a girl that I couldn't stand for two and a half years.

I was always trying to get my validation from women. I would see that a certain girl was interested in me, and while I wasn't interested in her, I would stay on the phone with her for hours because I needed the attention that much.

Ending up alone due to the sabotage of any possibility of a relationship as a result of my solitary ways of acting out, I would spend a lot of time on the internet looking at pornography; on many occasions I browsed until the sun came up.

I couldn't hold a job, couldn't interact with people appropriately, I was very depressed and constantly anxious about being "found out."

I attended a few SLAA

meetings at the age of 20 and it was apparent that the program was what I needed.

However, I did talk myself out of it with the justification that I was always the youngest person in the room by at least twelve years.

A few years later when my world got even smaller I had no choice but to return. I'm glad I did. In the few months that I've been back, my life has been getting so much better.

My eyes don't bulge out of my head anymore. I can concentrate when I'm having conversations with people. Most importantly, I'm starting to work on getting from a Higher Power what I was trying to get from women.

I'm 23-years-old and what excites me the most is being able to be uniquely useful to other young people who come into the rooms. It certainly would've helped if there was another young person to shake hands with when I came in, and I hope to be that person for someone else.

— MATT K.

Adopting a Non-Graphic Format

Editor's note: The following story is included for discussion. The Journal is in no way advocating for change by its printing.

As of this writing, I have been in SLAA for 16 years (since 1994) and I want to explain how I and several of the SLAA groups here in northern Massachusetts and New Hampshire adapted a specific wording that was added to the opening format at these meetings. Some other groups nationwide have since adopted the format.

After I had been a member of SLAA for some years, I noticed problems with what we were sharing at the meetings and in other conversations with fellows outside of the meetings.

I have had issues with prostitution and one night in the parking lot after the meeting another member said to me that I was right, the town and intersection I named at the meeting was full of prostitutes.

I realized that in my sharing I had named the town and location along with specific streets where I acted out, and I was ver-

bally leading others there.

At another meeting, a member shared the website address for a pornographic internet site. He said it 'only' once, but that was over 12 years ago, and to this day I can quote that exact internet address.

After that meeting I voiced my concern about this website being burned into my memory. The person who had shared said, "If it bothers you, just step out of the room." I replied, "But this does nothing to erase this unhealthy knowledge."

I brought this up at the monthly business meeting, and said something is wrong here, I had taught and triggered others about my acting out areas and others had been naming towns, strip joints, and pornographic magazine names.

I said someone should draft language to explain some boundaries for speaking in the meeting.

Some protested, saying things like “The format is long enough,” “If someone has triggered you, talk with them at the break or after the meeting.”

This doesn’t work for me. If someone says, “Don’t think of a Purple Monkey,” I immediately have that image burned into my memory banks and I can’t delete it or ignore it.

The same is true for many other SLAA members.

Also, newcomers can benefit from knowing the group’s boundaries around sharing. Without boundaries all are at risk. Newcomers can feel more free to share with the knowledge that they’re not crossing a line.

One SLAA member told me that at some Over-Eaters Anonymous meetings, they are not allowed to name particular acting out foods, and are even discouraged from naming foods if the food may be in question of breaking ‘abstinence’.

I knew it wasn’t right to share our ‘venom’ at the meetings — poisoning the group with details of where we acted out, leaving a trail of addictive bread crumbs to

further handicap other’s recoveries. (I also realized I should not share ‘tricks’ to my acting out, as this would ‘teach’ others to have worse problems than they already do.)

I made a list of suggested no-no’s about sharing in (and hopefully out of) meetings.

As I recall, they were, towns, addresses, locations, publication names, strip club names, porno titles, names of people (who had addictive potential), phone numbers (sex-lines and personal numbers of acting out), the list went on. As far as websites, it didn’t have to be ‘pornographic,’ sites with stimulating intrigue was too much too.

I was tempted to add states, but I needed to strike some balance with this.

This is the exact language I wrote and is being used in the opening format in many meetings:

“In Sharing we shall strive to be honest without being graphic. It is important to discuss our struggles without triggering others.

In areas of acting out, specific

language such as towns, addresses, locations, publication names and website addresses will be avoided in our disclosures. The meeting is now open for discussion.”

At the business meeting where we unanimously voted this into our format, one person commented that they may need to (for example) share they slipped up and went to a strip joint. I said, “But with this in the format, you still can. You just won’t be able to give its name, where it is or how to get there.” He thought for a moment and then said it makes sense.

Sometimes someone will not fully understand this.

Rarely, someone will name a location in another part of the world. Maybe they assume that no-one else from the room could ever possibly get there or, that life and/or their addiction will not take them there.

My philosophy is; “If you got there, we can get there, and I don’t need to know where you acted out” — or any trail of

bread crumbs on how to get there.

A few have said, “It’s not what the person shares, it’s how we do or do not react to it.”

I don’t fully agree with this, and will add in sharing graphically and/or with inappropriate specificity, no-one benefits, not even the person sharing.

I would say adding the non-graphic wording to our opening format has reduced the occurrence of graphic sharing by about 98%.

One challenge that has not been resolved is what to do when someone ignores this rule.

My last girlfriend was in AA, and at this (large) meeting, they had an assistant to the monthly chair person who had a gavel.

If someone’s sharing was out of line, and the gavel came down, their turn to speak was over.

This may be a bit much for SLAA for now, but perhaps as the program grows in the future some resolution will be found.

— SCOTT M., Billerica, MASS.



Quotation Corner

“There are no victims, only volunteers”

“When I let something go, it has claw marks on it.”

“The best thing about the future is it comes.”

“My disease is an elephant. As long as I remember it’s there, I won’t get stepped on.”

“I remember the lessons learned the hard way; the easy ones I forget.”

“In SLAA the only mistake you can make is not coming back.”

“We cease fighting everyone and everything.”

“My brain would have killed my body a long time ago, but it needed my body to get around.”

“The only thing infinite is our capacity for self-deception.”



What Is A Gift?

I've been a member of SLAA for almost 2 years now and have been working the steps with a sponsor actively. This was written over the course of my work on the 4th step. Having finished the 4th step and moved on to the 5th step, I have better perspective now on the relevance of this writing to my ultimate realizations about my character defects and personal inventory. Perhaps this writing will be helpful to someone else as they work the 4th step, others who need to be reminded of their 4th step work, or anyone with whom it resonates.

When I was a boy,
 My father gave me many gifts,
 A roof over my head,
 Structure for my life,
 A room to make my own,
 An example of success to follow.
 And what I received,
 From that stranger I sometimes knew,
 A life of chaos and confusion,
 Black blue rules to fuel duplicity,
 A cage of terror and shame,
 Blueprints for isolation.

When I was a boy,
 My mother gave me many gifts,
 Her commitment to education,
 Respect for all as equals,
 The promise of a bright future,
 Her love and pride in me.
 And what I received,
 From that scared little girl,
 Loss of a mother and childhood,
 Resentment of women's weakness,
 My empty hand in the dark,
 A betrayal, like no other.

When I was a boy,
My sister gave me many gifts,
Her bright light in our family,
Her adoration and praise,
First prize yielded in all things,
Her patience and humility.
And what I received,
From my fellow survivor,
A competitor and new star,
Her greed, always closest to the fire,
Second place in everything,
Her stifled indignation.

And as I pose as a man,
I wonder to myself...
Is the gift in the intention,
Is it in the perspective,
Is it in the expectation,
Or is it in the aspiration?
Life is a best effort,
Viewed through colored lenses,
Meeting few grandiose desires,
Since we selfishly deserve the Best.
But the fearless search
Reveals the gift.
Only the fearless search
Can reveal many life gifts,
None of which have been realized.
I am discovering that tranquility
And soothing the dark fires.
Finally, I am becoming a man.

— JOHN M, SAN FRANCISCO



The Augustine Fellowship S.L.A.A. Fellowship-Wide Services



July 12-15, 2011
Tuesday through Friday

Theme: Tradition 9

*S.L.A.A. as such ought never
be organized; but we may create
service boards or committees
directly responsible to those
they serve.*

Crowne Plaza Hotel
2270 Hotel Circle Nth
San Diego, CA 92108



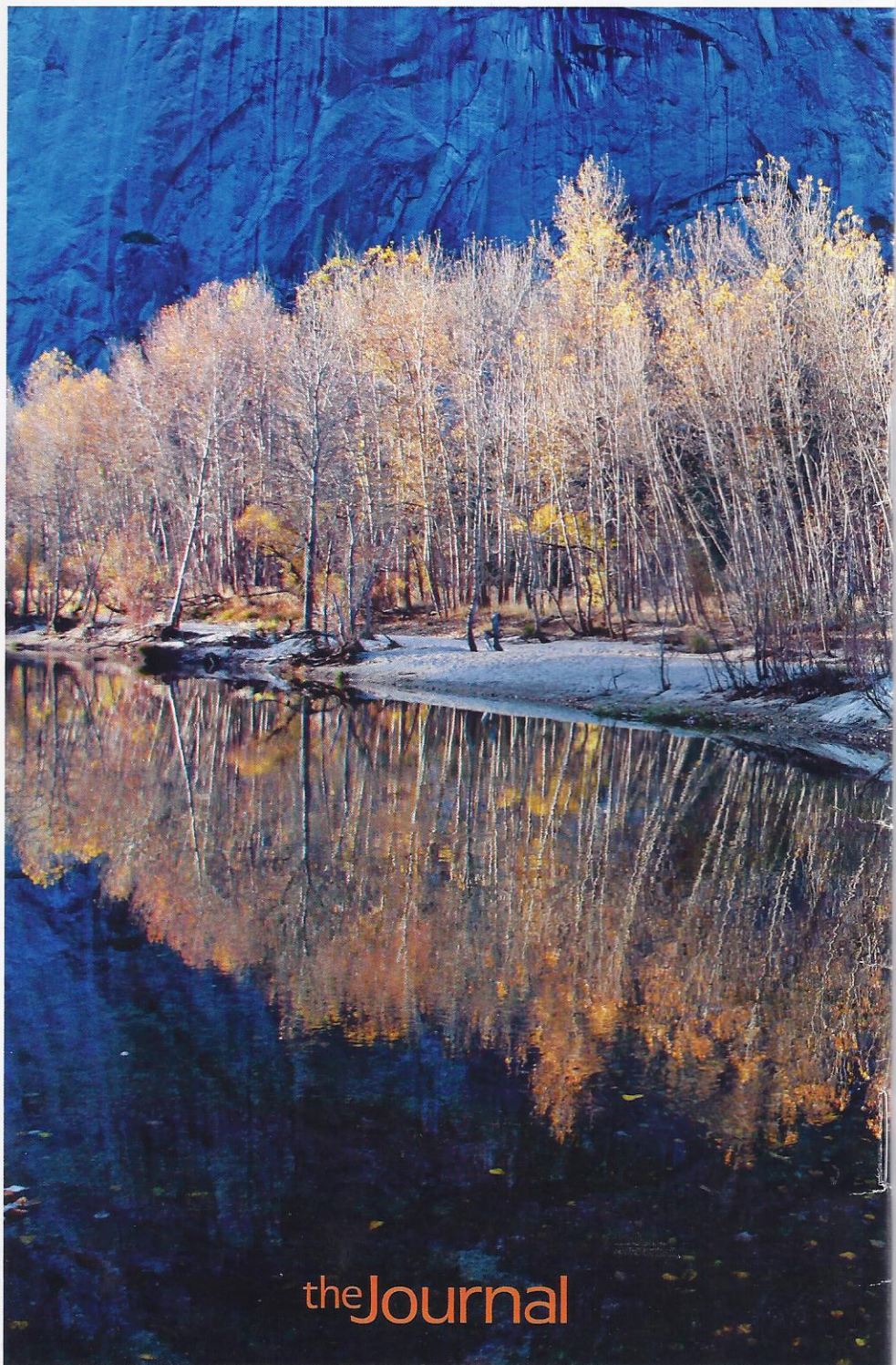
2011 S.L.A.A. Annual Business/Conference Meeting

Host: San Diego County Intergroup



S.L.A.A. Signs of Recovery

1. We seek to develop a daily relationship with a Higher Power, knowing that we are not alone in our efforts to heal ourselves from our addiction.
2. We are willing to be vulnerable because the capacity to trust has been restored to us by our faith in a Higher Power.
3. We surrender, one day at a time, our whole life strategy of, and our obsession with the pursuit of romantic and sexual intrigue and emotional dependency.
4. We learn to avoid situations that may put us at risk physically, morally, psychologically or spiritually.
5. We learn to accept and love ourselves, to take responsibility for our own lives, and to take care of our own needs before involving ourselves with others.
6. We become willing to ask for help, allowing ourselves to be vulnerable and learning to trust and accept others.
7. We allow ourselves to work through the pain of our low self-esteem and our fears of abandonment and responsibility. We learn to feel comfortable in solitude.
8. We begin to accept our imperfections and mistakes as part of being human, healing our shame and perfectionism while working on our character defects.
9. We begin to substitute honesty for self-destructive ways of expressing emotions and feelings.
10. We become honest in expressing who we are, developing true intimacy in our relationships with ourselves and others.
11. We learn to value sex as a by-product of sharing, commitment, trust and cooperation in a partnership.
12. We are restored to sanity, on a daily basis, by participating in the process of recovery.



theJournal