

Out of the Fog



News, events, outreach, and support for the Bay Area Fellowship of SAA
A publication of the San Francisco Bay Area Intergroup

Winter 2023
Issue No. 26

What is SAA?

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

Reflections on Life, Courage, and Recovery

“Things do not change: we change.” — Henry David Thoreau

Philosopher William James reminds us, “The truth is our decisions and actions define whether time is our enemy or ally.” In fact, the greatest gift we receive from our Higher Power is time, albeit limited on Planet Earth. Time is free, but priceless. We can't own time, only use it. We can't keep time, only spend it. And, once we've lost time, we can never get it back.

How we learn to overcome addiction is reflected in the wisdom of writer and poet Maya Angelou. She said: "Courage is the most important of all the virtues, because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently." Indeed, the most important virtue we must learn in recovery is to be courageous because, without courage, we can remain a slave to fear and addiction.

In recovery, we learn the only person we're destined to become is the person we choose to be. We learn sobriety is true freedom and addiction is slavery. We learn how to forgive ourselves and to make amends to others. Moreover, we learn the best way to stay sober is to focus on reality not fantasy; truth not lies; fact not fiction.

In July, 2011, after a serious relapse, I stopped lying to myself and others. Sobriety became the #1 priority in my life. Most importantly, I stopped believing the lies which had kept me sick. Lies such as: "Acting out could replace whatever was missing in my life." Or, "My addiction was really worth all the insanity, pain and suffering." And, "I didn't have a serious problem that could, and would, destroy my life."

For twelve years, I have not believed these lies. With God's grace, these lies no longer have the power to control or ruin my life. Therefore, I refuse to waste another day of my life as a slave to addiction. Also, I refuse to allow myself to be tormented and defeated by compulsive sexual behavior. Perhaps, author T. S. Eliot said it best, “Sometimes things become possible if we want them bad enough.”

With God's grace, we choose to get sober and stay sober, one day at a time. Victory over addiction is our daily reward. Regardless how difficult the fight, we must never give up. Our life is too precious to give away.

- Bill N. - “We Are Not Saints” Sat AM mtg - San Jose, CA.

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and be able to click links



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New Bay Area SAA Website Launched

In order to improve the maintainability and leverage new technology, the Bay Area Web Development Team has spent the last 6+ months creating and launching a new Bay Area SAA Website (<https://bayareasaa.org>). Thank you to Alex M, Gil R, Les J, and the rest of the Web Development Team for your service!

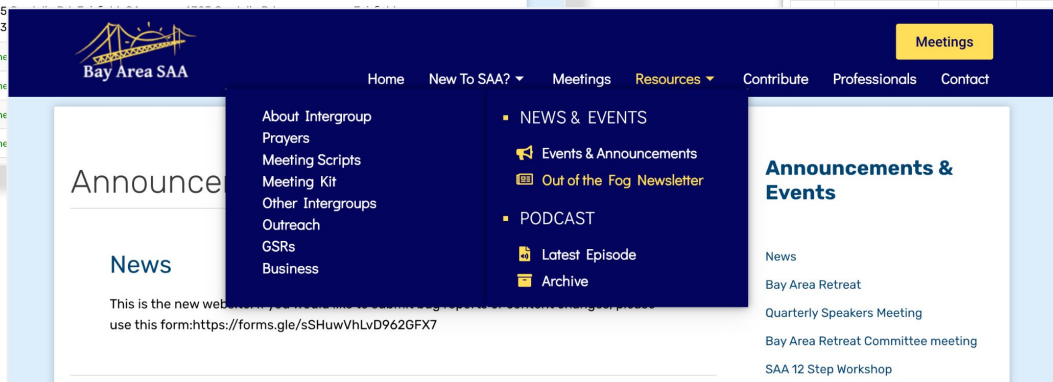
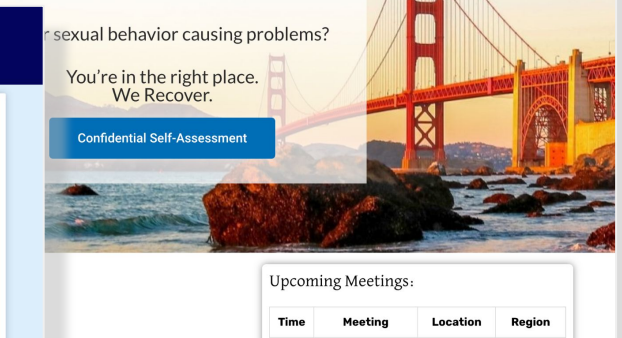
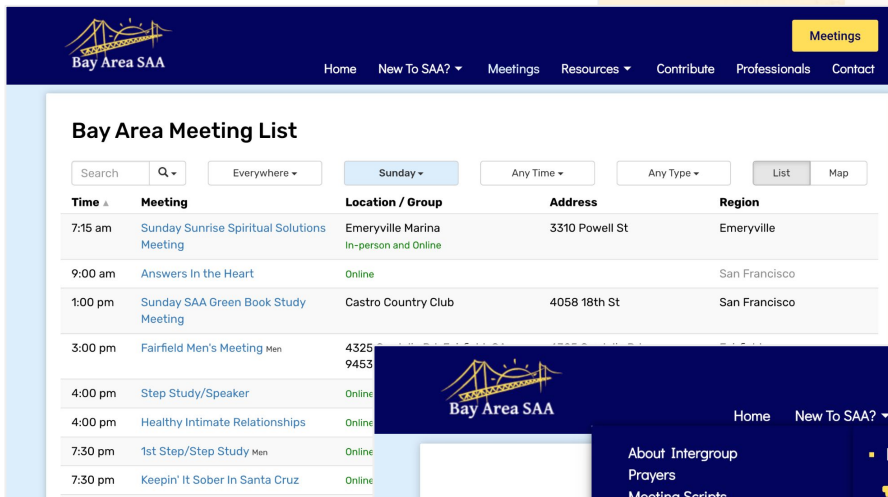
On the new site, there are many resources for struggling and recovering addicts and those who support them including:

- [Confidential self-assessment](#)
- Searchable [meeting list](#) for Bay Area SAA in-person and online meetings
- List of [announcements & events](#)
- Information for [women](#) and [LGBTQ+](#) members
- Links to this and past Out of the Fog [newsletters](#)
- [Meeting kit](#) for new meetings as well as existing meeting [scripts](#)
- Links for online and mailed in [donations](#)
- Information for [mental health professionals](#)
- [Contact information](#)
- and more

Thank You, Les J

For many years, Les J has served our fellowship and maintained and improved the original Bay Area SAA website. We want to recognize him for all his work with website creation and maintenance, updating meeting information, and so much more. **Thank you for your years of service, Les J!**

Check it out





Autobiography in Five Short Chapters

Steps 1, 2, & 3

I.

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in.
I am lost.
I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

II.

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I still don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place.
It isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

III.

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it there, I still fall in.
It's habit.
It's my fault.
I know where I am.
I get out immediately.

IV.

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

V.

I walk down a different street.

Step 1 - We admitted we were powerless over addictive sexual behavior - that our lives had become unmanageable

Step 1 of the 12 is foundational - it makes the case that I am an addict with a problem and need help. If I cannot acknowledge this and make the case for it, then there is no reason to continue. In SAA, many of us write out our story and share it first w/ a sponsor and then in a meeting. This may feel impossible, but it is the 1st turning point for most addicts. [This page](#) includes a few resources for working the 1st step including this [FAQ](#) compiled from the experiences of many addicts.

Step 2 - Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity

SAA, like AA and other xAA programs, is a spiritual program – not religious, but spiritual. Spiritual as in what goes on inside me and often outside of my control. As I work the program, I recognize that if everything remains the same spiritually as it was before I started SAA, then I am not really recovering. This [2-page worksheet](#) asks some core questions about hitting bottom, how I view God or any higher power, and lies I tell others and myself – it helps me contemplate my own higher power.

Step 3 - Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God

Step 2 got me thinking about my higher power – whether a religious god or some other higher power such as nature or my SAA group. Step 3 is about opening the door and waving the white flag and giving up trying to control and heal myself – that hasn't worked well... or at all. If I accept that I am powerless over my addiction, that my addiction has made my life unmanageable, and that there may - just might - be a power greater than myself, then in Step 3 I take the next step and make a decision to give another way a try. This short [worksheet](#) can help you work through Step 3.



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Keep Going

Oftentimes, “Keep Going” are the only encouraging words I have for those going through a challenging time - whether they are my adult children, friends, co-workers, or fellow addicts in the program. These 2 words can seem so trite a response when I’ve just heard about the weight and difficulties a fellow human being is passing through in the moment. Is that the best I can come up with? It may be all I have to share. The only wisdom I have available.

“Keep Going” is not a new concept – a Robert Frost poem (and a recent Under Armour campaign slogan) include a version of “the best way out is always through.” This points to the idea that, most times, there are no silver bullets or magical ways out of some hard times – that I must just keep going through them.

In one of his songs, Billy Joel sings “just surviving was a noble fight.” And I have thought of and repeated these words many times in my own life. Sometimes, the most courageous thing we can do is to just keep going – to find the courage to get up and head into the day, to take the next step, to get started on the project we don’t want to work on, to apply for another job, to fill out the online form, to make the call we don’t want to make, to get up off the couch, to move forward.

It is not always this way for me – there have been times in my recovery of the past 15 years where the energy and hope I felt from recovery, my wife, family, friends, my job, nature, and more has felt like a groundswell underneath me carrying me forward and filling me with strength and positive energy.

And there have been other times – like the last few months – where getting up out of bed, getting any useful work done, taking on life, moving forward, doing the next right thing – where doing any of those things felt like the most challenging and courageous thing I could do. I had to write in my journal, say to myself, and ask others to repeat to me... “Matt - keep going - it’s going to be ok.” I have significant clean time from my addiction, and am blessed in my recovery and in my life – and yet, I can struggle to be courageous and keep going. Challenges with my job and genetic depression are trying to get me to lie down and hide.

Thank you to all of those in this world who have encouraged me with their calls and words to keep going. And to you reading this... know that tomorrow can be better – that there is hope – that sometimes surviving is a noble fight – that you are a fighter! **Keep going, my friend.** You are worth it and so is the future.

- *Matt T - Editor*

Sponsor Support Group

In 2023, all sponsors are encouraged to attend six SSG meetings, on the first Saturday morning of these months: February 4th, April 1st, June 3rd, August 5th, October 7th, and December 2nd, at Trinity Presbyterian Church, 3151 Union Ave, San Jose (9:45 - 10:45). Questions: Bill N (408) 568-9702

Sponsor Support Group (SSG) meetings discuss important topics and key questions related to sponsorship. Furthermore, SSG meetings give sponsors the opportunity to share ideas, suggestions and fellowship with one another. Also, if you're not a sponsor, but have several months of sobriety, and would like to learn how to become a sponsor, you're invited to attend SSG meetings.



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Thank You from ISO of SAA

On January 30, 2023, the International Service Organization (ISO) of SAA recently sent out the following message.

SUBJECT LINE: **OUR HEARTFELT GRATITUDE**

Dear SAA Members and Groups,

Thank you for the amazing and generous outflowing of support during the ISO's financial crisis which began in July 2022. At one point, projections showed the ISO faced a deficit of more than \$200,000 at the end of the year.

Beginning in August and continuing through December, donations from individuals and SAA groups soared. We ended the year with total donations of \$799,586 which was \$141,186 over budget!

As a result, the ISO is in good financial shape and ready to support SAA groups in their efforts to carry the message of recovery in 2023.

The following are just a few accomplishments you made possible in 2022; even with the financial crisis.

- 22,000 professionals received information about SAA via 9 mailings
- 800 conversations with professionals at 11 conferences
- 150 additional professionals will receive The Outer Circle; 724 total recipients
- 35 requests for presentations to non-SAA organizations such as universities

We are planning over thirty PI/CPC projects in 2023, carrying the message of recovery to thousands of people! These projects include:

- Informational mailings to professionals
- Attendance at state and national professional conferences
- Online ads and notices
- Presentations to professional students at universities, public health departments, and counseling/therapy agencies.

We are planning to update and improve the online meeting search. We have had many requests for this and we are listening!

With your continued support, we will complete all of these projects and more.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and ISO employees, thank you again for your ongoing support! Best wishes for the blessings and grace of the program in 2023.

Sincerely,
Tracy R.
Acting Executive Director
ISO of SAA, Inc.



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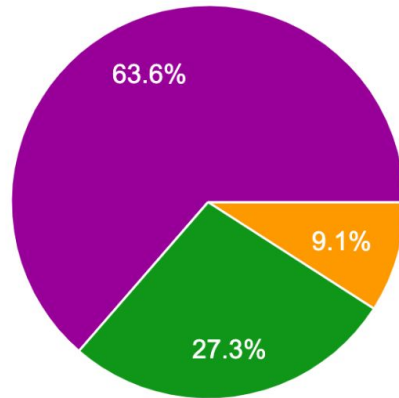


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The Bay Area SAA Community - Learning About Each Other


How far are you with working the 12 Steps in SAA?

11 responses



- Not yet started
- Completed Step 1
- On Steps 2-4
- On Steps 5-9
- Completed all 12 Steps
- Completed Steps in another program (e.g. AA), but not in SAA

Source: Fall 2022 Out of the Fog Survey



Winter 2023 Survey

Anonymous

- How often are you attending SAA meetings?
- What type of SAA meetings (in-person/online/phone)?

Take the survey

(2 questions)

You'll be able to see current results after you submit. Complete results will be published in the next *Out of the Fog* newsletter.



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Announcements & Events

- ❑ **Bay Area SAA Retreat** - March 31 - April 2, 2023
Go to [this page](#) for information, [registration](#), and [workshop proposals](#)
For questions, please email bayarearetreat@gmail.com
- ❑ **Working SAA 12 Steps in Community**
Work the 12 steps together **online** - 6:30-7:30 pm Wednesdays
For more information/Zoom link, see [top of this page](#) - join us!
- ❑ **Sponsors Helping Sponsors** - Thursdays, 11am US EST / 8am PST
Zoom ID: 419880404, pass code: 123456 PHONE: 646 558-8656
Contact: Christine C. 260 209-4445
- ❑ **Sponsor Support Group**
See article on page 4 of this newsletter!
- ❑ **Bay Area SAA Intergroup** - Serve our 90+ Bay Area meetings!
2nd Saturday of each month 11:15am - 12:45pm
Online: <https://zoom.us/j/87065412456> Password: Admitted
- ❑ **Bay Area SAA Website Development Committee**
Fridays 10am - Review new website: <https://bayareasaa.website>
Contact Gil R. for more information (831 419-3342)

California-wide Prisoner Outreach

More than half of the thirty prisoner requests arriving every week in the ISO Office come from California. Filling these sponsor requests always has a backlog, especially for Spanish speakers. Rey G from the Southern California Intergroup of SAA (SCISAA) thinks California SAA Fellows can/should take care of our own. He is building a coalition of SAA Fellows throughout California doing, and willing to do, Step 12 service to these SAA Fellows and new-comers in prisons. To help or get more information contact Rey G at 818.486.4053 (text first) or chair@scisaa.org.

ISO Donations

If SAA has helped, consider becoming a LifeLine Partner to support ISO either as an [individual](#) or as a [group](#).

Resources & Links

- **Women's Newcomer Line**
510 426-6420
- **Men's Newcomer Line**
510 906-1644
- **Women Seeking Recovery**
women@bayareasaa.org
- **GLBTQQI Seeking Recovery**
glbt@bayareasaa.org
- **Spanish Speaking Information**
espanol@bayareasaa.org
- **Bay Area SAA website**
 - [Bay Area Meetings List](#) ★
 - [Bay Area Events](#)
 - [Bay Area Meeting Updates & Intergroup Info](#)
 - [Intergroup Orientation](#)
 - [GSR Info](#)
- **Worldwide SAA website**
 - [Global Meeting Finder](#) ★
 - [SAA Literature](#)
- **Sex Addicts Recovery Podcast**
 - [Listen Directly](#)
 - [Podcast YouTube Playlist](#)
- **San Jose Recovery website**
 - [Step Guides & Worksheets](#)

Participate

- [Make an Announcement](#)
- [Publish an upcoming Event](#)
- [Propose an Article](#)
- [Provide Feedback](#)