

the Journal

Issue #212
Single Issue \$4



COVID-19

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.

Table of Contents

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous Preamble	4
The Twelve Steps	5
Question of the Day	7

Theme: Sober Through the Pandemic

Staying Sober in a Global Pandemic	10
Growing Through the Pain	12
Fear in the Pandemic	14

Share Space

The Ultimate Fantasy	18
Answering Questions on Step Eight	21
Addiction	23
Step Nine — My Wrongs	24
Love Letter to Myself	25

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.

©1985, 2003, 2012 The Augustine Fellowship, S.L.A.A., Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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, S.L.A.A., 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.

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.

© Jan./Feb., 2025. The Augustine Fellowship, S.L.A.A., Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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

In submitting such content to S.L.A.A., the member releases S.L.A.A., any other members of S.L.A.A. and S.L.A.A.'s officers, directors, employees and agents (collectively, the "Releasees") from any and all claims which the member may have against any of the Releasees in connection with the member's submission of content to *the Journal*.

The Augustine Fellowship, S.L.A.A., Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc. 2411 NE Loop 410, Suite 122, San Antonio TX 78217, 1-210-828-7900 Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. CT except for holidays (fax) 1-210-828-7922. www.slaafws.org.

For subscription concerns, please visit: <http://www.slaafws.org/subscriptionhelp>.

Managing Editor	Lisa C.
Outreach Director	Lisa C.
Proofreaders for this issue	Chris D. Beth L.

Question of the Day & Answers from Yesterday

The Question of the Day for this issue is, COVID-19: “How did you get through the pandemic sober? Dealing with grief, isolation, uncertainty, impatience.” Here are some insights that were submitted in service from fellow S.L.A.A. members. They are not presented in any particular order. The next two themes are: #213 – March/April – Meditation Practices – Tell us about your meditation practice. How do you get started and how do you continue? Deadline for submissions is Jan. 15, 2025. And #214 – May/June – Life Stressors and Grief: How do you cope with grief and other large life stressors while living sober? Deadline for submissions is March 15, 2025. Please go to <https://slaafws.org/thejournal/> and click on “Answer Question of the Day.”

“How did you get through the pandemic sober?”

I immediately started a meeting on Zoom within a week of lockdown. I was attending meetings twice a day. I coordinated fellowship on Zoom. We had a weekly movie night and a monthly fellowship activity such as crafting, origami, and talent shows all on Zoom. I really dove into my top lines. I planted a huge garden, organized my kitchen, and started baking my own bread.

— NORA B., ORANGE COUNTY, CA

I chose to adopt two new hobbies to keep me sane, sober, and living in the world of self-care. And being of service to others helped... service keeps you sober!

— CHRISTOPHER, CLEARWATER, FL

Question of the day

My large sibling family group held regular Zoom meetings to check in with one another because we live in different, distant states. And I spoke on the phone with close, personal friends, as well. I continued to work (because my work was considered an "essential service") in a safe setting, so this helped to keep me from feeling too isolated. I wore my mask everywhere in public, and it was the only year in a long time that I did not get sick.

Unfortunately, I befriended a member of the opposite sex who was not involved in recovery, and we spent time in one another's homes, spoke by telephone, sent text messages and direct messages. We also made day trips to outdoor places, like the beach in San Francisco, parks and historical sites in the foothills. We became overly involved in one another's lives, and as soon as the vaccines became available, he was off chasing other women. Luckily, I returned to S.L.A.A. after 22 years when we ended our "Covid-friendship!" Now I have been back in the program for over three years and I am happy to be back. My former "friend" and I continue to be in no contact, and I attend two to three meetings per week.

I like to think that if pandemic conditions ever happen again, I would do a better job of coping. Because I was away from S.L.A.A. for 20 years before meeting my Covid "friend," I was not following the spiritual practices I follow today. They would have been very helpful, I am sure!! And having outreach friends, as well as a sponsor, to remain in weekly contact with would have been immensely helpful.

— KATHLEEN A., SACRAMENTO, CA

Question of the day

The pandemic forced me to begin a further evaluation of my family and personal values.

It forced me to spend time with myself and my family, to strengthen the resolve that I needed to address my disease, and to turn toward finally working the Steps in this program.

In short, I didn't start the pandemic sober but rather it informed me that I needed to take a look at entering recovery.

Once I made the decision to actively take the Steps in lieu of the tourist stance I had taken in the past, I was on a completely new path that would inform the rest of my life. For this I am grateful.

— JOEL, SAN FRANCISCO

Announcing a New Zoom Meeting

Each week we will read a new personal recovery story included in the draft of the Second Edition of the S.L.A.A. Basic Text

Starts Tuesday, January 7, 2025

10:30 a.m. Pacific Time

Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87419671188>

[?pwd=vraNPXCJte1ycudi8hFd4x8eo2D](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87419671188?pwd=vraNPXCJte1ycudi8hFd4x8eo2D)

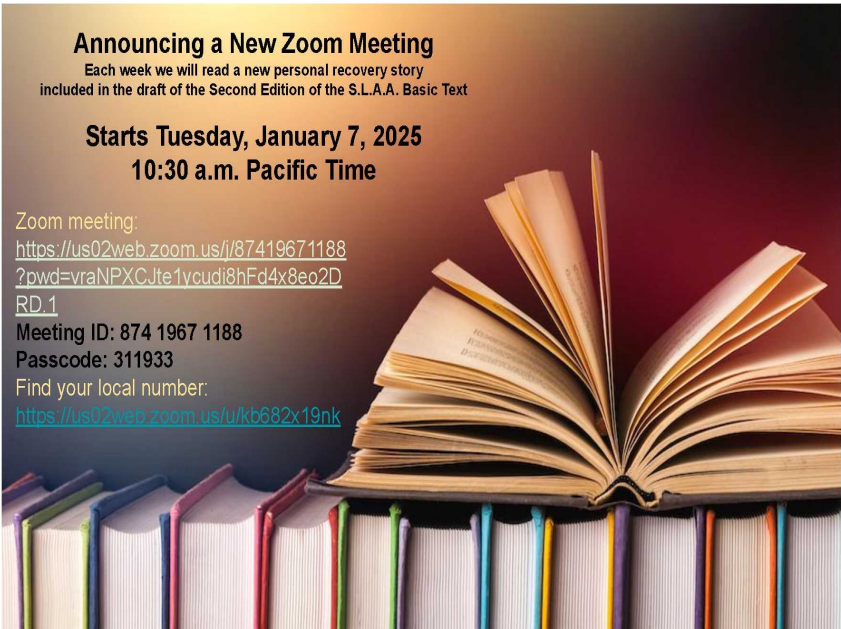
[RD.1](#)

Meeting ID: 874 1967 1188

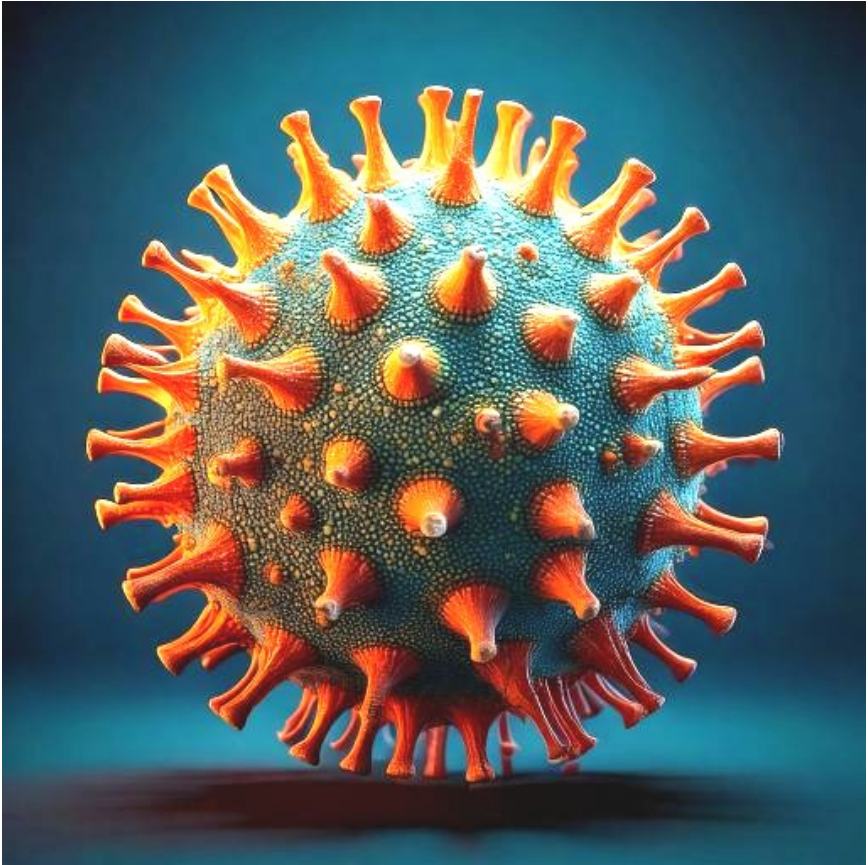
Passcode: 311933

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kb682x19nk>



Staying Sober in a Global Pandemic



I stayed sober by helping my S.L.A.A. homegroup transition to Zoom, by keeping in touch with my sponsor each week, by working with my sponsees, by, I believe, main-

taining my subscription to *the Journal*, keeping my sobriety coins close, logging into the Los Angeles meetings when my sobriety was severely threatened....the list goes on.

I stayed sober by using my God Can, writing letters to God, keeping journals and logs, creating and updating spreadsheets detailing my updated sobriety plan, working with my daily top lines buddy, Zooming in to the Women's Daily Top-lines meeting, doing a couple NYC Intergroup meetings on Zoom (well maybe just one), telling my sponsor the whole truth about what was going on with me and my dating life, sharing honestly at meetings and on calls, using on knees prayer, buying a t-shirt that said One Day at a Time (in Spanish) and wearing it even though I don't speak Spanish....

I did all sorts of cool things to stay sober. Fun things too!

Stand-up comedy open mics in NYC, rooftop open mics, hanging out with my 84-year-old best friend and being of service to her, checking out the restaurant scene in Covid New York....working to be of service to my family and show up for them even though they were in Illinois and I was in NYC....doing my Tenth Step pretty much every day in the park....going to in-person meetings when things opened up again.

I feel like I need to keep listing things but guess what....all of that above was enough to keep me sober!

November 18th I will have eighteen years sober in S.L.A.A. - no pursuit of unavailable people and no sex outside of an exclusive relationship - assuming I keep doing things like the wonderful actions listed above!

— KARA B, BROOKLYN, NYC

Growing Through the Pain

Editor's note: this is a transcript of a recorded share at the 2023 S.L.A.A. Annual Business meeting during the Conference Journal Committee meeting. The Journal thanks all of the ABM delegates for their service and for participating in this issue of the Journal by answering the question of the day.

So, I'm Pix, sex and love addict. I feel like the majority of my life has been pretty stressful. I am the third of five children in a very low-income family.

But for some reason, I was always the one who was the fixer, who mothered everybody else and took care of everything else. So, for most of my life, I felt like I wasn't able to grieve anything.

I wasn't able to experience things that happened to me because I had to have it all together. I didn't have time to feel it because I had to be strong for other people. And in S.L.A.A., it was this really scary

idea of having to feel everything. When I came into S.L.A.A., it was in the pandemic already. I had lost three aunts. I had become disabled, so I had lost my own entire identity. And it was just a really difficult time for me.

I was also going through a really difficult, messy breakup. And for a really long time, I had this victim mindset. I thought *why me?* And after a while in recovery, it evolved to why not me? I started to see these stressors in my life or periods of time where I grieved as moments of learning. It wasn't just pain for the sake of being hurt.

I was learning things. I was growing. And it wasn't so meaningless anymore. It wasn't. It did feel like a punishment for so long. I wondered what I had done. I must have done something wrong in a past life to deserve all of this insanity, all of these painful things that kept happening to me, all the terrible relation-

ships I kept finding myself in, not really realizing that I was doing this to myself. And I think part of me just wanted a space where I was able to grieve.

And being in a terrible relationship and then going through a breakup, I was able to grieve that. That wasn't anyone else's problem where I had to be strong for them. That was something that I could grieve on my own.

I don't think that was the major thing running my addiction. But I do think that I was intentionally feeling pain to give myself a platform to be allowed to need comforting or to feel weak or vulnerable.

There was some part of me that sought that out and sought that out in toxic relationships — just anything that would hurt me really.

But now I don't seek those things out. And I do recognize that pain, grief, loss, stress, it's all an inevitable part of life. But I can learn something from it. I can grow from it.

It's not all pointless. It's not just random acts of pain that happen. And I just have to react to it.

There is something deeper there. I don't take anyone for granted anymore. I try to live my life more fully.

I try to use every opportunity to grow — no matter how bad the loss, no matter how bad the stress or the grief. It's always a chance to grow or just survive one more thing and to realize that I can.

I can survive anything basically. So I'll leave it there. Thank you for your time.

—PIX

Fear in the Pandemic



1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon S.L.A.A. unity.

Downside: Covid hurt unity and made it difficult to focus on our common welfare coming first. The political climate didn't help.

People couldn't or didn't want to gather together for

meetings for fear of catching Covid. Resentments formed if people were forced to wear masks or weren't wearing the right type of mask or they weren't wearing the mask properly.

Turning it around: Virtual meetings helped. Zoom and Free Conference Call allowed us to have meetings in the safety of our own homes. It felt like

a gift from a Higher Power. But people had their cameras off and staring at little boxes made my mind turn off. In face-to-face meetings, I could look around and see people nodding in agreement with the speaker or showing facial expressions of compassion or understanding. But in Zoom meetings, I couldn't connect to the community I used to feel. I was grateful to hear shares and connect on some level but it wasn't as engaging as face to face. I read an article that said the mind shuts off after 20 minutes in a virtual meeting. Another article said it causes low self-esteem to constantly stare at your own reflection in the Zoom window. People unconsciously criticize every flaw on their face. The article said to focus on the speakers in the meeting and not look at yourself. I could see the truth in that. I always focused on how my hair was out of place or my crooked smile. I got distracted from the meeting. And I got bored. Eventually, I started turning off the camera and playing video games. I rationalized that I was still listening to shares, so at least I was still in a meeting. But I was distracted and not fully listening.

My sponsee started having very small meetings in the

park, socially distanced. She brought camping chairs and her dog. I never would have gone to an S.L.A.A. meeting in a public park before the pandemic where "normal" people could possibly overhear one of my crazy shares. But during the pandemic, these meetings were a godsend.

We met in a cute little park in downtown L.A. There was a loud metro train and helicopters that would sometimes drown out people's shares, but it was nice to be together surrounded by trees and wildflowers.

This meeting grew and today it is in Griffith Park. Every week we have coffee and donuts (I don't because I'm in a food program also, but it's fun to watch others enjoy their breakfast). After the meeting, for fellowship we go on a hike. It's usually about five to eight people talking about S.L.A.A. issues or fun events or life in general. I always leave feeling grateful for the connection. I always enjoy the beauty of the large trees and the fresh air. Sometimes even the sounds from the free tennis court are comforting.

We see squirrels, horses and dogs. Sometimes a dog will lick my face because she loves me!

My sponsee was consistent

in gathering her friends and pushing them to get out of their comfort zone and come together and it definitely paid off.

Downside: Donations fell during the pandemic. Intergroup participation was virtual and we had to start a literature distribution crew to get literature to people. In Los Angeles Intergroup before the pandemic, there was a lot of service work being done and a high level of involvement. There were always 40-60 people at each monthly meeting. We sold hundreds of dollars worth of literature. During the pandemic it was a struggle. The literature distribution crew was a group of hard working dedicated individuals. But the amount of literature distributed paled in comparison to pre-pandemic.

Fear Holding Me Back

My husband and I are both S.L.A.A. members (we met before he joined S.L.A.A.). Part of our top-line behaviors is to buy season tickets to theatres in L.A. We enjoy date nights with dinner and plays, comedy shows or musicals. We had tickets to "Hamilton" when the pandemic hit the news. Government officials were asking each other, "Should we shut everything down?" The day we

were supposed to go Ticketmaster cancelled everything.

Fear is the Number One Offender

In hindsight, it was silly to be fearful of being inconvenienced by everything shutting down. People were dying and suffering horribly. Who was I to complain about my petty little problems? But change is difficult for an addict. I sometimes expect a medal for running out of a burning building.

I was lucky enough to work through the pandemic. I drove empty freeways to downtown L.A. It's really eerie to drive empty streets that only a week before were packed with bumper-to-bumper traffic.

I had to get a letter from my HR department to show that I had the right to work in my office. The protests in L.A. had the police setting up a temporary headquarters in the parking lot across from my office building.

They had patrol cars blocking the entrance to the streets in front of my building. In order to get to my office every morning, I had to show a police officer my key card to gain entry to drive to my office.

It's intimidating when you've been told to stay away from people and every morning you are confronted by peo-

ple you've always been scared of (police were very scary to me when I was an alcoholic teenager).

Dealing with grief, isolation, uncertainty, impatience

Grief: I didn't have anyone close to me die because of the virus. But one of our best friends got Covid and had a stroke because of it. He had to move back home and live with his daughter.

We miss him terribly. We used to talk to him every day. We went to meetings with him and had parties, dinners and went to shows with him.

He was a lot of fun to be around. Now we only get to talk to him once a week on the phone if he is feeling well enough.

We were also grieving all the destruction and death that Covid caused. There came a point where I had to take news breaks so my mind wouldn't spin out of control.

We were all grieving the loss of our previous life. When I got sober in S.L.A.A, I was on a pink cloud. I wore a T-shirt that had the words *I love my life* sewn on the front. I did love going to parties, large meetings, dinners and shows with my family. The pandemic changed all of that.

We are still dealing with loss of business and lifestyle

changes. Most of my office is work from home now. We don't have the fun and comradery of the office atmosphere that we used to. Meetings in Los Angeles used to be two or three per day with 60 to 100 people in the meeting. Today there are much fewer in-person meetings with only 20 to 30 people. Most people still use virtual meetings. We are slowly building meetings back up and there seems to be more interest in the in-person meetings. I'm hoping it continues to improve to pre-pandemic levels.

Isolation: The pandemic gave my anorexia a license to isolate. "I have to stay home because if I don't I will die," was my mantra during the pandemic. It's been a slow battle to allow myself to be social since the vaccines came out.

Uncertainty: Were we all going to lose our lives? Were we all going to lose our jobs? Was everything going to shut down forever?

Impatience: When will everything get back to normal?

This too shall pass. I am learning to curb my anorexia, have faith in God, sit with uncomfortable feelings and have hope for the future while living in the present reality.

—ANONYMOUS

Share space

The Ultimate Fantasy



If I ask what your life story is, you likely have an answer. The ultimate fantasy is the fairytale of who we think we are,

which is nothing but a recount of events -a tale. I am not alone in this, I can tell you where I am from, when I first learned about fantasy addiction, and what tortured childhood I had. In meeting after meeting, I have shared my life story so many times that I can make a performance out of it. I know what words will evoke sadness in you, and I know how to use a comedy-timed bit that might cause you to laugh.

This story itself is universal, for some of us it starts with an adoption, for others with sexual abuse at an early age, still others were abused or neglected. Most stories are sad or even tragic, but the underlying substance is the same, we have all suffered and that brought us to escape through fantasy addiction.

When I speak about this, many people use the opportunity to tell me their own story, but my intention in writing this is to gently ask you to recognize that what you want to share is just a tale you keep repeating to yourself. In other words, to notice that, as personal as and as tragic as it feels, it is still a story.

It took eight years for me to surrender and start working the steps with a sponsor, it took another year to get to

Step Nine in which I began to suspect that my own story was boring. I started talking more about the solution. I shared the bounty of good things that were happening to me as a result of working the steps.

In the "set aside" prayer, we say: "HP, Please help me set aside everything I think I know about myself, these steps, my ability to stop my pattern of sex and love addiction, and especially you, for an open mind and a new experience of myself, these steps, my ability to stop my pattern of sex and love addiction, and especially you."

Praying for an open mind is like opening a door, but opening a door to what? Consider this: in the prayer we ask for something "new" which, by definition, is something that did not exist before. We pray to have an experience that didn't exist before. We want to cleanse our old, tired story and replace it with something that has never existed before.

This is what it means to die before we die. It is not a physical death, it is dying to the story we keep on telling ourselves, that grand saga of "our lives".

We still practice the steps and aim for progress. We still have answers for questions about our lives, we just don't

identify with them, we know that those answers refer to our current “life circumstances” not our nature.

Giving up our precious life story is a tall order of business. If you are in the throes of the horrific fire of withdrawal, we can start with a small mission, for example, don't say the name of your qualifier anymore. If you are amid a rampant obsession with a person, you can try reading the “Romantic Obsession” pamphlet. If you are attempting no contact avoid saying their name whenever you speak about it. Trying these simple suggestions might slowly break the thin ice on top of the iceberg.

It is okay to have a life story, but the spiritual call asks us to make a decision. That decision we make in step three is clear, we give up everything we think we are and will be, we give up our will, to the care of God as we understand it. We surrender the story, we be-

come empty, and let God fill us with what it has in store for us.

Letting go of the story of our lives has a powerful payout, that of living a life in God's terms. And if you listen to the new stories of people who are currently surrendering completely, and using God's power to carry his will, you may notice that their lives are not so bad.

These new happier stories are -again- just stories. The ultimate fantasy is hard to release. It's difficult to stop the inner voice that demands our will rather than God's. But in the program, we talk of progress, not perfection.

What would happen if we opened ourselves to a new experience? And what if that experience did not include talking about our past or reaching out to our qualifier? What would happen if we followed **good orderly direction**, just for today.

Worth a try?

— CLAUDIA A. NJ

Answering Questions on Step Eight

Why is forgiveness of the utmost importance in working Step Eight?

First of all I need to forgive myself in order to stand tall and go out and do God's work, as well as to be able to live with myself and express love to others.

Forgiveness allows me to move forwards lighter, and better, as Martin Luther King Jr. said, "I have decided to stick to love...Hate is too great a burden to bear."

The result of carrying resentments and not forgiving is heavy and painful, and doesn't allow me to grow.

The final column in the Step Four inventory is, "What would God do?" and, while asking me to protect myself and stay well and sober, God would forgive me, so I can forgive others. Forgiveness is not letting people off the hook for their actions, it is an energy of letting go of the resentment I

still carry regarding their actions. It is understanding that we are all flawed human beings doing the best we can with what we've got and what we've been given in life.

It can be hard to forgive those who have deeply harmed us, but I have the choice to let go and move on so that harm is no longer harming me. I hope others can also forgive me.

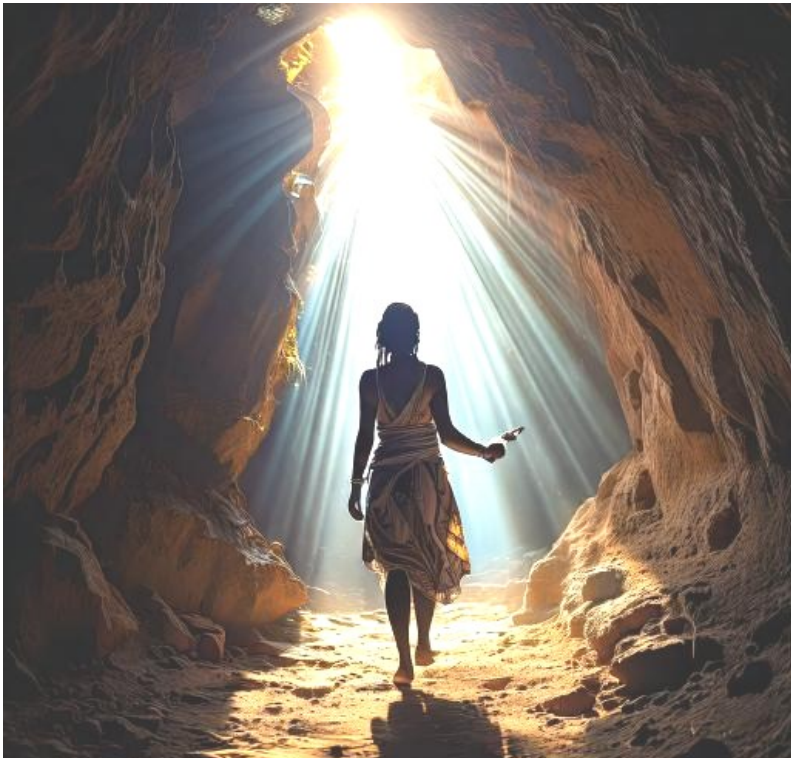
Why is the taking of this Step the beginning of the end of isolation (Step Eight, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions page 82, last paragraph) from our fellows and God?

In forgiving and asking for forgiveness, making amends, we clear the air energetically between ourselves and the person we have harmed. This may or may not affect that specific relationship. But it impacts the universe. It affects the feeling I have about myself, may affect

the way the amendeed sees people and life, may potentially restore some trust in humanity, as happens to me when a stranger does a kind deed. This clearing of negative energies, even if just for one day, makes space for more loving thoughts and actions; behaviours more inspired by HP. It may indeed restore relationships, or just the relationship with self. It connects us with our Higher Powers, which in turn brings

about greater grace and purpose in our actions. We restore our own integrity in the eyes of HP, ourselves and others, which allows us to go back out into society with our heads held high in self-love and respect. In seeing our traits in real time, we can put change into action, and stop pushing the world away in anorexia. We can come out of isolation and into the light of day.

— JULIA



Hi. I am not a member but I recognise myself in everything I read. I don't want to join a group because I feel that it is not wise for me to connect with people with the same problem right now. I am still very early in recovery. But I would like to submit a poem I wrote, for anyone's benefit.

Addiction

It is not true that those who have never drank alcohol don't know what it's like to be addicted.

We called it love.

I know both of us still do.

But it's like my therapist told me bluntly.

You believe in many lies.

We blinded ourselves to life, reality, and to ourselves.

For the sake of temporary pleasure,
selling ourselves to the darkness one hit at a time.

After I lost what I came here for,
not to mention my dignity and my sense of self,
I still love you.

And your card told me that you do too.

I know that when the world sees us, they say that we would be insane to stay together.

and they're right of course.

but only you and I know the strength of a fantasy that
outshines all reality,
that believes unto death and risks hell for their children to get there.

And all the while it's thin air.

And I still believe.

But I ask God to open my eyes every day.

And may he open yours?

Thank you.

— CHRISTINA

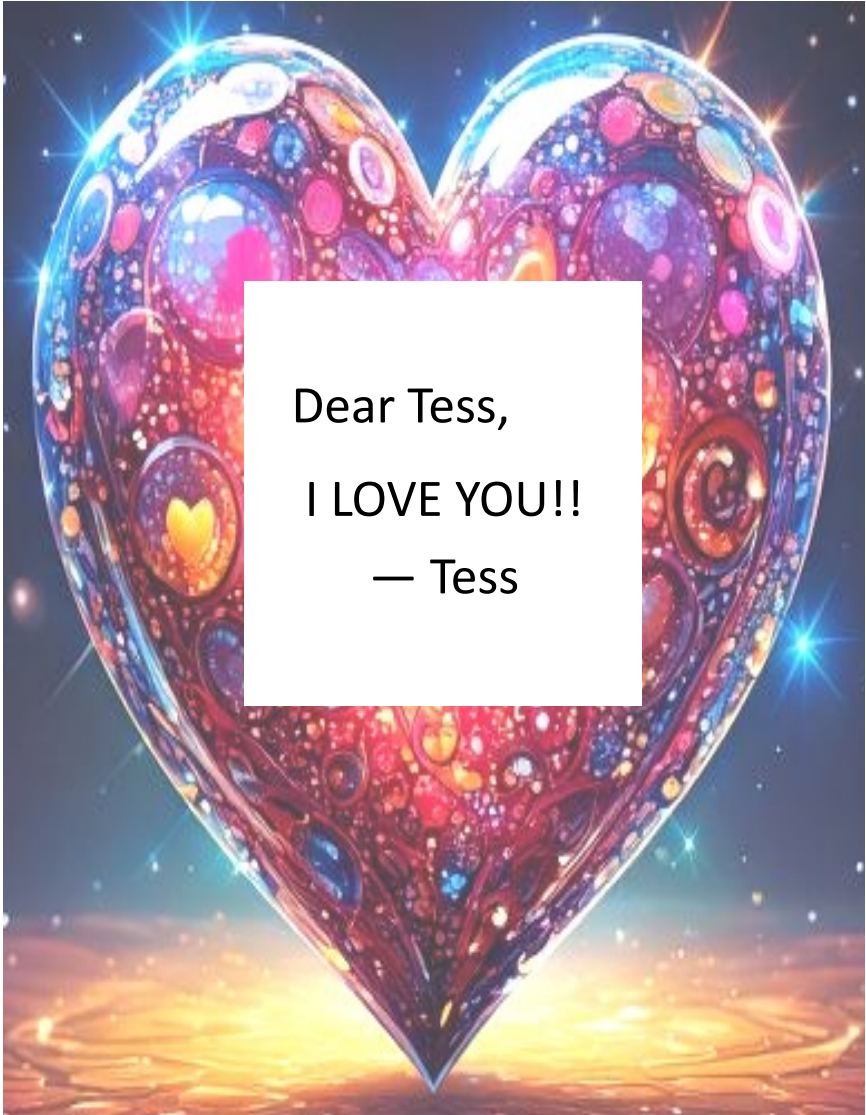
Step Nine — My Wrongs

AMENDS To Self:

- How I easily lived this lie, deceitfulness and unfaithful walk of my separate life
- Infidelity is the Christian term for unfaithfulness (God loving; gone at the moment) Ask for forgiveness-grateful forever
- If I wasn't acting out sexually, I was often in thought
- The antithesis of truth is a liar
- How preplanned my secret life (auto pilot, omissions or lies)
- Moments of Sex thoughts raged with hormones overflowing with obsessive thoughts
- How I could omit so easily to self-protect my disease
- How I could find something sexual in most women sometimes without trying and other times ruminating (lost)
- How I manipulated and charmed to the best of my ability with the thoughts of a predator from my early teens to the age of fifty-seven years old if they showed a hint of interest.
- How I took advantage of the sworn badge of honor (fire department), to the women who looked upon firemen as special men of service, hero.
- I could spot a woman's wandering eye showing interest like a hawk looking for prey
- I didn't just check out women, my eyes were like lasers with a computer brain to formulate a connection (so coy, not)
- The time I wasted with anxiety masturbating because I didn't know how to study or be disciplined enough to study
- How my biological desires were manifested over the years and stirred my sexual energy; subliminal advertisement, Summer sexy wear, Sex at young age, alcohol/drugs, pornography, family of origin, few boundaries if any when my desires took me into the zone of a dopamine-needed fix.

— ANONYMOUS

The “Sober Dating Questions for Discussion” book talks about writing love letters to yourself. Here’s my attempt at making a beginning of this practice:





THE INSPIRATION LINE

Your 24-Hour Sponsor

215-574-2120

CELEBRATES

500,000 CALLS!

Greater Delaware Valley Intergroup, originators of the Inspiration Line, want to thank Fellowship Wide Services and *the Journal* for supporting the Inspiration Line. GDVI wants to acknowledge the 15 volunteers from all over the US & Canada that leave inspirational messages on the Line and credit them for making this huge milestone possible: Alicia, California, Alyce, Montreal, Canada, Alyson, Pennsylvania, Bob, Pennsylvania, Brenda, Maryland/Florida, Chris, California, John, Florida, Kip, Connecticut, Leah, New York, Mark, New Mexico, Matt, Pennsylvania, Natalie, Pennsylvania, Rich, Massachusetts, Sean, New Mexico, Shelly, New York, Steve D., Pennsylvania, and Zoe, Pennsylvania.

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.



the **Journal**