

theJournal

Issue # 161

Single Issue \$4

*Celebrating
40 years
of S.L.A.A.*

Attitude of Gratitude

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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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.

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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, which transcends any personal differences of sexual orientation or gender identity.

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.

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Letter From the Editor

Letter From the Editor

Dear Reader,

I really enjoyed this issue of the Journal because it gave me some really great ideas about how to stay out of negativity. I would like to follow some of the advice and send out a gratitude list to my sponsees every day. I think that's a great tool to help battle the negative voices in my head. When the voice in my head says that my job sucks I remember to be grateful that I have a job.

When I want to complain about driving across town to speak at a meeting, I remember to be grateful for a Fellowship that saved my life. And I take note of the good feeling I get after sharing in a meeting of S.L.A.A. I hear people say they are grateful recovering sex and love addicts and I remember that not everyone gets this gift.

We are the lucky ones. We may be in the pain of withdrawal, but we can hold our heads up and be grateful for the freedom from the bondage of our disease today. Gratitude can keep us sober and remind us that there is a Higher Power in our lives that wants good things for us. I hope this issue helps to bring some gratitude into your day.

Lisa C., Managing Editor, *the Journal*

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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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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.

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Question of the Day

& Answers from Yesterday

WHAT TOOLS DO YOU USE TO GET INTO AND STAY IN AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE?

I walk back thru the things that I didn't think I had. I look at what I have now and see how I had those things all along.

— **P.A.**

Working with newcomers helps me to stay grateful that things have gotten better. Also, having sponsees reminds me of where I came from. It shows me how far I have come and how bad it could be if I were to return to my addiction. And my sponsor reminds me how much progress I've made over the years whenever I get down on myself.

— **Anonymous, Largo, FL**

I write a gratitude list and I read my sponsor's gratitude list which he sends out over email each day.

— **Richard, Los Angeles**

There are 2 essential tools for me to get into and stay in an attitude of gratitude: 1) Starting each day with a prayer, thoughtfully thanking God for my blessings and 2) Keeping a gratitude journal. I try to list at least 3 new things each morning for which I am grateful.

— **Jeremy, San Antonio**

Gratitude list each morning. 11th Step. Time with nature (especially the ocean). *Practice. *Practice.* Practice.* Outreach calls. Mindfulness. My drive to work. The blessings.

— **Anna Y, Thousand Oaks**

Outreach.

— **Graham, Los Angeles**

I have to stay in that attitude in order to stay sober and serene. That means my 10th, 11th and 12th Steps have to include honesty about my disposition and whether I'm doing what I need to do to stay grateful – pray, clean house and help others.

— **Steve B., Ft. Lauderdale**

Gratitude is a muscle that I build on a daily basis – a “turning over” process that I use when I feel irritated, depressed, or angry. I try to find the positive in every situation – no matter how small.

— **Diana, Oakland**

I attend a speaker meeting.

— **Anonymous, Seattle**

The Question of the Day from the last issue was, “What tools do you use to get into and stay in an attitude of gratitude?” Here are some wonderful responses for your enjoyment. They are not presented in any particular order. The next two questions are: Issue #162 — Sex and Love addiction and PTSD — “How has S.L.A.A. helped you discover/deal with PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder).” — The deadline for submissions is July 15, 2016; and Issue #163 — Top line behavior — “Please share your experience, strength and hope around defining and maintaining top line behavior.” The deadline for submissions is Sept. 15, 2016. Please send answers to www.slaafws.org.

When I start to find myself thinking of being proud of something I’ve done, it reminds me that to remain spiritually fit, I must focus on gratitude, not pride. I express my gratitude thru service.

— **Andrew H., KY**

Prayer and meditation. By doing service work I help create unity in the community. It is gratifying.

— **Jack S., Seminole, FL**

I Turn my thinking around to positive thinking. Keep myself in the moment. Stop and look around myself and see what I have!

— **Danette S., Seminole, FL**

I pray, do a mental gratitude list, listen to newcomers share and appreciate “what it was like” and “what it is like now.”

— **Suzanne D., Los Angeles**

Prayer and meditation. I have an affirmations calendar and sculpted rocks with words on them.

— **Gabriel G., Sacramento**

Seeing how hard others in this fellowship have worked to get where they are allows me to appreciate how far we’ve all come, and how we’re all in this together.

— **Madeline S., Los Angeles**

I reflect on the Voyager 1 photograph of Earth as the satellite was leaving the Solar System. Earth is only a pale blue dot in that photograph and it makes me truly grateful that I get to experience life in this miraculous universe.

— **Jase S., Monterey, CA**

I pray in the morning, before my meals and in the evening. My evening prayer is especially important for my attitude. In my daily life, I try to enjoy the good parts of it. I do a daily gratitude list and send it out to 15 other people.

— **Diane S. Pittsfield, MA**

Slow down and focus on the positives in my life.

— **Angela, Fort Lauderdale**

I use the “happy app” on my phone to keep a daily gratitude list. When I share, I try to always end with words of gratitude.

— **Jaki Jo, London, UK**

Question of the Day

Gratitude is a core piece of my recovery. I take an inventory very early in my day of all the blessings in my life for which I have to be grateful. When I feel the need, I take my “gratitude inventory” — as many times as I must throughout the day. When something happens that I don’t like, I look within the event to see if there’s anything for which to be grateful — even if only the smallest thing.

— **Natalie, Chicago**

I use the tool of reflection to get into an attitude of gratitude. Reflecting back onto the havoc and spiritual bankruptcy of my past often catapults me back into gratitude.

— **Jason S., Sacramento, CA**

Daily gratitude journal — 5 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Slogan — OK is OK. Gratitude. Meditation.

— **Anonymous**

I do a daily email to a group of friends. Over the years it has changed from bullet points to full on blogging. However, it helps me relate to my personal situation when I feel distressed. I feel that this tool helps me be grateful at all times.

— **Juanita, Hyattsville, MD**

I know historically I was comfortable in chaos, drama and lack. Whenever I find myself seeking these states, I remind myself of all I have in my life with a miracle journal.

— **Kim, Los Angeles**

For me, it’s action — taking action. Gratitude lists have never really done it for me, personally. They almost always feel forced. But when I put one foot in front of the other, however difficult, I inevitably discover something to be grateful for after a few steps.

— **Adam, Los Angeles**

Service is my biggest gratitude tool. It’s especially effective when I’m able to put aside any resentments, which seem to be the great blocker of gratitude (as well as of abundance). In service, I’m often finding myself putting my attention on something that winds up feeling incredibly worthwhile. It works from the inside out.

— **Anonymous, Hollywood, CA**

I’ve dedicated an area of my house for “thanks.” Everything in it says “thanks.” I found a 12 min. gratitude meditation video online that I do every day. It guides me through saying thanks for things I take for granted like: a roof over my head. It’s so easy to go into victim mode. Giving thanks for even the little things keeps me on track.

— **M, Los Angeles**

I pray and ask Higher Power to help me focus on Higher Power and me, our relationship. I do a gratitude list and look up to the sky.

— **Elizabeth, Los Angeles**

A splendid summer unveils its physicality, and I am immensely grateful. This edition focuses on tools to maintain gratitude. For me, as a grateful recovering sex and love addict at the impetus of each morning, I write ten things I am grateful for. And I email them to a recovery friend. Additionally, I meditate by inhaling and exhaling through my nose. This enables me to obtain centeredness and the divine from within. Frequently, I call three friends a day and talk and laugh. Serving other fellow sex and love addicts through emailing, texting, and encouraging them gives me a great sense of gratitude.

I want to encourage you to observe your environment and find things that you are grateful for. Perhaps you are grateful for recovery meetings, friends, sanity, laughter, joy, swimming, water, ice, playing basketball, reading an intriguing novel, movies, God, family, friends, gardens, etc.

To be grateful enables your mind, soul, and body to be in harmony with yourself, Higher Power, and your fellow man. Gratitude enables you to be fully present to you, friends, and family.

— **Anonymous**

I use my nightly “progress, not perfection list,” as a daily reminder of my many blessings, while also noting what I can do to stay on my spiritual path, as a recovering co-addict — which means “keeping my side of the street clean.”

It helps keep me humble, and grateful, “one day at a time.”

— **“K. C.” H, of WV**

Prayer before falling asleep: “Thank you God for another sober day”. Daily gratitude list -to be alive and kicking, still able to work, go to meetings and do service as I approach 70.

— **Rita H., Montreal.**

I create rituals to remember my gratitude; daily prayer, reading and recovery journaling help me stay in positive spirit. I also try to live in the present moment and communicate with my Higher Power throughout the day.

— **Shawn A, Montreal**

Gratitude for the ABCs of S.L.A.A. AKA Abbreviations and Acronyms

I am so grateful that I came into the rooms of S.L.A.A. and stayed.

Mind you, heading to that downtown church for a noon meeting after a major snowstorm that first time, I told myself that maybe a year, two at the most and I would be cured. I would know enough to handle a relationship and learn the difference between lust and love. Instead I learned the ABCs of S.L.A.A. and all the wonderful abbreviations and acronyms of sobriety and service.

A close friend of mine from high school once commented about the ABCs after my name on my business card. It was a joke of course, but over the years I obtained many degrees as I found education to be a way out of the slums, the incest and molestations, the neglect and the childhood traumas. I also found my many addictions as a way to cope (until they all stopped working and I had to stop medicating). I was almost six years sober from alcohol and drugs when it hit me that I might have a sex addiction. The 12-Step program seemed to be working for me so another one for sex addiction would help. At least I could check it out.

What I found from the first meeting to my first call to the F.W.S. Office in Boston was a warm welcome. There was a ton

of information like “Super Starter Kits”, 100s of CDs from International Recovery Conventions (IRCs), a dozen pamphlets and much more at the office. There was draft literature in the making at the Annual Business Meetings (ABMs) and events posted on the Fellowship-Wide Services (F.W.S.) website: 12 Step Retreats in Chester, VT and Winslow, ME plus other conference days/weekends like Healing Heart in Seattle, WA, the Florida Roundup in Clearwater, FL, not to forget the Easier Softer Way weekend at DaySpring, Ellendale/Parrish, FL.

The ABCs of service began as I attended meetings regularly and helped start new meetings in 2002 and 2003. I became an Intergroup Representative (IR) for my home group, then chair of the Dependants affectifs et sexuels anonymes (DASA)/S.L.A.A. Intergroup followed by election as the delegate to the Annual Business Conference/Meeting (ABC/M) in 2003 (Boston) and 2005 (San Francisco). The service commitment of a delegate is to serve on at least one Conference Committee: I selected the Conference Steps and Traditions Committee (CSTC) and the Conference Healthy

Relationships Committee (CHRC). I also served on the Board Public Relations Committee (BPRC) as a non-board member.

I had a slip after four years of sobriety and I had to go back to the basics. I must confess the first few days after my slip the thought crossed my mind to fire my sponsor and quit S.L.A.A. But when I wanted to drink, I knew I had to commit at a much deeper level. I stopped service at the Conference/Board level and focused on Steps 1, 2, and 3 used in the draft *Renewal of Sobriety (ROS)* pamphlet with my sponsor. One of the consequences of slipping was to be honest about it at meetings. I also had to tell my sponsees and we agreed it was best that they find other sponsors.

In my addictions I spent a lot of money and time acting out so I became willing to do the same for my recovery and my fellowship. I attended the 2003 IRC in Clearwater, FL and again in 2005 in San Francisco, CA. It was truly amazing to see hundreds of sex and love addicts from all over the world gathered in one place sharing their experience, strength and hope with each other. I missed the IRC in 2006 when S.L.A.A. celebrated its 30th Anniversary but I am so happy to



have the audio recordings (CDs).

In 2007 I served on a board committee again as a non-board member...this time the Board Governance Nominating Committee (BGNC). In 2008 I became a member of the Board of Trustees (BOT). I truly felt like I was back at university getting a degree in business management for non-profit organizations. It

was one of the most enriching and comfort-zone stretching times in my 22 years of service that I have ever done. The spiritual principles of the 12 Traditions and the then draft 12 Concepts really deepened my sobriety.

I attended the 2008 IRC in Clearwater, FL which was right after the ABM and did a road trip

to the IRC in Houston, TX in August 2015. To have the 40th Anniversary IRC in Boston where it all began with only a five-hour drive from Montreal is the best news of all. Am I grateful for S.L.A.A.? Yes, I am. And I want it to always be there with all its ABCs, a.k.a. abbreviations and acronyms.

— **Rita H., Montreal**

Tools for 38 Years of Sobriety



This year S.L.A.A. will be 40 years old, and I have just celebrated 38 years of sobriety.

My own celebration was very quiet so far, just myself and my Higher Power, with which I have developed a truly intimate relationship, which requires equal amounts of listening and talking. The most profound change in how I live my life today is simple: commitment to continue seeking more and better honesty with God, myself, and others.

I only found S.L.A.A. because one person reached out to me and told me *his* story, of which far too much was my story as well. That confronted me with the truth of my compulsive behavior and its consequences, even though nearly 5 years of daily meetings had kept me free of alcohol, chemical substitutes, compulsive eating and bulimia (with 6 trips through the 12 Steps). Yet my life was again unmanageable with my obsession with pornography, masturbation, and adrenaline-pumping, risky, and anonymous sex.

On March 26th, 1978 I began withdrawal from that 29 year-

long obsession, raging at God but pleading for help anyway. How could I have foreseen that my journey would become an adventure of discovery! It was only the hope given freely by the Fellowship of S.L.A.A. that enabled me to face my terror of vulnerability and surrender my denial that I needed anything from anyone.

Sometimes I have had to put contact with someone or some place or some behavior on my bottom line while using the Steps to cut through the self-deception of obsession. But often those lost their power of temptation entirely, or reconciliation replaced restriction. In 2009, a 14-year partnership ended in chaos, recriminations, and bitter regret. But Higher-Powered inspiration led me to and through the 12 Steps *with* a sponsor for the first time since my first years in S.L.A.A. And a new relationship with that same person has emerged as I was able to face my shortcomings without giving myself permission to repeat them. In this relationship,

as in all the others I am in now, I can keep to a higher standard of honesty while listening to others without reacting to what they have to say. I can choose to respond with civility, and with forgiveness up front for the human limitations we both have. I offer those things to myself, and therefore I can offer that in my relationships as well.

I now recognize many ways in which I avoided intimacy in long term commitment to anything or anyone except sobriety itself. Ruefully, I now see that I crafted those barriers out of self-justification and blame directed anywhere except at my own defects of character. I even used my own well-intended involvement in S.L.A.A. service to avoid noticing my well-disguised self-dishonesty.

The rewards for not crossing current, if evolving, bottom lines have been amazing, filling my life with a consistently growing sense of peace and ease, and openness to both joy and challenge with a minimum of fear. Each time I had to make the commitment not

to act on newly discovered patterns of sex and love addiction, and now emotional and spiritual anorexia, I found a new level of feeling 100% in recovery, even recovered. At those times I leaked gratitude from every pore, not realizing that the next challenges to my recovery would bring new suffering and another painful trudge through the 12 Steps, but amazingly, new levels of happiness each time exceeding my older dreams.

I know that I can stop reaching whenever I decide to be contented with *this* “Top line,” but so far I have always decided to take the Steps that lead up toward a new level of acceptance of myself and others one more time. The journey of discovery led me to sharing my story both before and in recovery with others around the world. Now I have discovered a small cottage with cats, contentment, work that I love, and new commitment to what is now a nearly 20 year journey with my partner while living separately to insure autonomy, responsibility, and choice will never be lost again. And it only costs me a tithe-worth of service at local meetings.

This week I will go to a meeting where I do not usually go and perhaps no one will know me, to share my gratitude for 38 years of progressive sobriety. At my regular meetings I will just get current, as usual, and thank everyone for helping me stay sober one more day. I will tell them I am not afraid to be happy today, that I try to laugh at my mistakes and keep trying to do better. I will say I have learned to respect the addiction, but not fear it; to feel 100% sober today, and to enjoy as much life, love, and laughter as I can be part of in a single day. I intend to continue dancing as I walk hand in hand

with the Fellowship and with God, confident that we will get wherever “there” is, together. I know I can stay sober alone, but not joyfully in discovery that way. I have learned to keep close at hand the tools of keeping it simple, living one day at a time, asking for serenity, courage, and humility. I celebrate the time I have been on the journey, not the date of my last “do-over” or newest bottom line, while using my newest discovery about myself so I do not need a new do-over on the same problem. I know I will keep coming back, and that I am not afraid to be happy if I am sober right now, for this one day.

WHAT I THINK THE THEME IS: TOOLS FOR BUILDING A LONG-TIMER LIFE

I am truthfully incredulous that one-day-at-a-time has accumulated into 38 years of above-the-bottom-line living. I am 100% convinced that I owe my past, present, and future life to my sometimes shaky commitment to intimacy with the nearly 40 year old Fellowship of S.L.A.A.. I am rather amused by the way I procrastinated about this writing, and how successful that was in avoiding intimacy with the topic itself. That is my current challenge to sobriety – anorexia about my anorexia for most things involving emotion. Really tricky. I think the A.A. folk said something about that.

So here is the best I can do for now; the tools I tried that worked, worked for a while, and didn’t work at all.

• The Serenity Prayer: worked and still working. At first I needed to leave “God” out of it, or allow myself to put “God damn it!” either in front of or behind the other “God.” But at least it did always remind me that there

were three categories of things and not just one thing that would do what I wanted if I just tried hard enough and was willing to do anything to make it happen. Picturing that nicely printed poster of it found in so many A.A. meetings and even on greeting cards was (and is) also an effective blockage between my intentions and the pornographic images I rehearsed for so many years. I picture the poster and read it slowly with my lips moving, and the porno disappears. Long term, this prayer is a guide to self-change, and a warning about the importance of honesty with myself.

• Live and let live: I needed this a lot at first, but had to translate it into “Mind your own damn business and character defects!” I could not use it as written until I learned I was going to live without my addiction and discovered that I had no idea what “living” really was, and had to ask everyone I knew. That introduced me to the practice of at least elementary intimacy with other human beings.

• Easy does it: No way in this world of mine! I only know under -do or over-do, and neither feels anything resembling “easy.” I would say it, but simply could not keep it in mind for more than a nano-second. By the time I could hold onto it for a minute, I was already practicing one day at a time.

• One day at a time: I believe this is the most effective tool in my toolbox. It slows me down. I can take part of this day to consider alternatives, but only those I can use today or plan for tomorrow, unless I can put it on a calendar. The Serenity Prayer works better for me as a barrier to immediate addictive temptations. When that is dealt with, I seem to be able to handle

one day of real reality.

- Keep it Simple: Sigh. MY specialty seems to be keeping it complicated. But I have found it very useful when talking to others. It is much easier for me to see someone else's situation clearly enough to identify what is really important and what isn't. So I had to ask others to identify "simple" for whatever my current issue was. I could hear it from them. I just could not apply it to myself.

- The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions: Bingo. These needed to become and have become the framework for everything I do. Without them my self-will reliably gets me into trouble and makes fuzzy or faulty choices. Unfortunately they were like diets – no immediate results except attempts to avoid what I needed to do. I loved the results of the Steps, but rarely enjoyed the process of doing them. But they worked like a fitness routine: the more I used them the better they worked and the more lasting the results. The principles of the Traditions were just as important. I needed that guidance for my relationships with the rest of the world whether it was one person or a whole bunch. The Traditions showed me how to be "non-professional," just one human among others, all equal in value no matter how different in talents or integrity and equal in responsibility for outcomes. I was just plainly and simply, nobody's judge, and nobody was allowed to put any kind of price tag on me. I am a volunteer in my own life and no one owes me a paycheck. And that is ditto for everyone else.

- Fellowship: This vital, absolutely necessary tool is limited by the trust we collect together, and by the reality that all of us seem to need at least

some kinds of repair or maintenance at any given time. Besides that, like a bunch of mismatched toothed gears, we don't always fit or work well together. But when we get coordinated, our collective strength is unmatched! I need it and it needs me.

- Sponsors: I do a lot better when I have one. It is practice in intimacy in a small group: me, thee, and a Higher Power. In my middle two decades I got along using the Steps and getting current at meetings as if they were my sponsors. Through that time sponsoring others kept me solidly in the Program. But finding someone to sponsor me through the 12 Steps in a structured approach in my 35th year of sex and love addiction sobriety brought me to a whole new understanding of my emotional and spiritual anorexia, and into a whole new level of recovery.

- Writing/journaling: This made my spinning thoughts, intentions, motives, and reservations stand still. It put them outside of myself, so I could look back at them later from the outside and get a better perspective and understanding of myself and how I was operating in my world. I was able to teach myself a great deal about honesty with myself and others this way, and even saved money because I could often be a therapist to myself.

- Personal slogans and wise words: These are very individual, one of the gifts of letting my journey become one of discovery. They may or may not be of any use to anyone else.

I Tenth Step myself when I get current at a meeting or with a program friend.

I need to thank people at meetings for being there to help me stay and grow in sobriety. I

owe them.

Don't be afraid to be happy right now even if it is threatening to be a "sobriety sucks sometimes" day.

Laugh at my mistakes but try not to repeat them.

Respect the addiction, but don't fear it. H.P and I can handle it together with a little help from our friends.

I should enjoy as much life, love, and laughter as I can find in a single day.

I tell myself, "Don't just trudge or just walk this journey of recovery. Dance it!"

I know I can stay sober alone, but not joyfully in discovery that way. I need to keep my toolbox close at hand.

I celebrate the time I have been on the journey, not the date of my last mistake.

Bottom lines are my protection from slippery slopes and floods. They need to be built higher or in different directions, and sometimes opened as the strength and direction the threat is coming from changes.

I only have to deal with anything right now. This day, this hour, this minute.

I will keep coming back. I want to keep coming back. It is really cheap life insurance.

— Anonymous



Happy 40th to S.L.A.A.!



Happy 40th to S.L.A.A.! “Attitude of Gratitude” is a wonderful topic to discuss during this celebratory year. As I approach what I hope is my 25th anniversary of S.L.A.A. sobriety, it’s hard not to feel grateful. Here are a few reasons:

S.L.A.A. existed in western Massachusetts in 1991. There were several meetings per week in the area I lived in with members who had quite a bit of sobriety. The group was welcoming, even to someone

who really did not want to be there. I did not want to be a sex and relationship addict. I was already sober from alcohol and drugs, which meant I did not drink or use. I was afraid of what sobriety looked like in S.L.A.A. and that I wouldn’t be able to maintain such sobriety.

The group was patient. All I was able to do when I was brand new was to talk and think about how my boyfriend had dumped me. Nobody told me to shut up – I don’t know how they survived!

• Our Basic Text – OMG! From Step One: “Like a cattle prod jabbed into someone who is exhausted and dazed, an addictive hit jolted us into a temporary illusion that we were alive and really living.” That sentence really hit home. But then there was: “If our primary addictive problem was obsessive love dependency, we separated from or severed ties with our ‘partners.’” That sentence was like a kick in the stomach – even though he had already dumped me! And from the wonderful

Withdrawal Chapter that I must have read 100+ times: “Regardless of which pattern is yours, *it has to stop*.”

- Withdrawal. I did not view suicide as an option because I was afraid I’d just be reincarnated as me on the same day, so I had to go through withdrawal. I didn’t like it and was sure I wouldn’t survive it, but at least the pain of withdrawal kept me desperate enough to stay sober in the beginning. I had never experienced anything like it and will do everything short of suicide to not have to go through it again. Eventually withdrawal showed me I could live without sex, which made me far less desperate. Now it serves as a reminder of what I’d have to go through if I survived acting out. I do wonder how our addict predecessors survived withdrawal prior to having an understanding fellowship and the ability to apply the 12 Steps to their addiction. Of course, obviously, many did not survive.

- Service. I knew that service

work helped in my other program, so I tried to do what I could in our program. Does service work? Perhaps not for everyone but it certainly helps me.

- Meditation — are you crazy? Wasn’t that just for the spiritually adept? But I was willing to do anything — even meditation. That 30 minutes per day 6-7 days per week has been and continues to be an important part of my sobriety and peace of mind. Meditation helps me to learn how to live with myself, which is probably all I was really looking for.

- Examples of healthy relationships. I was completely celibate for many years prior to meeting my spouse. This gave me the opportunity to learn how to have intimate friendships, which has helped me to be in a much healthier relationship than the one I had with my qualifier.

- The *Journal*. How is it that so many comments and stories in the *Journal* hit home? It’s a wonderful and life-saving

publication.

- Getting current. What a wonderful tool! Because I had to learn to get current in meetings, my feelings are far more accessible to me now. Plus, S.L.A.A. allowed me to share these feelings in a safe environment. Now, with a lot of prayer and support, I can share my feelings with my spouse, just as if I’m getting current.

In addition to the above, my Higher Power and the Steps are incorporated in my daily life. I also don’t mean to minimize the Traditions, Concepts, or one day at a time. To me, the items that I’ve listed all work together.

The bottom line is that when I walked into S.L.A.A., I couldn’t stop obsessing. After getting sober, working the Steps, going to meetings and getting through withdrawal, everything got better, including my thinking. Today, living life as a sober man makes it easier for me to maintain an attitude of gratitude.

— Anonymous

Happy and Proud to be a Member of S.L.A.A.

It seems almost impossible that S.L.A.A. has been in existence for 40 years! It has been a very important part of my life for almost 20 years.

I went to my first ABM meeting 16 years ago. I remember coming home from that meeting enthused and greatly impressed by the wonderful people who attended the meeting. I remember telling my home group that having attended the meeting

made me feel “proud to be a sex addict.” That brought smiles and chuckles, but that is the way I felt and I still feel proud to be a part of the organization, although not happy with the behavior that necessitated becoming a part of the organization.

I have had many fond recollections over these years — too many to recount here. I have attended 16 straight Annual Business Meetings, all of the

International Recovery Conventions, more than 5,000 meetings, and spent six years on the Board of Trustees. I have made many friends in the program who continue to enrich my life.

My hope is that the next 40 years will help bring recovery to countless others who need our support.

— Roger R., San Diego

Priceless Lessons

I will illustrate how gratitude saved me from a sourpuss attitude earlier this year.

I work as an independent contractor and my main client and I decided to part ways. So I had some free time and started looking for other clients. A “super nice” vendor who had serviced one of my previous accounts set me up with another client. Boy, was I happy — at first.

All was hopeful and I gave the new company a discount hoping to start a lengthy relationship with this company, like I had with the previous client.

All started unraveling when the company talked about a long-term relationship but when it came time to talk about putting a contract together, they were just silent.

So I was committed to finish the preliminary work. The friend who hooked me up with this company assured me the company was solid financially and would pay me for my work.

That was in January and I have not received any funds yet.

How I stay in gratitude in a time like this when money is tight for all (and tighter for me) is that I cannot allow one bad situation to muddy the waters of my attitude.

People like to hire and work with others who are fun, sunny and enthusiastic.

I have sent the company messages of gratitude for the lessons I have learned with my short exposure to them.

I now will not start a job with a company without a contract in place. That lesson was worth the money. Also, it shed some light

about the real type of person that “super nice” vendor was. I have pulled back from all communication from this person. Again, another layer of gratitude is when people truly reveal who they are underneath a “nice façade.”

The good news is I have headed in another direction and all looks hopeful. I am grateful that I have tools like daily meditation and prayer. I have been regularly attending meetings. I have faith in a Higher Power who I believe is helping make ends meet with my bills until I get more financially stable. I have used the down time to learn more about financial markets and better ways to invest my nest egg. Finally, I have had the opportunity to work a number of small jobs. It’s been a blessing to serve clients who truly appreciate what I bring to the world.

Two big psychological lessons I have learned in the down time:

- Lesson One: I got a book on the psychological “shadow” part of the psyche. This book had a great number of exercises. I took the time to do them ALL and I have learned from this book how I have consistently “shot myself in the foot” by sabotaging myself in unconscious ways. This helped me shed more light on working with the company above.

- Lesson Two: The lesson of what the “Drama Triangle” is. My past several attempts at intimate relationships would have turned into “relationship addictions” if they had fully bloomed. I realize from my family of origin that I have been playing the “Drama



Triangle” both in work and intimate relationships. This has been priceless. I strongly recommend that all females look into this since it is females who 9 times out of 10 are left with the “short end of the stick” in these situations. Another reason for being grateful is that I now see that the client that I parted ways with had been playing this “Drama Triangle” with me. I knew that “all was not good.” But to now see my part in the mess with such clarity has been priceless.

I started a women’s only S.L.A.A. meeting and am grateful today after a long time of wondering if there would ever be a group of women getting together. March was the second anniversary of the group and I can finally report there now is a very small core who attend this meeting and I have been blessed with oodles of unconditional love for starting this group. I give gratitude to my Higher Power that this is finally a success.

Sincerely,

—Lois T., Cincinnati, Ohio

Share space

What Recovery Means

I recently reflected on what recovery has meant for me. The minute I stopped acting out a calmness started to settle over my life. Life in the addiction was so manic. Actually this new feeling of calmness and groundedness goes a long way towards keeping me from acting out. I don't want to lose this peace. I don't want to muddle my thoughts with sexual obsession. The insights I am gaining into myself are so exciting. Because I am no longer medicating and escaping, I am starting to work through the feelings I am running from. I have started to literally thaw out.

From a cold, calculating, unfeeling addict who used others, I have changed into a warm, caring person who is feeling his emotions, connecting with and helping others. It literally is a miracle. As I get further into my recovery, my bonds to the people in my S.L.A.A. groups have become even stronger. I am part of something much larger than myself. I can be vulnerable and honest. I won't be hurt. As a matter of fact, in S.L.A.A. I am accepted unconditionally and loved for who I am. S.L.A.A. is my new family. They know everything about me — my fears, my shame, my joys. I feel safe. I

feel loved. Finally I am home!

When I entered S.L.A.A. I realized that I was not alone, as what people were saying resonated with me. I felt safe and accepted, like I finally belonged. Through sharing, my faulty addictive thinking was challenged. Finally, I let go and admitted that I couldn't do this on my own — I needed help. As I gained sobriety, I started to feel so much calmer. I wasn't waking myself up in the middle of the night to masturbate anymore. The obsessive sexual thoughts that the hook-up apps whipped into a frenzy, quickly started to subside. I still have periods of sexual thoughts but it is nothing like the torment at the peak of the hook-up app siege. I no longer feel the utter despair of being powerless to protect myself by refusing to use protection when I have sex, as I was driven to get the most intense high possible.

Since I'm no longer acting out, I'm now being forced to deal with the childhood traumas and feelings that the addiction was keeping buried. In spite of the reemerging pain, overall I feel so alive. I'm being vulnerable and learning to trust in therapy, with my sponsor and at S.L.A.A. meetings. My Higher Power moves through these meetings.



They are a blessing and a miracle as to how they've changed me. I am no longer hopelessly defective, lonely and hell-bent on avoiding getting close to people or the feelings of my past. I am vulnerable and open to love. That's what it really is all about — love — love of yourself, love of others, and love of this beautiful world that our Higher Power has blessed us with. Through S.L.A.A., I'm finally learning to love. I am so grateful for this program.

— Craig G.

Tradition 4

It has been an issue in some of my groups in Sacramento whether to allow outside literature or to promote outside events. To me, as someone with experience in other 12-Step fellowships, it has been obvious that to do so was outside of Traditions. Yet as a relative newcomer to this Fellowship, I

spent the first year or so hanging back, focusing on my recovery. Eventually, I spoke up and shared my discomfort and concerns. I did some research about the Traditions and shared it. The group conscience changed and we stopped promoting outside groups or putting out their flyers. We did however keep

using the meditation book for sex and love addicts that is not approved by the Fellowship. In the end, I have had a chance to choose my battles and to learn that I can speak up, show up and let the result go.

— **Anonymous, Sacramento, CA**

Step One

I am a sex and love addict. I am powerless over that. When the urge to flirt, intrigue, posture or cheat arises, I am powerless over that. These urges are always related to me feeling some discomfort - discomfort caused by emotions, past memories, regret or perhaps someone else's behavior.

My stress switch doesn't make me crave a drink or a line of coke (although I've abused those as well). My stress switch makes me want to find someone to make me feel better.

It could be eye contact with a stranger or a full out affair. After just over a year-and-a-half in the program I now know and accept that I am powerless over this response to stress. I am

powerless over the first thought of wanting to act out my sex and love addiction. When I accept that powerlessness, I feel relief, a weight is lifted. Then I can be calm and sane enough not to act out on that thought, urge, or desire. When I was acting out - having affairs outside of my marriage, being active in the swinging lifestyle with my husband, and having unprotected sex, my life became unmanageable.

I tried to keep everything all controlled and just where I wanted it, but the truth finally came out one agonizing night. I nearly lost my marriage to the man I love dearly. I nearly broke up my family doing who knows what kind of damage to my

children, and contaminated a community of friends that was important to my whole family. I know I'm powerless over those addictions because even when I had the sense to stop, it was short lived.

The high became more important to me than living a life of integrity. I know my life became unmanageable because I couldn't do it anymore.

The pain of staying active in the addiction was greater than the pain of looking at my part and doing the deep work in this program.

— **Anonymous, Richmond, CA**

I Am a Different Person Now

This morning it hit me, as it often does, how very different I am from the woman I was nineteen months ago. What happened this morning was an event that I might have written about in my journal back then. I would have noted some flirtation, instead of what it was, a sparkling moment where I could see the difference in me in stark contrast. A very simple thing like pulling into a parking space became a moment filled with overwhelming gratitude for what God has done in my life. Nineteen months ago I would have pulled into that parking space keenly aware of the cars next to me.

Was anyone in them? If so, was it a man? If there was a man in one of the cars, I would have been keenly aware of how I parked. I would have wanted to look like I was a woman with broad experience with cars.

I would have been slightly uncomfortable about the fact my car was a Honda and not a Mercedes or Jaguar as in days of old. I would have pulled the mirror down from the visor and conspicuously checked my lipstick and hair, sneaking a glance at the stranger in the next car.

My haughty face would have broadcast a message to the man sitting in the next car. And the message would be, "Disregard this Honda, as you can see, I'm used to nicer things!"

If the man was in the very broad range of what I felt was attractive (roughly age sixteen to sixty) I would be broadcasting by my walk as I exited the car as if to say, "Don't you wish I were sitting next to you in the



passenger seat?"

Yes, all this would happen all day long each and every place I parked when a day full of errands took me away from my house, from my husband, from my integrity and into the moral wasteland of my voracious appetite for more — more men, more sex, more flirtation, more fleeting confirmation for my anorectic self-esteem.

What actually happened this morning is that I arrived at my destination, and looked for a parking place reasonably close to the entrance of the building I would be entering.

I was satisfied the cars on either side of me were parked reasonably away from any door

dinging possibility.

I turned off the radio, put my keys in my purse, my phone in my pocket, forgot to check my lipstick in the mirror and exited unceremoniously across the parking lot to my appointment.

And then it happened. That miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit when He says, "Look! See how different you are!" And my heart expands with gratitude to this program of recovery.

And I thank God for the time together with Him this morning. There I sought a place of safety in His arms where He would dismantle as He does daily, the armor of addiction that once held me captive and insane.

— Cheryl C., Phoenix, AZ

A Prayer for Health

God, please enable me to let go of all anger toward those who cannot meet my healthy needs for friendship, companionship, being listened to, listening to someone else who wants to open up and share, exchange of physical nurturing, or sexual sharing.

Please enable me to peacefully look away from those who cannot meet my needs. Help me to be open to those people who can

meet my needs. Help me to heal the feelings of sadness, grief and anger from the past that arise when my needs ARE being met. For sometimes when needs that have gone unmet for so long start to be met, those feelings arise.

Help me to feel love toward myself as I let go of those feelings. Help me into a place of being able to rejoice and feel good when my needs are being met.

Help me to know that the world is not a desolate, hostile place, but a place that is abundant with love and kindness and to know that my needs can be met through healthy relationships with healthy people. Thank you.

— Anonymous

Craving Power Led to Incarceration

Hi. My name is Lisa S. I'm 31 years old and a mother of 6 kids, 5 who are not in my custody. Only 1 is in my custody — a baby girl — age 2. I'm going to write about myself and what led me to how and where I am, which is incarcerated. At the age of 1, I was taken away from my mother and placed in a foster home. They adopted me. But since I can remember, I always knew that that family wasn't my family. So I always felt like an outcast. No matter how much they took good care of me, I never felt that they gave me the affection that I needed (even though they gave me unconditional love).

I used to always run away. At the age of 13, I started having sex. I liked the attention. And that affection was with a female. So once my adopted family found out that I was sexually active, they freaked out and sent me away. What freaked them out was my obsession with females.



During my life with that family, my real siblings and others (except Mom and Dad) would come visit me here and there with my grandparents. When it was brought to light that I was sexually active they sent me to my real family because they couldn't handle me. You would think that being with my siblings would fill the gap, but it didn't. It left me with an even bigger hole inside because now I felt rejected and abandoned by both people that I called Dad.

And the fact that they didn't ask for my opinion or give me an option added to my seeking control on top of affection and acceptance. I need to make this long story short because of my lack of access to paper.

I've been through a whole lot of rejection, betrayal, hurt, loss

etc. by both family, society, and relationships.

It got to the point where I felt nothing anymore. If someone doesn't have something to keep me entertained then I leave. I don't have time to question your feelings for me nor do I want to question myself about you.

Now don't get me wrong, I've been in love, but even then I ended up in great heartache. Just recently I was in a relationship where I decided to give my all to it and was slapped in the face. Let me get back on track. My need for control led me to my addiction and selling drugs. Holding the drug gave me so much power over people, places and things that it actually fulfilled me in every way — sexually, physically, mentally, etc.

All I had to do was pull the drug out and people would snap to attention. I loved it so much, it was sick. The things I would do or have people do for it wasn't normal — couldn't be normal.

In my head, I didn't care because all the gaps felt filled. So now after all these years of hurt I finally found what I thought was all the fulfillment or what I assumed fulfilled me just by simply selling drugs. That has led me to being in and out of this facility over the years. I'm addicted to that lifestyle of sex and drugs and the power I hold with those two elements. And I admit it to myself and to others that I'm powerless over my addictions.

— Anonymous

Dashed on the Beach

I addressed my immoral behavior in sex and love addiction within a few days of my shattering realization that I was an addict. I could not avoid writing about my behavior. Images poured into my mind one after another and I wrote fast and nearly illegibly to keep up with the stream of memories. I felt I had a noxious, life-threatening toxin inside me that had been slowly and purposefully dissolving my will and erasing any memory of

goodness.

I felt frantic to purge myself of the infidelity to my soul's purpose. I wrote pages and pages in my journal and in the following days and weeks, I added notes in the margins from the outposts of my mind — people, places and events that I had conveniently hidden from scrutiny. They were extremely uncomfortable to remember and nauseating to put into words.

I had done Steps 1, 2, and 3 within minutes of the shattering

realization that the words I was reading in the text applied, without exception and in their entirety, to me. I was confronting the diseased motive for my existence in horror. It was like flailing in the sea, drowning, but glimpsing a lighthouse in the distance. There was hope. There was safety. I just had to swim to the shore where answers would be revealed in the text and meetings, in recovery partners and through a sponsor.



In the meantime, my life took on a passion of newness. I looked around me and saw choices where none had been. Whereas before, the world was mine to exploit, now I saw stop signs and danger zones and nuclear power plants on fire. I knew, with my newly born instinct of recovery, not to go there. But looking for where to go left me unsure and

wandering. Clearly I had a new life to live. There was no other option except to pause and let God speak to me. This “pausing” consisted of waiting a full twenty-four hours before speaking or acting. This process guided me into new thought patterns and positive actions based on a Spirit-led life.

Every day was and continues to be an adventure. I begin each

morning in humble adoration for what God has done in my life. I know I am one of the lucky ones. Though I was dashed and nearly drowned on the beach, I survived to keep the light lit so others like me who swam circles around insanity and death would find life anew.

—Anonymous, Phoenix, AZ

Meditation Book Project

PLEASE CONTRIBUTE:

1. PERSONAL SHARES FOR MEDITATIONS.

2. POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS/PRAYERS.

PLEASE EMAIL SHARES TO THE *JOURNAL* WWW.SLAAFWS.ORG

Oxytocin

QUOTE: *“An entrancing moment with her, ephemeral in real time, took on the qualities of eternity, and in such a moment all awareness of how my mind had been altered was lost; I was overwhelmed.” S.L.A.A. Basic Text, Page 16*

SHARE: The research on oxytocin is very new at this time. We know that it is a chain of just nine amino acids long, but it has big effects. It speeds child delivery and results in milk letdown in mothers. It is hypothesized that increased oxytocin may create the state we associate with being loved, sexually stimulated, and socially bonded, while decreased oxytocin appears to lower our desire to socially interact or be emotionally expressive. There is even the possibility that oxytocin works outside the brain, speeding wound healing and reducing inflammation.

During my withdrawal experience I was shocked to find myself shaking and crying, my grief overwhelming, my anxiety spiked and my body hurt. Even if science isn't sure, the possibility of a biological basis to sex and love addiction/anorexia helped me believe that sex and love addiction was 'real.' I know that, for me, I needed the 12 Steps, the mottos, the tools and the supportive social network of recovering companions to produce in me the spiritual awakening and personality change needed for recovery from sex and love addiction. Too much or too little oxytocin is not too much for my Higher Power, the program and me.

Sincerely submitted,
Nomad in OR

You Mean I Can Go to the International Recovery Convention (IRC) in Boston this August?

Even though I'm newly sober and kind of clueless ...By Betsy L



Perhaps you're like me and have heard the acronyms "IRC" and "ABM" thrown around during announcement time at meetings for a couple of months now. Some convention? In Boston? In August?

What is it ... and can I go even though I'm a relative newcomer? Can you go?

So at the Spring Gathering in Newton in April, I asked long-time S.L.A.A. member Rita H. from Montreal to tell me more about it from her experience. In short, she said it was truly "a life-changing event" for her and that she heartily encourages any member of S.L.A.A. whether they have one day, one month, one year or any amount of time in recovery to take part.

IRC stands for **International Recovery Convention** and it takes place every other year in different locations around the U.S. Groups from the U.K. and Australia have expressed interest in perhaps hosting someday, but, for now, "international" means S.L.A.A. members from anywhere in the world are welcome to attend. So far, registrations have come in from Canada, Poland, and Israel and it's still early!

ABM stands for **Annual Business Meeting**. Like the name implies, it is held every year, usually immediately prior to the IRC so delegates can more easily participate in both. It is at the ABM that literature is reviewed and voted on as Conference approved, sites for future conventions are announced, and other items are hashed out so the organization can grow and thrive.

Rita went to her first IRC in Clearwater, Florida, in 2003 and said the opportunity to be with so many other people from all over the world who were sharing a message of recovery helped her get more connected. English-speaking meetings in Montreal at that time were very few; she got lots of phone numbers.

"You have the opportunity to meet a whole lot of people in different situations in a safe and secure setting," Rita shared. And she had fun. "A lot of us don't know how to have fun when we're not in our addiction. The three-day convention allows for a variety of ways to connect with others, be it in meetings, sharing meals together, at the hospitality suite, or during the Saturday night banquet followed by the live auction. Volunteering is also an excellent way to feel "a part of," she continued.

This year's IRC convention -- **40 Years Evolving and Growing in Recovery** – is extra special because it is being held here in Boston where the program was founded in 1976. So whether you're an old-timer or a newcomer, you'll be welcomed at the IRC. Please consider registering today. And tell your friends in recovery ...they may have as many questions as I had.



August 5, 2016 – August 7, 2016 **2016 International Recovery Convention**

Hyatt Regency Boston Harbor, Boston, Massachusetts

To review information about the event and to register visit the Fellowship Wide Services website at

<http://slaafws.org/irc2016>

Cost is \$79 after May 27th which covers all IRC activities Aug. 5 – 7 including Saturday night banquet and auction. Hotel reservations are separate cost.

S.L.A.A. Fellowship-Wide Services and New England Intergroup IRC Committee are co-sponsoring the event. You may also review information on New England Intergroup's IRC Local Planning Committee web page at <http://slaanci.org/events-and-retreats/international-recovery-convention-2016/>

