

Out of the Fog

*An update on events, outreach, and other news of the Bay Area Fellowship.
Available online at: bayareasaa.org/newsletter*

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue N 10- Winter 2015

What Is SAA?

Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other so they may overcome their sexual addiction and help others recover from sexual addiction or dependency.

From the Green Book

"In taking this journey, we commit fully to the process of recovery. We make the program our top priority, in the knowledge that anything less puts us at risk. We learn to listen at meetings with an open mind. Gradually, we stop picking and choosing what we are willing to change and to open ourselves to the changes our Higher Power wills for us."



Save the Trees!

Sign up to receive this newsletter via email.
Send your request to:
newsletter@bayareasaa.org

Looking for a meeting?

A complete list of all current Bay Area SAA meetings can be found at:
<http://www.bayareasaa.org/meetings.php>

If you can't make a meeting in person, a complete list of electronic meetings can be found at <https://saa-recovery.org/Meetings/ElectronicMeetings/index2.php?timeOffset=-480>

Inspirational Words

"If you have made mistakes, even serious ones, there is always another chance for you. What we call failure is not the falling down but the staying down."

- Mary Pickford

Freedom From Fear for the New Year

My name is Craig (pseudonym) and I am a sex addict. I've been in program for two-and-a-half years. I work with my sponsor regularly, have a daily practice, read the *Big Book*, do step work, attend meetings regularly and offer service. During this time I've slipped six times and I'm currently marking a new ninety days of sobriety. For my entire life, the holidays—specifically Christmas and New Year's—have been spent traveling or staying with my family on the East Coast. Manhattan was usually on my itinerary, with acting out "recreation" scheduled for weekends. This past holiday season, however, was very different. Many things have changed since my mother's death: friends leaving Manhattan, and my need to plan a different holiday season of activities in San Francisco. I was having feelings of a free fall. Being unfamiliar territory for me, this meant possibly establishing new activities and new traditions. Hence, I turned to program, offering to do service by establishing holiday eve meetings. So it was that I found myself on Christmas Eve with

keys in my hand fumbling to unlock a basement door. The door opened to a small green room in the basement of a church. I turned on the bright florescent lights, and set up a few metal chairs in a circle, not knowing if anyone would attend. I brought an electric candle to comfort myself and any others who might need a meeting. I sat in the room spooked; listening to the basement pipes banging while the traffic outside bustled. I was awash with feelings: fear, aloneness, less-than, sadness, isolation, and the childhood memory of myself as an abandoned youngster. There were fantasies of everyone else celebrating under Christmas trees with their loved ones while I sat lonely and forlorn. I've heard and believe that when you work the steps, they eventually work you. The steps can become an escalator and even an elevator. My feelings began to morph into faith as I set up one extra chair for Higher Power to provide support and to bear witness. I was where I belonged. I was practicing service, if not to others that may come, certainly to myself in honor of the importance of my sobriety. Feeling sorry for myself morphed into feeling useful. Emotions started to change to the point where I no longer felt alone. Emotions are like the weather; they don't have to determine us. I was able to sit there and meditate. I practiced the principles of the program even if no one else was going to appear. Self-pity became courage. I had always taken for granted that the rooms and the people would be there when I needed a meeting. Now was my time to provide as so many have provided for me.

I was in an amazing moment of recovery, experiencing a God Stream. "This is how recovery has been for us. Each of us has taken steps of courage and leaps of faith. Each of us has contributed, not only to our own recovery, but to the recovery of other suffering sex addicts as well." (1) I heard footsteps on the stairs coming into the basement room. They belonged to a fellow friend in program and we proceeded with a meeting that five others joined. This holiday season is a gift I will always remember. The recovery provided me with the ability to experience the Promises: "If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half-way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves." (2)

(1) Pocket-sized edition of *Sex Addicts Anonymous*, page 100.
(2) *Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 83-84.

Thanks to You!

Bay Area SAA 2014 Giving Thanks Event a Big Success

On November 8, 2014, the Bay Area SAA Fellowship dug deeply into their hearts and pockets to support the 12th Annual Giving Thanks event. Alison T. generously donated her East Bay home again for this very successful event. Plenty of good food, good

weather, and good fellowship were on hand that Saturday afternoon. The Giving Thanks event of SAA was started here in the Bay Area and is now an annual event not only in the Bay Area, but also in Phoenix, Houston and Southern California. This year the Bay Area Giving Thanks event generated over \$20,000 for ISO. These funds help support the many fine programs of ISO, which makes our Bay

Area fellowship possible. To date, since its inception the Bay Area Giving Thanks event has contributed over \$230,000 to ISO! The Giving Thanks Committee is grateful for the outstanding work of its committee members, as well as all of the members who came to the event and all of the members who donated to this worthy fundraising drive. Many thanks to all!



San Francisco Bay Area SAA Announcements

• Term for Intergroup Representative

The bylaw of position service term for Intergroup has changed to: The suggested term of office for each representative is a minimum of one year; a two-year term is encouraged.

• New Women's Meeting

A New Meeting for Women has started in Oakland at the Kaiser Fabiola building. Thursday evenings. See the meeting list for details.

• Out of the Fog and Into the Light

Join other SAA members for a weekend each Spring to experience strength and hope. The Annual Bay Area retreat will be held on March 27, 28, and 29th at a new location in the North Bay.

Enrich your recovery with meetings, workshops, meditation, hikes, art activities, fellowship and fun. More details to come.

• Got an Idea for an Event?

Anyone in any area who wishes to create an Outer Circle event should contact Mahesh G. at (831) 428-2846.

• Publishing Announcements

Call (415) 456-1063 or send email to info@bayareasaa.org to publish fellowship news and announcements here.

• Got Something to Say?

We are always looking for articles for the *Out of the Fog* newsletter. Share your experience, strength and hope, or tools for recovery by emailing them to newsletter@bayareasaa.org.

The Step Corner

Every quarter we'll publish experiences, hope, and hints about completing a step. If you have suggestions, please drop a note to: newsletter@bayareasaa.org.

Step Nine: *'Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.'*

Reading:

SAA Green Book: "Step 9," pp. 48-52.

In taking the Ninth Step, we act on our knowledge that what we do really matters—that our actions have consequences in the world, for good or ill. The damage we did in our addiction is cleared away, not only by honestly admitting what we have done, but by committing to setting things right. Reaching out to others to acknowledge and heal the wrongs of the past brings us freedom and serenity in the present. We call this process *making direct amends*. In Step Nine, we make our best effort to contact people we have harmed, admit the wrongs we have done them, express our remorse, and offer some kind of reparation. Most importantly, we change how we behave today. We do our utmost not to repeat the behavior that caused harm in the past, and we communicate this resolve to those we've hurt.

Many of us find ourselves worrying about the reactions of those to whom we make amends, hesitating to proceed with this step because of our fear. We can rely on our Higher Power to be with us throughout this process and to grant us the courage we need to move forward. Our part is to make the amends, without taking responsibility for the reactions of others. Some of the people we approach may accept our amends with understanding and forgiveness, and others may not. The response of any particular person, positive or negative, is not a measure of how well we make our amends. The success of our amends depends only on how honestly and thoroughly we make them. The Ninth Step can be a project of some magnitude. We work this step only when we have a strong foundation built upon the preceding steps. Rather than be overwhelmed by the number of people on our Eighth Step list, or all of the harm we've done to them

situation has much to teach us. We can take our time, patiently dealing with the challenges we are ready for, and trusting that we will become ready for others in the future.

Throughout this process, we are mindful of our motives in making amends. Effective amends are as selfless and sincere as we can make them, with no hidden agendas. We want to be sure that we are not using the amends process as an excuse to re-engage with people who prefer not to have contact with us. We also guard against using Step Nine as an opportunity to defend our past behaviors or to burden others with detailed confessions in order to relieve ourselves of our own guilt. We need to exercise good judgment here. We seek the counsel of our sponsor and other members who have experience working this step. If we have good reason to believe that we will do harm to someone by making contact, then we refrain. Sometimes we might ask through a third party if contact for amends would be appropriate. If the answer is no, we need to show our respect and stay away. In the long run, the most effective amends we can make to others and to ourselves is our commitment to recovery.

Working Step Nine brings us many gifts: true empathy for those we have harmed, compassion, self-respect, and respect for the humanity of others. God willing, we may experience the forgiveness of those we have harmed. If we have been diligent in our amends, we will certainly grow in self-forgiveness too. As a result of accepting responsibility for the harm we have done, even to those who may have hurt us, we glimpse new possibilities for loving and forgiving others. The process that began in the Fourth Step, and culminated with the Ninth, now becomes a part of our lives, a daily stance, a practice that will keep us sexually sober and spiritually connected. We will now take Step Ten.

Bay Area SAA

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