



theJournal

Issue # 132

Single Issue \$3

DANGER

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ACCESS ZONE**

Emotional
Anorexia

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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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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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader:

Emotional anorexia is a difficult subject. Unless a person is extremely anorectic to the point of complete isolation it may be hard to recognize as anorexia. And some of us choose partners or friends who are *clearly* more anorectic than we are. Alcoholics often point out that in their drinking they had someone else that they could point to as a worse drunk and then they didn't have to change themselves. It just serves to keep both people sick.

And there is also the anorectic who has a lot of sex and tells themselves they must not have that problem because look how social they are! Then they find out that using sex as a drug is not the same as intimacy.

Some S.L.A.A. members may get sober just to find themselves too scared to attempt intimacy because they are afraid of going back to their disease. Or traumatic experiences made the world a scary place.

My anorexia is triggered by a nine-year abusive relationship when I was 12. My head tells me that people are scary and cannot be trusted. This is when I have to trust God, not people. My perfectionism started in that relationship when I wore something my boyfriend didn't like and got hit so hard that it knocked me over.

As an adult if anyone communicated that they didn't like what I was doing, I thought something really bad was going to happen and the world would eventually come crashing down around me because of my one little mistake. I had to write fear inventories and pray for years for my character defect of perfectionism to be removed. And I kept saying "just let it be what it is, God, either make everything OK or give me the strength to handle whatever happens. Thy will, not mine, be done.

I also had the problem of no filter. In social situations I would say the oddest things and beat myself up afterward for being an idiot. In sobriety I learned to pause before speaking, become more present in the moment. My sponsor always told me to keep it light and polite.

I'm also afraid of my disease because, especially in this area, my addiction used to be so strong. But I can't use that as an excuse to be anorectic or it will take me right out of program. I just have to remember that I have nine years of sobriety and God and program are there to catch me if I fall. Falls are lessons. S.L.A.A. helped me find a life I can be proud of. I pray that I stay!

Lisa C., Managing Editor, *the Journal*

Letter from the Marketing Director

Dear Journal subscribers,

You may have noticed that the Journal is back on schedule for the first time in many years thanks to our dedicated new production team. We also have several important announcements for the good of the S.L.A.A. Fellowship.

1. **New Journal Prices.** The costs required for printing and shipping (especially postage) have risen considerably since our last price increase over ten years ago. The Conference Journal Committee (CJC) voted to increase the price of subscriptions to \$24/year or \$40/two years for the U.S. and Canada, and to \$33/year or \$60/two years for International subscriptions. The price increase will go into effect starting January 1st, 2012. You are encouraged to renew your subscription now at the reduced price. Please feel free to contact us at www.slaafws.org/cjc with your comments as we are committed to service towards each of you as members of our greater Fellowship.

This was not an easy decision but we feel it was a necessary one just to break even financially, which has not happened in many years. As S.L.A.A. meetings are supported by donations, we hope you will still continue to support your “meeting in print” by subscribing to the Journal. Also we’d like to extend a special thanks to the Conference, the FWS office and the Board of Trustees including the Board Finance and Operating Committee for their continued support throughout these years without which we would never have been able to fulfill our directive since 1989 to publish the Journal for the good of the S.L.A.A. Fellowship and to reach the addict who still suffers.

2. **New e-Journal Subcommittee.** The CJC voted to form the e-Journal Subcommittee (EJS) to publish the Journal online. We are currently negotiating a contract within this committee to publish the Journal to Kindle, which would make the magazine available to most electronic devices including smartphones and computers. Please contact the CJC at www.slaafws.org/cjc to join the EJS.

3. **New Journal Production Team Policy.** After careful review, the CJC voted to approve a new policy for the production team available in the S.L.A.A. Conference Service Manual (CSM) at Appendix I. This policy may be requested at the CJC contact page listed above. The policy implements a new election cycle for all Journal production team service positions, starting January 1st, 2012. Subscribers are also invited to join the CJC at any time, which oversees policy for the Journal. Currently the CJC meets on the first Saturday of the month for an hour-long teleconference call starting at 3pm Pacific Time / 6pm Eastern Time / 10pm Greenwich Time.

4. **New Free Outreach Issue.** Please visit the home page of the S.L.A.A. website at www.slaafws.org for a free issue of the Journal which you may copy and distribute with responsible abandon to reach the addict who still suffers!

...And that’s all the Journal news for now. Thanks for reading, everyone!

Sincerely in Service,

Tom B., Marketing Director, *the Journal*, journal@slaafws.org

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. 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 which renders any personal differences of sexual or gender orientation irrelevant.

We need protect with special care the anonymity of every S.L.A.A. member. Additionally we try to avoid drawing undue attention to S.L.A.A. as a whole from the public media.

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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.

* ©1985 The Augustine Fellowship, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The Twelve Steps are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that A.A. is affiliated with this program. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs and activities, which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise. **THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS** 1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — 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 Him. 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 Him 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 God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His 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 alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Question of the Day & Answers from Yesterday

The Question of the Day from the last issue was, “What effect has emotional anorexia had on your life?”

Here are some wonderful responses for your enjoyment. They are not presented in any particular order.

WHAT EFFECT HAS EMOTIONAL ANOREXIA HAD ON YOUR LIFE?

I feel I have been in an emotional prison for most of my life, too scared to do the things that I felt were right for me.

— NANNA; COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

The side effect of my sex addiction was greater retreat into my emotional anorexia, and the consequence of that was an empty life. One where I didn't allow myself the nourishment that I so desperately needed and therefore retreated further into my sex addict. And the end result of all those behaviors was a life I was no longer willing to live. My bottom in A.A. was where I knew it was “get sober or die.” In S.L.A.A., my bottom was an emotional and spiritual bankruptcy that made me willing to do anything to get better.

— RICK B., LARGO, FL

I have run from my feelings, mashed them, been ashamed of them. This leads to consequences of all sorts — social, romantic, spiritual, financial. When I allow myself to feel my feelings, I am nurturing myself emotionally. When I speak to myself with gentleness and kindness, I am nurturing myself and therefore recovering. It is a form of showing up for myself. It is a way of being my adult self. Letting myself cry is actually an adult, nurturing behavior choice.

— KARA; MANHATTAN, NY

It keeps me from wanting to open up completely in relationships to avoid getting hurt. This doesn't work, of course, and I have to remember that intimacy follows vulnerability.

—MARCELLA M., LOS ANGELES, CA

WHAT EFFECT HAS EMOTIONAL ANOREXIA HAD ON YOUR LIFE?

I have converted emotional needs into sex, anger and other emotions in an anorectic tendency. This all prevented me from having my emotional needs expressed or met.

— FREDRIK L., UPPSALA, SWEDEN

Has had an impact on my marriage – kept me from being close at times when we need most to be close, and I tend to isolate when I need to reach out.

— SUSAN G., SUNSET BEACH, CA

1. Avoidance of healthy relations (relationship with healthy persons) resulting in relationships with unhealthy persons.
2. Low self-esteem.

— RICHARD C., BOSTON, MA

When confronted with discomfort, I withdraw and act in (as opposed to acting out.)

— JOHN, LONDON, UK

It is insidious in the sense that it has often passed unnoticed under the more obvious outward manifestations of sex and love addiction. I was often unaware, therefore, how much it underpinned the addiction.

— OWEN, NEW YORK, NY

Emotional anorexia has functioned as a protection against feeling my emotions during assault, abandonment and loss. Emotional anorexia has kept me away from myself. It has also kept me from feeling my life and being free in all relations, especially close and intimate relationships.

— MARIE, COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Emotional anorexia had given me a very small life. I was fear based and so isolated. I did not know how to use my words to say I was in a lot of pain.

— C.R., LOS ANGELES, CA

QUESTION OF THE DAY

Fear! By holding back emotionally, Anxiety and Fear become another ‘monster in the closet.’ Like a dog bitten that never wants to go back to the place he was bitten, I become emotionally anorexic to avoid the pain I felt from being hurt while emotionally vulnerable. Opening up again — working past or through my anorexia with trust in my Higher Power — is the solution!!

— LOREN, LOS ANGELES, CA

In emotional anorexia, I lived in denial of my condition and the consequences of my inaction for almost 20 years. I lived a truncated life without the fullness of all my emotions and the wonderment of real and genuine responses to the people around me.

— ANONYMOUS, LOS ANGELES, CA

When I don’t regularly practice interacting with other people, I find I am cranky and contentious when I finally get out among people.

— MAGGIE W., LOS ANGELES, CA

It affects my ability to have intimate relationships with family and friends. In addition, it makes me feel like an imposter.

— LOUIE B., LOS ANGELES, CA

It keeps me in isolation. As an introvert, I require a lot of solitude to recharge and reconnect with self and Higher Power. But sometimes I find myself with a list of “excuses” why I can’t or won’t reach out. Working the S.L.A.A. program has helped me be aware when this becomes a pattern and has taught me tools to apply to return to serenity and trust.

— KELLI H., AUSTIN, TX

I avoided calling people because I was scared that I would disturb them. I had a problem inviting people to my home and I never asked people if they would like to hang out with me. I waited for them to ask first.

— CARMEN B.,
STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

WHAT EFFECT HAS EMOTIONAL ANOREXIA HAD ON YOUR LIFE?

Social anorexia limits my life and makes it small. It also affects my interactions in a negative way. When I am in my anorexia it is like I have a cloak over my eyes and I cannot see clearly – everything appears to be harmful and negative. I end up responding to others from this space, which further pushes them away. If I can remove the cloak through affirmations, meditation, prayer, meeting, fellowship and outside help, I can then come from a place of self-love. My true self comes out, and this is the space within which my relationships flourish – not from a space of shame and perfectionism, but from a space of beautiful woman imperfection, self-love, self-acceptance, and joy.

— KARIN B., LOS ANGELES, CA

I have not been able to make a family and get a husband and children. I have not been able to set real goals for my life and to fulfill them.

— VIVI, COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

All the addictions connected to this emotional anorexia. Debting. Love addiction. Food. Alcohol. Drugs. Sex. I don't want to sound like I'm whining because I know I am farther along in my recovery to think that anything good will come from resentment and self pity, but emotional anorexia has destroyed what I think is my H.P.'s will for me. As I've heard in the S.L.A.A. program, not being able to connect with others has been the painful buildup of my emotional anorexia. Not just that I restrict, but I can't connect when I want to (i.e. with my partner). The consequential sex addiction, which comes as a natural result of needing to connect with others, went against my rules of upbringing, and then, subsequent self-hatred and misanthropy at society at large.

Wherever IT came from, IT wasn't budging. Wasting horrible amounts of time trying to "fix" whatever was wrong with me and the way I related to others. So phony and contrived. Why bother, hide, don't try. The pain of trying to be emotionally available.

— ANONYMOUS

QUESTION OF THE DAY

It has prevented me from having a healthy, long term love relationship.

— MAYA, COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

I went for years without a relationship when I was in active addiction. I have had four long-term relationships since coming into S.L.A.A. almost 14 years ago, the last one for four years. The program works.

— JIM, LOS ANGELES, CA

Emotional anorexia has affected my life by limiting my capacities to give and receive to others, myself and God. I am grateful to be aware of this and have support from my sponsor and fellows to accept myself, love myself through this limitation. I have learned how to open myself while maintaining healthy boundaries.

— ELIZABETH, LOS ANGELES, CA

It has left me lonely and with very few friends. New relations do not develop, they soon go away.

— RON G., LOS ANGELES, CA

I have been attracted to men that aren't available. I have felt lonely, and that men I meet find me wrong if I am honest.

— INGRID, COPENHAGEN,
DENMARK

It has kept me from connecting with the loved ones around me at critical times, to my detriment.

— STEPHEN F., CT

It has isolated me to the point that I haven't known how to break out of it until finding an S.L.A.A. anorexia group. Now I'm a "social butterfly."

— BECKY L., TORRANCE, CA

Never Knew a Warm Relationship Before S.L.A.A.

Early in recovery I kept my bottom lines for pornography, sex without mutual commitment, and sexual fantasies. I realized that fear of intimacy was at the heart of my addiction, but I really had no idea how deeply the roots of that fear reached into my childhood, or how it was still preventing me from experiencing the true fulfillment possible in a sober life.

I chose partners who had very limited capacity for intimacy. I moved frequently, so that I never got close to anyone. I filled my days with work, meetings, and education, and that left little or no time for intimacy with anyone. The fourth steps that I did over time would temporarily relieve me of feeling I was trapped in an intimacy desert. But as the pain left, I would busy myself in other activities again.

I worked in a profession in which friendships with clients were forbidden, and my peers were too overloaded with work to socialize. In the periods I lived alone, I slipped easily into a state of mind in which it seemed very



easy to be single. I was not required to be emotionally present to anyone. For years I rejected almost all opportunities to fill my human needs for emotional closeness, exchange of love, comfort, and support, and for awareness of normal anger, fear, sadness and joy. I had a deep longing for attachment and emotional closeness with my own children, parents, and friends, but I never seemed to achieve that. Finally I began to understand that this self-imposed loneliness had become my life. Very, very slowly, I began to be aware of my emotional anorexia.

When I got sober in S.L.A.A., I had never had the experience of normal, warm, and consistently responsive relationships. I could

not “recover” from my addiction to anorexia. I could reject my addictive pattern, but then I was faced with trying to create relationships when I had almost entirely unhealthy models from my childhood, which I had repeated over and over again as an adult. I had to discover how to build emotional bridges with other human beings, and I had not even practiced identifying what I felt, much less sharing that with another person. No wonder I was anorexic without even knowing it.

At the heart of it all was simply fear that if I let myself need anything emotionally from others, that I would be rejected and hurt; that if I tried to get my needs for giving and receiving love filled, the loneliness of the inevitable (I thought) rejection would be too painful to bear. I tried to protect myself with a wall of pretense – that I did not care and did not need emotional closeness with others.

My first healthy intimate relationship was with my sponsor, but I did not maintain that relationship any more than I did

with others. Gradually I built friendships with others in S.L.A.A. in which there was mutual investment in honesty and the exchange of mutual positive regard, emotional support, and companionship. But my frequent moves limited those relationships as well. As I listened to

others share their good and bad experiences in relationships, I learned very gradually how to get my normal needs filled in non-addictive ways. Most important of all, I began to find new levels of intimacy with myself, and intimacy with God. In S.L.A.A.

I have learned how to take risks for emotional closeness with others in small steps, to recognize those quickly who will not meet trust with trustworthiness, and to risk vulnerability as that is returned in kind.

Anorexia feels like a very safe place to be. It tells me I don’t need friends and loving relationships, so I do not have to take any emotional risks except for occasional loneliness. But now I have experienced the emotional and spiritual rewards that come from letting myself be loved, and

I have learned how to take risks for emotional closeness with others in small steps, to recognize those quickly who will not meet trust with trustworthiness, and to risk vulnerability as that is returned in kind.

by offering love and caring to others. Anorexia is still easy for me, and intimacy requires me to overcome that old fear from childhood that there will not be enough love in the world for me,

so I do not need to even try to get it. But one day at a time I can act on faith and allow myself to discover the happiness that can be experienced in caring relationships.

-Barbara

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous



Have you been restored to sanity, on a daily basis, by participating in the process of recovery? If your answer is yes, then perhaps it's time to carry the message to Sex and Love Addicts and Anorectics!

We need Long Distance Sponsors. Do you have time to take a phone call? Write an email? Skype? Share your experience, strength and hope? Is it time to give back what has so freely been given to you?

If your answer is "Yes!", then you are just the person we need for the Long Distance Sponsorship Program.

Contact: <http://www.slaafws.org/contact/Sponsorship>

(This is a link to a webpage where you can insert your information, which will then be forwarded to the Long Distance Sponsorship Program. Thank-you!)



Recovering From Anorexia - Recovery Partners



A few days ago I was talking with a lady with whom I have been doing S.L.A.A. service for several years. She stated that it is so very helpful to have a recovery person in S.L.A.A. to whom you talk every day. I agreed with her. For many years I wanted a person with whom I could have a commitment to talk every day. I am now 68 and I have been looking for this kind of a committed relationship since I was a teenager. When I first found 12-Step fellowships at the age of 38 in 1980, I had already been seeking such committed communication for many years and I hoped I would find it in 12 Step fellow-

ships. However, sponsorship never worked for me, because my sponsors wanted to direct me in working the Steps and wanted me to do daily exchange of sharing with someone else.

I was unable to stay in relationships with sponsors, because I was overwhelmed with the memories and feelings of intense anger, confusion and sadness that came up from working the Steps. So even though my sexual acting out — which was masturbation and pornography — ended at age 33 in 1975, my social and emotional anorexia continued to dominate my life.

After attending over 2,500 face-to-face 12-Step meetings in

a variety of programs, I was still looking for my recovery partners. One died after a number of years. Soon after that another ended our relationship because my overwhelming anger and sadness was more than she could handle. A third one died. One sent me a no contact email one day. A fifth one died.

Now I have a new name for what I have wanted and needed for over 50 years. It is called recovery partners. I think recovery partners is a new term in S.L.A.A. At least I have been hearing it only a short time.

For me the two most important things about recovery partners are that it is a committed relationship like sponsorship and it is an equal horizontal relationship with each giving and receiving the same amount from an equal position.

Where as I greatly value a recovery partner relationship in which we talk every day, this is not the only style. Less frequent phone conversations are also helpful. The important parts for me are the commitment to continue and to return phone calls promptly and the fact that the relationship is equal and horizontal.

One of my recovery partners and I often talked several times a day. If one of us needed to do

something else for a time, we would take a break from our conversation and resume later in the day. This sometimes happened 3 or 4 times in one day. We both did lots of driving for our employment and we both talked with hands free kits on our cell phones while driving our cars. We had a standard agreement that if a call waiting would come, we would immediately interrupt our conversation so the person could take the new incoming call.

Later, I had another recovery partner when I was no longer driving but self employed at home. He was also at home and did not drive. So we talked a lot — frequently several times a day.

Although these were all very helpful relationships, they all suffered from lack of security as they had no name and I had no way of asking for a commitment.

The anorexia pamphlet states we could not get our needs met because we could not even name them. I could not get my needs met because the name, recovery partners, was not being used in S.L.A.A. at those times.

The name, recovery partners, and the tool, recovery partners is one of the greatest gifts I have received from S.L.A.A.

— RON G, LOS ANGELES

Finally Got Up The Courage

I finally got up enough nerve to join S.L.A.A. back in 1997. At my very first meeting, a woman welcomed me and praised me for having the “courage” to show up.

I had no idea what she meant. How scary could it be? I thought S.L.A.A. was just a bunch of people acting tough and talking about sex.

Trouble is, this harmless-looking group of strangers started talking about their feelings about all kinds of scary experiences, most of them from their childhood!

This was the very last thing I wanted to share, and in fact, the very reason I had chosen to act out for so many years.

As a sex addict, I resisted identifying with the concept of emotional anorexia for as long as possible. Weren’t the two mutually exclusive?

Then, several months later, another member informed me that my facade of bravado, which looked like raw, meaningless promiscuity, was in fact a form

of emotional anorexia. I had never nourished my soul with genuine emotions for fear of having to face the pain of childhood abuse. If I let people get to see the real me, what on earth

could happen then? I couldn’t imagine it would be worth the fear and pain.

For me, emotional anorexia is very much tied up with childhood trauma, despite the fact it happened

more than five decades ago. This has been the same traumatic residue that had previously led me to drink and drug. Of course, when I was fortunate enough to put those addictions down, the emotional anorexia, disguised as sex addiction, came barreling through my life.

Much to my regret, I am no stranger to slips. I am eternally grateful to this program that I have always learned more about myself and the depth of my trauma, and that not once, has my S.L.A.A. family said anything but “Welcome back” after a slip.

—MARSHA Z., JAMAICA PLAIN, MA

**Not once, has my
S.L.A.A. family said
anything but
“Welcome back” after
a slip.**

'Closet Introvert' Struggles With Anorexia

The term I used to describe myself before coming in to program was “closet introvert.” That I identify as an anorectic in this program can surprise people, as I have a big mouth, and can hold my own in any room – whether it’s filled with high school students or marketing executives. I always have something to say, and I love verbal rapport. I like engaging with people – in controlled doses.

What people don’t see is that after being “on” for more than a few hours, or perhaps sometimes a full day, I need to be ALONE. In the past, outside of the times I was required to be among other people, I was always very guarded with my free time. I needed to control my social interactions so that I never had to be anywhere I didn’t want to be, and could always get out of an obligation if at the last minute I didn’t want to be somewhere or with someone.

This worked for me well enough, back in the days when working for others required me to be with people much of the day. It was built-in social time. However, as my work became increasingly more freelance, and

I moved to a more remote place about eight years ago, my being alone became a more constant state. I realized that the patterns I’d developed – to have just a few local friends, good friends far away, and ideally a boyfriend, weren’t really working for me. Whereas I’d been happy and content being alone *much* of the time prior to this, I started noticing that being alone was sometimes starting to feel *lonely*. Alone, and lonely – two very different things.

A couple of years before coming into program, I had fortunately started working more regularly with others again, doing work I love, with people who share a lot of similar values to mine. I started feeling more connected to a community and realized I needed to carefully tend to my new connections with people if I wanted this community, and my place in it, to thrive. During this same period, I’d identified that my intensity wasn’t always serving me. I saw that I could benefit from learning to be more vulnerable, and shutting my big mouth more often. I’d heard enough from my analytical brain over the years. I wanted to hear what my heart had to say more

often.

I added 10 minutes of daily meditation to this new awareness and understanding of myself, and had begun to feel myself grow. However, my new growth was seriously challenged last year when I found myself completely demoralized in a relationship with a new boyfriend. Due to each of our own personal past traumas and unrealized patterns, we found ourselves insecure and arguing a lot, even though we really cared about and were attracted to one another.

I was trying to be as honest and communicative as I could to see if we could work things out. He, on the other hand, acted out by cheating and lying to me. I had some sense that I had a lot to learn in this relationship, so chose to stick it out (again, with the support of a therapist who helped prevent me from feeling completely insane). I wanted to see what I had to learn about me.

What happened is that I definitely learned something about me in this painful and destructive relationship. I learned that something in me so badly wanted some of the good things between me and this man — humor, physical intimacy, playfulness, the *dream* of a creative and less ordinary future together.

And I *needed* these things because I wasn't getting them from anyone else. I clearly had a big needy hole in me *so* deep, that for a time, I was willing to compromise feeling *safe*. I clung desperately to the good things and explored the possibility of working things out with him. I tried to trust him again and look at *my* role in the relationship, meanwhile I was feeling an increasing anxiety. Some things were getting better, but some things I found out eventually, were getting *worse* with his patterns — intriguing and keeping back doors open. Through him, I learned the term — sex and love addiction, and I learned about S.L.A.A.

After a few months, I got tired of waiting for him to honor his commitment to join S.L.A.A. I realized my own inability to extract myself from someone who was causing me more anxiety than peace needed to be examined just as much as his patterns did. I enrolled in S.L.A.A. in the winter of 2011 and immediately began using the tools offered to me.

It was a struggle at first. Going to meetings was easy because I was good in groups. But making outreach calls or spending time one-on-one with fellows

was difficult because this required more intimacy. I grew up relying on myself for guidance, particularly in romantic relationships. It was hard enough for me to learn to trust and be honest with friends and to share the things about me of which I was pretty ashamed. It felt *terrifying* to trust my worst bits with strangers. I was lucky to realize right away that if I wanted to increase my trust in and connection with others, I would really have to lean hard into the notion of constant contrary action. I took on a 90 in 90, got a sponsor, and started accepting and making social invitations at least once a day.

The best thing that has come from program so far, and from really pushing myself to connect with others, despite how intensely upsetting and disruptive to my old patterns it feels sometimes, is that I've begun to feel more present and at ease with people. The constant repetition of new social patterns has made them feel more natural for me. In fact, now, even when I've been out working with people all day, and met up with friends after work, and maybe taken a phone call from a fellow before bed, I still want to be connecting. This

at first, had the affect of making me feel even *more* lonely — to learn what great company was, and then want more of it.

However once I developed an authentic sense of my own higher power, I had my HP to chat with if I felt I was missing human interaction. "There's always tomorrow." HP may tell me "You can see people tomorrow." My HP by the way, has helped me return to a place of feeling simply, *alone*, rather than *lonely*. When I do find myself wishing for company I don't have, "Remember how much you love reading and cooking?" She reminds me. Or, She says "Don't you have some step work you could do?"

I've begun to experience and understand that it takes time to get to know people — women and men — and that immediate ease with people is not a requirement for the possibility of true long-term intimate connection.

My closest friendships are with people whose best qualities I would never have seen if I didn't make the effort to spend more than one day with them.

As I continue to feel more present with others and myself, the anorexia continues to fade.

— ANONYMOUS

Emotional Anorexia

I was born in a small town in Alaska in 1968 — a place of natural beauty and equally limited public resources. Early on I recall a close family with my great grandmother at its center. In 1973, I went with my dad and my great grandmother to the airport. I watched her board her flight, and turn around to wave goodbye to me — that was the last time I ever saw her.

After her death on the operating table, our close knit family fell apart. One by one, all my aunts, uncles and cousins moved away looking for job opportunities as the lumber trade in Alaska dried up. Looking back, I realize my father was a good provider with a stable job. We were comfortable materially.

However, from my young perspective, it seemed like we were trapped on a remote island while my entire extended family (including several cousins I was very close to) left us and fled to warmer climates and better lives.

By the time I was 12, a belief that the most important relationships in my life would ultimately end in loss, was fully formed. Being small in stature, I was coming to terms with the fact that I was “different from the other boys.” I was no “man’s



man” by any stretch of the imagination. By the time puberty set in, I adjusted to the verbal abuse (like being told I “should be shot”) from young and old alike. I tried to preserve what little worth I thought I might have left. I learned quickly how to become “invisible,” wear dark clothing, and slip around in the winter shadows to avoid detection from testosterone-driven teenagers.

All I can say, looking back, is that I’m grateful for alcohol, drugs and even masturbation — all were in full swing before I was 13. At the time they were part of my survival kit that took away the pain and allowed me to retreat into myself where it was “safe.” Without them, I might have hopped on the bandwagon with everyone else and done myself in. I learned to “act in” and discovered a place where I found make-believe friends, entire

complex fantasy scenarios that dulled the pain of adolescence and quelled my sense of isolation.

For hours, I listened to 80's 'new wave' music and dreamed that one day I would attend college in San Francisco "where the gays are." With all of the grotesque and hate filled descriptions I heard concerning gay life, I knew I wasn't like the people I lived around. And I hoped to find a place of acceptance and love, especially for being different — even if it meant becoming "like them."

In 1985, when I was 17, a turn of events unfolded and I moved with my mom to Seattle and then further south to Portland, Oregon. I went into drug and alcohol treatment (3 different times in fact, totaling 136 days) and finally got sober. I met my first boyfriend after high school and fell "in love."

But with my dysfunctional family dynamic (including a sex-addicted father and a sexual anorexic mother) and the message that I was an "abomination" — it was no surprise that I lost my faith in God, discovered bookstores and pornography, and even spent a night in jail (for storing my boyfriend's stolen equipment in my parent's home). Eventually, I even gave

up my 2 years of cherished sobriety so my boyfriend wouldn't think I was such a "goody two shoes" and leave me.

Over the next 22 years, each of my 6 relationships have ultimately ended. I've gone through my share of pain. But over time, through my work with the 12 steps, therapy, and relationship building workshops, I have learned a lot about myself and how I relate to others — in both good and not so good ways. I have found that being gay doesn't have to equate to self-destructive sex and open relationships. I've learned that I can, through the help of a Higher Power, be of service and perhaps, one day, become the role model that I wished I'd had.

The good news? As of this month I've celebrated 17 years of A.A.-related sobriety and have found that there is indeed sanity in Los Angeles within the rooms of S.L.A.A. — where I have been attending meetings now for 10 months. I am exploring my pendulum swings between sexual acting out (currently with masturbation and pornography) and "sobriety" which looks and feels more like celibacy and/or anorexia.

Also, after 4 years of being single, I've found a sweet young man and we've been together for

almost three years. We're building a wonderful bond, but I am aware that I'm still not giving all of myself emotionally — and that I'm terrified of the reflective mirror that is intimacy.

I feel that God gave me a gift by leading my partner to me *and* simultaneously leading *me* into the gift of the S.L.A.A. program. I still struggle with trusting that gay men can be faithful, but I'm learning to take risks, pray and turn the outcomes over to God.

I often struggle with being authentic, vulnerable, even feeling “messy” or “dirty” when it comes to emotional and sexual intimacy. I understand that I don't yet know how to be sexual without shame. And I still don't know how to open my heart fully to another without the looming fear of losing them.

Through the program, I'm learning to trust God and to realize that life is about joy, celebration and at the same time, dealing with loss. Certainly there will be more losses in my life, but I'm coming to accept that loss is part of the great mystery of life.

My faith in my Higher Power is slowly growing, and I can stay more grounded in the present if I stay current with Him and in the meeting rooms with my fellows. I'm also understanding that through Higher Power and my participation in the S.L.A.A. fellowship, that my life can be “happy, joyous, and free” even without iron-clad guarantees.

My program is not perfect by any means — but I continue to make progress.

—PATRICK, LOS ANGELES

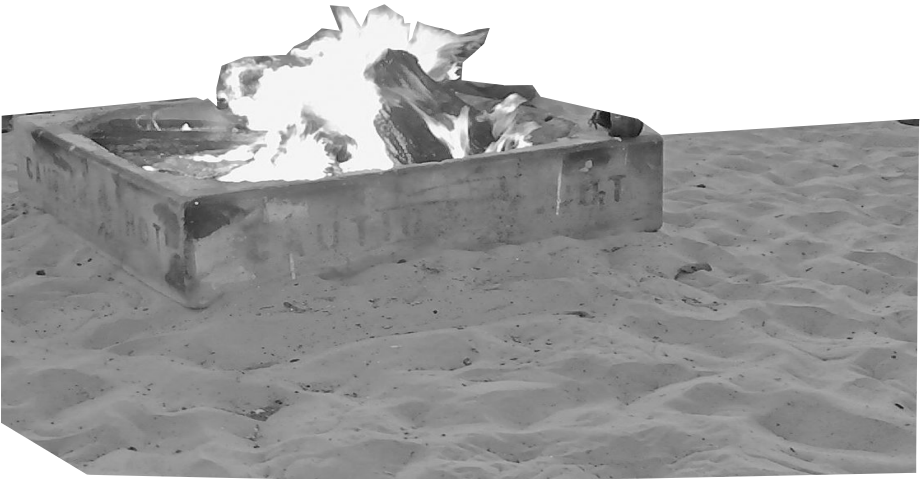
An Invitation For You

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 volunteers of all skills and levels of availability. Become a Journal Representative for your 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.

Contact info: <http://www.slaafws.org/contact/jeditor>

Recovered From A Hopeless Pit Of Despair



I have recovered from a helpless, hopeless pit of despair. I am a sex and love addict. I am addicted to a lot of things and a lot of behaviors. I have come to know that addiction is a disease. The disease is me. I treat my disease by working the 12 Steps, adhering to the 12 Traditions, working with a sponsor, reading our literature and going to meetings.

If I don't treat my disease with these actions, I will treat my disease with what is familiar: sex and love addiction. It is at the meetings that I hear a lot of good things about the disease of addiction. I attend meetings for more than one 12-Step fellow-

ship. In a pinch, any anonymous program will do, if you talk about the solution.

In a recent meeting at another anonymous program, people spoke of the disease of alcoholism. A.A. is the foundation upon which other 12-Step fellowships are built. Some people say that the disease of alcoholism is about drinking, and that is all that should be referenced at meetings.

Then, I hear people qualify the statement about the disease of alcoholism by saying the addiction problem is their thinking and them as an individual. They treated their disease with alcohol; hence the identifying state-

ment.

But, liquor is but a symptom of a much deeper disease. It is a living problem. It is a thinking problem. It is a behavior problem. Some people treat it with alcohol. Some treat it with narcotics. Some treat it with inappropriate social/sexual conduct. Some treat it with money, food, television, exercise, thrill-seeking — anything to an extreme. Some like a combination of these and others. It's really all the same disease of self.

There is a simple solution to the disease of self. Simple, but not necessarily easy. It is a more natural state, easier, for each of us to live in the disease of self, than it is to live in the solution.

The solution is the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, the Principles and the Concepts. It was presented first in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, by people who treated the disease of self most obviously with alcohol. Some of the other symptoms, e.g., behavior, money, sex, narcotics, were there, too, but not as tangible. Of course, we humans, in our well-intentioned quest to fix, have complicated the solution. We have to be unique. We can't all identify as alcoholics, because it doesn't describe the way we've treated the disease of self.

Either yesterday or today, part of my thinking was directed toward the concept of not regretting the past, nor wishing to shut the door on it. When overwhelmed, I felt a strong energy that was about regretting decisions and actions taken over the years. Regret is not part of the solution. I also heard a slogan for the first time. I thought I had heard most of the slogans, many times. But, I don't recall ever hearing, "it is what it is" = acceptance. Acceptance is part of the solution.

Someone also commented that they can't control other people, and can't fix their imperfections. That was part of how I treated my disease before coming into the rooms of S.L.A.A. This person continued, that it is as 24-hour-per-day job just managing me — implying that there isn't any time in the day to manage anyone else. I also heard someone say that they don't worry about what other people think, and they don't worry about pleasing people. They only have to please Higher Power, and live each 24 hours in accordance with Higher Power's plan, not theirs or anyone else's.

I aspire to treat my disease that way.

—ANONYMOUS, NO LOCATION GIVEN

Share space

Making Real Changes To Your Life

One year ago I came to my first S.L.A.A. meeting, bent and broken by a relationship that was spoiling my life, souring my parenting of a preteen girl and sapping me of money, self-esteem, friendships and the chance of love.

I quickly realized my relationship was just the latest in a life-long pattern of what I now see as “addiction to love.” My addiction took me to prison for stalking, and in and out of mental hospitals and took my daughter out of my life for four long years.

Today I am sober in S.L.A.A., but this does not feel like just another period of celibacy, where I regroup and recharge; ready for the next onslaught of the battle that was my love life. This feels like I am making real changes. I am accepting that the onslaught is waiting for me every day and it

will never leave. My disease of sex and love addiction is doing push-ups in the car park, even while I am in a meeting.

Today my program allows me to wrap God’s love around me, just for the day and not concern myself whether my disease will get me again tomorrow. Today I know that my greatest safeguard against relapse is to be fully present to my life, today now.

Today my relationships — with my child, my family, friends, colleagues — have room for them to express who they are and to express the challenges they face. I neither engage in nor run screaming from, other people’s dramas.

Today I am sober in S.L.A.A. and working daily on the solution S.L.A.A. offers, not working on the problems sex and love addiction creates. I am making

peace with my past and planning my future. But I am doing all of this in the present.

I am making real changes in my life — accepting what I have (and what I don't have) — letting serenity into my life — being calm and becoming gracious.

Today, I am unrecognizable from the screaming madwoman, locked in a police cell, holding a small baby. Today that baby is a tall, willowy, 12-year-old girl and I am a sober, calm, responsible

middle-aged mother who manages the finances for the scouts club and makes a nutritious dinner every evening — at home. Today I am content and grateful for the changes I have made. But I know my Higher Power wants more from me and more for me.

So I keep on making real changes to my life. I keep coming back. I keep working the steps and I keep on asking God for guidance, love and sobriety.

—SARAH M, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

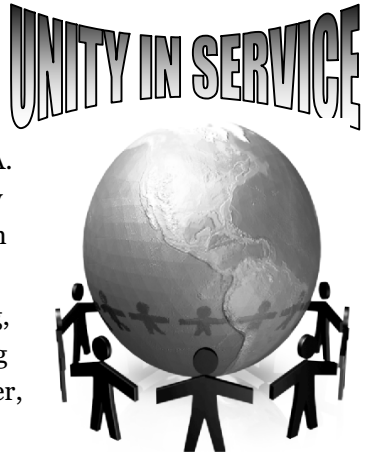
Service opportunities for *the Journal*

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.

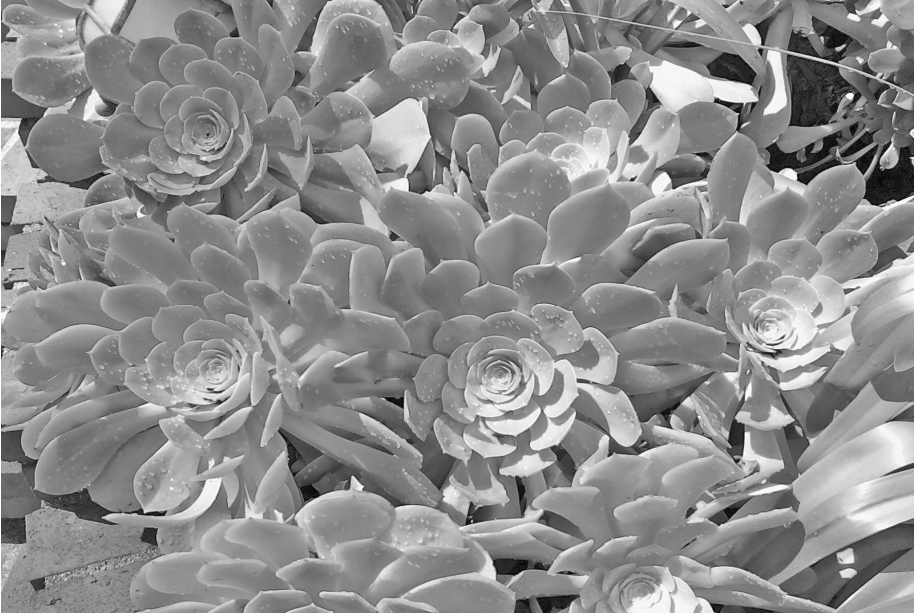
We're looking for people with writing, drawing, outreach, web design, production, and printing skills to assist in the creation of the new, deeper, more refreshing publication.

Please assist us in creatively carrying the message of recovery.

Please go to <http://www.slaa.fws.org/contact/jeditor> to submit your writing.



Recovery Is The Best Attraction



Addiction, both sexual addiction and compulsive eating, has had me in its grip for most of my life. My incredible journey has been like a roller-coaster ride. It has taught me to follow my heart rather than follow the herd.

As long as I can remember, I never fit in. I was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome when I was at school. Even before that, I was given special education because I was deemed unsuited to the normal school environment. I was always trying to eat my dinner at

school as quickly as possible, which led to my food addiction.

Also, I was sexually abused around the time of my 6th birthday. I had no idea what was going on then. Little did I know how it would affect my approach towards sex when growing up.

My life was turned upside down when I was 9 and 10. Six months after my mum gave birth to my brother, my father was killed in the Northern Ireland "troubles." We lived in a well-to-do farm with my paternal grandparents. Dad was an only child,

so soon the farm land had to be leased.

At age 11, I started secondary school. Suddenly I became attracted to girls. I had limited knowledge back then; my Mum didn't tell me about "the birds and the bees." And suddenly girls became the object of my affection. There was one girl I became really friendly with. She was my first crush. But I never plumped up the courage to ask her out during the next 5 years. That began a cycle of having platonic friendships with girls I was attracted to, but never having a relationship with them. I now know what I have is sexual anorexia.

At age 13, I developed a habit of watching adult-themed TV shows, using magazines, fantasy and masturbation — habits that would progress later on in life.

At that time there was a late night show that discussed sex. I learned new words that became the topic of conversation on the playground. The show also gave me a false impression that women were desperate.

When I was 14, it was time for General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) level. My sexual desire was suddenly cast in stone. I developed a foot fetish that would continue throughout my teens. If that wasn't confus-

ing enough, I became attracted to a first-year girl and fantasized about her when I got home. The following year, when I was 15, I fantasized about her sister. I sneaked into the junior years' bus in order to "get to know her."

After my GCSEs I did well enough to be admitted to the grammar school to do A-levels. I suddenly became overtly sexual, thinking this would please the girls there. I inadvertently admitted to my best female friend that I was giving up masturbation for lent. She took it very ill. Her cousins were also vitriolic towards me over it. But suddenly I received "legend" status amongst the boys.

There were plenty of young girls at the grammar school I was attracted to — it felt like a sexual "garden of Eden" for me. Also, there were school socials at a local nightclub. I would meet all those I knew from school there, but could never get the chance to "bag" any of them. I was never one for nightclubs.

When my upper-sixth exams arose, I went again to the house of the girls I was attracted to from the secondary school. This time I had planned to look at their feet. I was quickly chased home.

University followed when I was 18. Suddenly, I found myself

out of my depth. The women that I fancied either had steady relationships already or had their eyes on someone else. The next two years would see me fantasizing, but with no sexual contact other than masturbation. Then I discovered magazines through my blockmates, as well as using the internet for the first time. I fantasized about female celebrities.

Then during my placement year (3rd year) I was introduced to pornography. I had avoided it like the plague previously, but then suddenly I was hooked. One university mate had been forwarding pornographic images which I forwarded to my male work colleagues. Then, I was introduced to Asian pornography. I had been attracted to girls from the local Chinese community when I was at school, but little did I know how big the sex industry is in Asia. For the next 10 years or so, my time would be consumed looking at Asian pornography.

After graduation, I suddenly found myself unemployed. My time was spent looking at porn online. When I did find a job, it only lasted 6 months. My Mum had developed Parkinson's disease and I was homesick in Belfast; I worked in the civil service; and that was the seed of what

suddenly became deep-rooted resentment.

I then studied for a post-grad, but I could only afford to complete one semester. However, I still graduated with a lesser degree. I spent a lot of that time looking at pornography (by then our house had broadband available).

When I found another job, I shot myself in the foot when I admitted being a fan of Asian pornography. The legend status suddenly wore thin, with my work not being up to scratch. I was dismissed after just 4 Months into a 6-month contract.

I found brief rays of hope later that year. I received an inheritance from my grandfather, which I wasn't entitled to until my brother had turned 18. And I passed my driving test on the seventh attempt. At the age of 28 I found a new freedom.

However, that freedom was short-lived. My Mum died the following February, as a result I suffered severe depression and felt suicidal. During one particular weekend I had a cold on top of that and really felt low.

Then, shortly after my 29th birthday, I was listening to a Sunday night radio show and discovered a social networking site for recovering addicts. I signed up, initially to sort out my

eating problem, and found several aspects of my life needed improving. Prior to joining that site I had never heard of the 12-Step program of recovery — only hearing of Alcoholics Anonymous through TV shows.

I had joined a diet club initially. Ten months later; after much argument with my Gran; I started attending Overeaters Anonymous meetings.

At first, recovery was at a snail's pace as I was drifting between sponsors. After a year into the program, I committed to a particular sponsor and my recovery from eating compulsively has improved.

During that time my sexual behaviour still wasn't fully contained. I was attracted to a young girl, still in school, whose Mum worked at the local chip shop. Though I never approached the girl, I was fantasizing about her.

Also, my brother became friendly with some Americans on Skype who wanted him to visit New York with them. My Gran went ballistic and things got bad at times with rows and threats.

Eventually, when things got really bad, I said the Serenity Prayer and things cooled down. The Mum of an English guy, that my brother planned to go to America with, rang our home and that contented Gran. He

then went to New York for 2 weeks and got home safe and sound. I owe making it through this difficult time to my knowledge of the 12-Step program and applying it in my life.

Around Easter in 2010 — at age 30 — I started attending online Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous meetings on a regular basis. I need them, as there are no S.L.A.A. meetings face-to-face in Northern Ireland.

Armed with my improved knowledge of the 12-Step program my first goal was to get a sponsor. A woman from America offered to sponsor me. I accepted and we get in contact via e-mail and Skype.

I am now roughly 3 months abstinent from masturbation and pornography. Hopefully, one day at a time; I remain abstinent. Hopefully, I can start dating soon and develop a lasting relationship with a woman I can respect, and who respects me.

Thank God for recovery. I wouldn't be here without it. God's light is "a light that never goes out" to quote the famous Smiths' song. I've never lost my faith, amidst all the maelstrom that went on in my life. Recovery is, indeed, the greatest attraction of all.

— DESMOND, UNITED KINGDOM.

We Need Others To Recover

Prior to entering S.L.A.A., I had believed that my recovery from obsessive compulsive behaviors was something that I could handle by myself. I was certain that I could figure things out and come to a solution for my unmanageable life through the power of my own intellect.

I failed miserably and eventually came to that point of surrender commonly referred to as a bottom. It was only after I began to realize that any hope of recovery would require assistance from others (or at least from something other than me), that I came to my first S.L.A.A. meeting.

The Fifth tradition refers to the “message” we carry to the sex and love addict that still suffers. What message did I receive? That I was not alone and that recovery was possible if I followed the Steps that many had successfully taken before me.

I entered the program an addict, and by definition, was self-centered and self-absorbed. I learned that the best (and perhaps only) way to get out of myself is through helping others. This is, in fact the “primary purpose” of all S.L.A.A. gatherings, and the Fifth Tradition is a statement of both group responsibil-

ity as well as individual accountability. We gather together to ensure our own sobriety as well as to help others.

Either purpose is less likely to be reached without the other. As members of a non-professional organization, we have found that we are in a unique position to help others who suffer from the same affliction as we do. No one can better understand and give hope to a shame-riddled sex and love addict than one who has been there before.

When I look at the twelve traditions as a whole, the “message” behind Tradition Five is simply that above all, I am accountable to myself and to my fellow sex and love addict.

True help comes from a place of loving authenticity, helping others for its own sake, not for credit or admiration. Whether I am working with a sponsee or performing service at the fellowship-wide level, I am most effective if I do it humbly and in accordance with what I have been taught by those who have gone before me.

The Traditions help me set aside my personal ego and prevent me from placing my personality above the principles of the program.

As is often said, this is a “we”

program rather than an “I” program.

From the Fifth Tradition I receive one of the most powerful

of all the program messages ... that I stay sober by helping others become sober.

—STEVE B., FLORIDA

Grandiosity And Ego Masquerading As Humility.

Twelve reasons not to contribute to *the Journal*

1. I'm afraid to share any experience, strength and hope.
2. I don't have anything good to write.
3. Other people have better recovery than I do.
4. I'm too busy; I don't have time to write.
5. I'm embarrassed: I don't want my experience, strength and hope to be printed for others to see.
6. I don't meet the sobriety requirement.
7. I'm not good at writing — it has to be perfect.
8. Other people write better than me.
9. Other people have better experience than I do.
10. I don't want to write.
11. I'll write something next week.
12. I don't want to share what I've gained.

Honesty, Openness, Willingness, The Desire To Stay Sober:

Twelve reasons to contribute to *the Journal*

1. I can choose not forget my past.
2. I have learned how valuable it is for one addict to share with another addict.
3. My recovery is as good as it needs to be.
4. I've got more time now that I'm not covering my tracks.
5. There is no shame in this spiritual journey.
6. I've been sober for several 24 hours!
7. There is no sobriety requirement for *the journal* contributions.
8. I'm good enough at writing to share with others.
9. Other people have given me what I need.
10. I'm happy to write in sobriety.
11. I've only got today.
12. I can only keep that which I give away.

Finding Humor in Sobriety



THE FIRST MEETING OF LIST ADDICTS ANONYMOUS WAS OFF TO A SLOW START.



Quotation Corner

“This addict’s problem with instant gratification is that it takes too long”.

“Addicts are the only people who get mad at others and get back at them by burning down their own house!”

“Getting involved in a relationship in early sobriety is like putting Miracle Gro on all my character defects.”

“Resentments are like stray cats. If you don’t feed them, they’ll go away.”

“I was a legend in my own mind.”

“The scariest thing I can say to my sponsor is ‘I’ve been thinking.’“

“There is a God and I’m not it.”

“You can’t save your face and save your butt at the same time.”

“My inner child’s a juvenile delinquent.”

“Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.”

“Easy does it, but do it.”

“The first time I experienced serenity, I thought I lost my mind.”

— CONTRIBUTED BY ERIC EE.

Calendar of Events

Phone Meetings

There are numerous phone meetings. A good place to start is the S.L.A.A. F.W.S. website: http://directory.slaafws.org/intl_phone

Telemeeting Series

Skills for Healthy Loving

3rd Saturdays Monthly 11 a.m. Pacific time email: healthyrelationships@slaafws.org

All Aspects of Sponsorship

2nd Saturdays Monthly 9 a.m. Pacific time

Sept. 10

Cross addicted Sponsee

Oct. 8

Differences in Higher Power

Nov. 12

The Anorectic Sponsee

Dec. 10

Giving Directions

Jan. 14, 2012

Sponsorship Formats

Feb. 11, 2012

Sponsor Self-Care

March 10, 2012

Recovery Partners

April 14, 2012

Promoting Sponsorship

Upcoming Events

Sept. 24

Cincinnati area intergroup presents 25th anniversary celebration of recovery "You are not alone." 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Quaker meeting house, Cincinnati, OH. There will be topic meetings, lunch, meditation with singing bowls, and a panel presentation.

www.slaacincinnati.org

513-852-9459

Sept. 30-Oct. 2, Dec. 16-18

S.L.A.A. 12 Step Weekend Retreats in Chester, Vermont

www.slaanei.org/vtweekend.html

Nov. 25 — Nov. 27,

15th Annual Spiritual Renewal & Recovery Retreat. Serra Retreat Center, Malibu, CA

www.slaalosangeles.org

S.L.A.A. is here to help!

Go to www.slaafws.org

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.

WARNING
RESTRICTED AREA
KEEP OUT

**KEEP
OUT**



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