

# 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 2025  
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## 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: Love and Addiction

“We can only learn to love by loving.” — Iris Murdock

Regardless of the challenges we face in recovery from sexual addiction, love can help us to get sober and stay sober. However, for many addicts, lack or loss of love can result in fear, anger, guilt, depression and shame. Therefore, in recovery, we need to understand how self-destructive thoughts and behaviors not only affect our lives but also those we love and who love us.

Moreover, addiction is a complex disease which can impact our ability to give love, receive love and create or maintain healthy, loving relationships. While acting out, we deny the truth, lie to ourselves and others, and damage relationships. However, with rigorous honesty and help from our Higher Power, SAA, and our sponsors, we have the opportunity to heal personal and/or family relationships.

A wise soul reminds us: “Some of the biggest challenges in relationships come from the fact that most people enter a relationship in order to get something: they're trying to find someone who's going to make them feel good. In reality, the only way a relationship will last is if you see your relationship as a place that you go to give and not a place that you go to take.”

And, a famous psychiatrist wrote: “There are only two emotions: love and fear. All positive emotions come from love, all negative emotions from fear. From love flows happiness, contentment, peace, and joy. From fear comes anger, hate, anxiety and guilt. It's true that there are only two primary emotions, love and fear. But it's more accurate to say that there is only love or fear, for we cannot feel these two emotions together, at exactly the same time. They're opposites. If we're in fear, we are not in a place of love. When we're in a place of love, we cannot be in a place of fear.”

With the power of God's love, we can defeat our demons. However, a wise soul reminds us, "Pray like it all depends on God, but work like it all depends on you." Indeed, we must actively complete the Twelve Steps with passion and purpose. And, as we grow in our recovery, we will learn how to make wise decisions, overcome self-destructive impulses, and remain sober, one day at a time. Furthermore, we must do everything possible to remain sober because our lives are too priceless to give away.

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## Reflections: Love and Addiction (cont'd)

Our Higher Power gives us the strength, courage, and wisdom to cross the bridge to freedom, sobriety, and serenity and to burn the bridge to slavery, addiction and self-destruction. With God's help, we can let go of our fear, anger, guilt, depression and shame. And we can heal the visible and invisible wounds of our addiction, as we forgive ourselves, forgive those who have harmed us, and make sincere amends to those we have harmed.

A wise minister said: "We're all on a journey here. We all struggle. But prayer wakes us up with mercies from God that are new every morning." Long ago, St. Francis of Assisi gave us this powerful advice: "While we have time, let us do good." No matter how difficult recovery may sometimes be, with God's love, we have the power to get sober and stay sober, if we have the willingness and commitment to do so. And, as a famous mountain climber once said, "It is not the mountain we conquer but ourselves."

- Bill N, *We are not Saints, San Jose, CA.*

## Keep Coming Back!

I have felt out of place at SAA meetings, which I have been attending for about 15 years. My discomfort started when I decided to change my circles, particularly, the Inner Circle. I haven't been getting my needs met for a long time. Sexual needs, intimacy needs, emotional needs.

I believe that the SAA program has a problem: I am not supposed to act out, so how can I get my needs met? Well, I got mine met by using pornography, pleasuring myself, and of course, working the steps. In particular, the tenth Step, which is a key "maintenance" step.

I do not feel crazy or like I am losing it afterwards. Maybe I am not addicted? Oh, I am definitely addicted – to sex in all of its forms. I feel lighter already just getting that off my chest. But I do not have to prove how long I can go without. Years ago I practiced total celibacy before SAA was started. I was miserable, but proud in my own way.

Back to the present. I recently discovered a website that was analogous to a powerful narcotic. Technically, it was not pornographic. But it was actually worse (in intensity). I learned what it felt like to be hooked. Someday I may even be able to indulge, but not now.

I would not say that I am full of joy these days, but I am not in pain and I hurt no one. I help other addicts when I can. Keep coming back!

- Les J.

## Recovery Quotes

- ❑ *The opposite of addiction is not sobriety but human connection. – Johann Hari*
- ❑ *The best way out is always through. – Robert Frost*



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## A Calming Delight

I sit at the foot of my wife's bed lying my head next to her blanketed feet and talk and talk about a stray adopted puppy we missed and say "how do you think she is missed? will she be loved? Will she be homed? A beautiful puppy she is beautiful in her presence of life living in our presence. She could not stay, we had to let go this precious gift so others could receive her love and life of giving love she received. A beautiful thing to let go for loving life for others in strife or loneliness barren living alone someone to watch over her and for her to watch over love lost and reborn from this precious little gift we had to let go.

- Mark T, Santa Cruz



## I Am A Leper

*(Preface: In ancient times until the late 1800s, leprosy was considered a punishment from God upon those who sinned until science confirmed in 1873 it was a bacterial skin disease. Being stigmatized for a disease is something I can relate to, yet my disease of sex addiction is not widely accepted as a disease. For I still must stay in hiding in the caves of safety in anonymity.)*

I am a leper in a leper colony far from the home I used to be to be finally free to be the person I am not ashamed to be. Finally I am free to be the person inside of me hidden for 40 years shame on me from my own shame on me. No one else but me. Finally I can be at peace with my family of lepers like me. Talk to me, talk to me back to connection finally to understand in me truth Humility finally I am free.

- Mark T, Santa Cruz



## Recovery Quotes

- ❑ *It's never too late to become who you might have been.*
- ❑ *Recovery is hard. Regret is harder.*



### Timeless Wisdom: Gratitude

"The Simple Power of Affirmation and Gratitude" (from Issue 17, Summer 2018, *Out of the Fog* Newsletter)



At a recent meeting I attended in Berkeley a prearranged volunteer offered a short reading and reflection that was followed by round-robin shares from the members. The presenter did not choose a reading from SAA or recovery literature, but instead chose two very short stories, one on the theme of affirmation, the other on gratitude.

The stories were quite simple, yet at the same time profound and powerful, just like the concepts they describe. Each of the two, affirmation and gratitude, are so easily

accessible to us – just a thought away, don't you know – and yet so potentially impactful (if we are willing) on our recovery.

Is it not easy – play along with me here – to simply let your eyelids gently close for one second and bring to mind one thing that you are grateful for? Even if it is just gratitude for this one moment of peaceful thought? Is it not just as easy, to silently say the words to yourself (even if you do not believe them) that you are at the core a good person worthy of love, and who, with the guidance and support of your higher power and this program, can on this day conquer this disease?

On the surface, this might seem like a pointless mind game however the fact is that there is substantial scientific evidence on the effectiveness of practicing these techniques (aka mindfulness) on a variety of physical, psychological, and behavioral outcomes.

Deepak Chopra, whose initial career was as a physician, with a specialty in Neuro-Endocrinology (the study of brain chemistry) said, "Wherever a thought goes a molecule follows. Your consciousness is actually governing your biology...each thought, altering your brain chemistry." Research on neuroscience has proven that our thoughts help establish, and with repetition, strengthen, the neural pathways that reinforce the reality behind that thought. Or in other, simpler words spoken by the Buddha, "What we think, we become."

Such is the power of expressing affirmations. And in the past two decades, multiple studies have shown conclusively that people who regularly take the time to acknowledge and/or express gratitude for people or things in their life and surroundings are healthier, happier, and better able to address and forestall anxiety and stress. These people are less angry and resentful at others, and more forgiving of themselves. And in one study out of the University of Connecticut of 1726 participants in AA, 40% of those who regularly practiced gratitude over a 3-month period avoided taking a drink in the following 12 months, while only 2% of those who did not stayed sober.

All of these concrete benefits are accessible to us just a few thoughts away. Engaging in regular meditation is one way to build and exercise our thought control muscles so that we can proactively employ affirmation and gratitude in support of our recovery.

So, what are you waiting for?

- Edwin F.



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## Santa Cruz Beach Burn Update

On February 22, 2025, a group of men gathered on Seabright Beach in Santa Cruz to share food, stories, and fellowship. The night began with everyone enjoying a buffet-style meal with many types of food and beverages to choose from, including pizza, chicken wings, homemade sushi, taquitos, brownies, donuts, coffee, and fizzy water – just to name a few.

Next, the men gathered around a fire for a fellowship meeting under the stars. Marc S got the meeting started before handing it over to guest speaker David C. David told the amazing story of his recovery journey, inspiring many men in the circle to share about their own unique stories of powerlessness, unmanageability, and finding hope in the rooms of SAA. It was truly a magical night shared by all. Thank you to the organizers and all who participated for pulling off this amazing event!

**The next “Beach Burning Desire” event at Seabright Beach is scheduled for May 3, 2025. All are welcome!**

## Out of the Fog and Into the Light – 2025 Bay Area Retreat

### Friday 14 March (4PM) to Sunday 16 March (3PM) Walker Creek Ranch (*Marin County*)

The Bay Area Retreat Committee is excited to invite you to our annual Out of the Fog retreat at Walker Creek Ranch in Marin County on the weekend of March 14-16, 2025. Enrich your recovery with meetings, workshops, meditation, and fellowship. We will also enjoy all manner of outer circle activities including drum circles, campfires, game night, talent/no talent show, and hiking among the rolling hills of West Marin.

Prices have been REDUCED from last year! We hope that those of you who are able will donate to help bridge the gap so we can offer a scholarships to every member who wants to attend the retreat.

Registration:  
<http://bit.ly/retreat2025link>



Workshop Submittal:  
<http://bit.ly/2025workshopform>



Questions about the retreat? Email [bayarearetreat@gmail.com](mailto:bayarearetreat@gmail.com)



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## Reflections on the 2024 Bay Area Retreat

I attended for the first time last year and had a great experience. I felt welcome when I first arrived. I have a social phobia when it comes to large gatherings. Where will I fit in with the crowd? How will I be received? At the retreat, a welcoming committee got me signed up and name tagged quickly. As I walked into the main hall, I recognized some people from my regular meetings. I also realized we all have a common bond; we're sex addicts and we want help in recovery. This is huge common ground that was apparent throughout the weekend.

The venue was a great choice; a beautiful location in the hills with hiking trails and natural beauty. I was awoken one morning by a flock of wild turkeys. The workshops were very good. There are many perspectives to recovery, and each workshop was different. We split into pairs often during workshops to compare notes or address a question by the presenter. This I thought was really helpful. I got a chance to talk over my thoughts and listen to another point of view. Two standouts I recall were a Step 6 workshop that asked us to look at why we may be holding on to old defects of character and a Tai Chi workshop for moving meditation. Oh, and I learned how to play Canasta! I felt no pressure to participate throughout the retreat but was very glad each time I did. Please go. Your program will thank you. - Dave B.

## More Reflections on Past Retreats

*I saw friends I haven't seen since before pandemic. I enjoyed excellent food. Talent-no talent show was particularly great last year. But more than anything, I once again felt like I belong, that people care about me being there. - Anatoly C*

*I have been to the retreat several times, and I always find the experience rewarding. It always feels like such a safe space to be. Nobody comes to the retreat with attitude or ego, so what's left is a group of individuals who can be their true and authentic selves. We all share something in common. This is a place of universal kindness, acceptance, and support. - Dave R*

*I've been to two retreats over the years, and both have been massively impactful and memorable. Those three days in Petaluma set the tone for more solid recovery, joy in sobriety, and connection with the fellowship and my Higher Power. I can't wait for this year's retreat. - Alex DL*

*Over the years the SAA retreat has been a wonderful opportunity to reset and deepen my program, connect and build community and clear my head away from distractions. Climbing the hill each year with fellow sex addicts through green fields and forests to see the view from the top feels like a glimpse of the promises! - Greg L*

*The many things that I enjoyed about the 2024 SAA retreat include:*

- 1. Connecting with new SAA Friends and seeing old friends that I hadn't seen in a while.*
- 2. Meeting SAA fellows from zoom meetings, in person for the first time.*
- 3. Workshops and learning new things about myself.*
- 4. The "talent no talent show was great. There are so many talented people in our fellowship!*
- 5. Good food. Good times! Friendly staff and attendees. - Jeff M*







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## Announcements & Events

- ❑ **Quarterly Santa Cruz Beach Burn #6-** May 3, 2025 - Seabright Beach.  
For more information: Mark T (408) 607-8186.
- ❑ **HELP NEEDED: Have experience in web design and/or WordPress?**  
If so, please contact [bradinrecovery@outlook.com](mailto:bradinrecovery@outlook.com) – there is a service opportunity for 1 or more people to help with the Bay Area SAA website.
- ❑ **Podcast listener? Check out the Sex Addicts Recovery Podcast**  
Available on [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), [YouTube](#), [Bay Area website](#)  
130+ episodes which are downloaded and listened to around the world.  
For more information: [jason@sexaddictsrecoverypod.com](mailto:jason@sexaddictsrecoverypod.com)
- ❑ **Sponsors Helping Sponsors** - Thursdays, 11 am US EST / 8 am PST  
Zoom ID: 419880404, pass code: 123456 Phone: 646 558-8656  
Contact: Christine C. 260 209-4445
- ❑ **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 @ noon - Contact Gil R. for more information (831 419-3342)
- ❑ **Please Submit Group Donations via Website** – this ensures we know which group is donating. Use this link: <https://bayareasaa.org/contribute>

## 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.

For more information: <https://scisaa.org/prisoner-outreach>

Rey G - [prisoneroutreach@proton.me](mailto:prisoneroutreach@proton.me) 818.486.4053 (text first)

## 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](mailto:women@bayareasaa.org)
- **GLBTQQI Seeking Recovery**  
[glbt@bayareasaa.org](mailto:glbt@bayareasaa.org)
- **Spanish Speaking Information**  
[espanol@bayareasaa.org](mailto:espanol@bayareasaa.org)
- **BIPOC Specific Recovery**  
[bit.ly/SBIPOCintergroup-welcome](https://bit.ly/SBIPOCintergroup-welcome)
- **Bay Area SAA website**
  - [Bay Area Meetings List](#) ★
  - [Bay Area Events](#)
  - [Bay Area Meeting Updates & Intergroup Info](#)
  - [Intergroup Orientation](#)
  - [GSR Info](#)
- **Printable Bay Area Meeting List**
- **Worldwide SAA website**
  - [Global Meeting Finder](#) ★
  - [SAA Literature](#)
- **Sex Addicts Recovery Podcast**
  - [Listen Directly](#)
  - [Podcast YouTube Playlist](#)
- **San Jose Recovery website**
  - [Step Guides & Worksheets](#)

## Feedback / Submissions

- [Newsletter Submission](#)