

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

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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

“As long as we can be honest, even just a little bit, we can move forward in our recovery. Honesty is the foundation on which all further progress is based. We start by admitting that we are completely powerless to stop our addictive behaviors on our own. We admit that our lives are out of control. This is enough for our recovery to begin.”



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

“When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us.”

Helen Keller



The Principles Behind the 12 Steps Step Three: Faith

“Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.”

Just as Step Two and Three are inextricably linked, so are the principles behind them: hope and faith. The hope generated in Step Two is characterized by thoughts of the future—something is challenging now and we hold the hope that it will get better. When we enter SAA and sit in meetings we frequently become inspired by the stories of recovery around us. The seeds of hope are planted as we begin to consider the possibility that that if we apply ourselves just as those who have come before us have done, we might also enjoy the gift of recovery from our addiction.

Hope alone, however, is not enough to sustain us. The crucial question becomes: How do we move from the hope generated in Step Two to the faith that is the here and now of Step Three?

One of the foundations of all 12-Step Programs is the notion of a Higher Power. Equally as important is that the definition of this power is personally determined by each of us. I recall a step study meeting early in my recovery. One of the members shared how he slipped and slid

through five years in program. Traction in sobriety didn't begin for him until he heard a speaker at a meeting say, “If you are going to successfully turn your life over to something, you need to have a solid idea of what that something is!”

These words resonated deeply in me and I realized that while Step Two encourages us to define what our higher power is, Step three invites to begin relate to our chosen “God” in a pragmatic way, i.e., how do we use it as a resource in our recovery journey. What does turning something over look like?

Initially the prospect of taking the Third Step felt daunting. How could I possibly have that much faith in something and how could all my troubles ever be lifted? I had been in my sex addiction for decades and there was so much wreckage in my life as a consequence of it. The idea of a Third Step was just too abstract. Yes, I knew what troubled me, and yes, I knew that turning it over means releasing it to my chosen Higher Power, but I needed something much more tangible and concrete. The tools of SAA (as well as other tools I acquired from outside resources) became the concrete *how to* of my Third Step journey. I believe that one of the tasks of recovery is not necessarily to master all of the tools available, but to discover which tools work for me and to apply ourselves to them with as much commitment and rigor as I can muster.

Meetings and program calls were central tools for me. I came to think of each meeting and phone call as an opportunity to show up and tell the truth. In the act of

doing so, I turned over my shame and isolation. I remember once in a moment of despair saying to my sponsor, “Yes, I feel better after listening and sharing in a meeting, but my addiction is so strong I don't know if I will ever get out from under it.” He smiled (he had been there) and said, “Just keep showing up and doing what you are doing. Things sometimes change quickly, but most often, slowly.” Over time, I too came to understand that the *how to* was to just keep doing Third Steps. Each time I released a piece of the darkness of my past, I had the opportunity to reclaim a piece of my essential self—a self that was buried in the throes of my addiction. The experience of turning over my struggles (as well as my successes) created relief, and this relief in turn created faith. I came to believe that even for me, recovery was possible.

Journaling also proved to be a tool that worked for me. Each time I would write down what was on my mind and in my heart, it was like taking a Third Step—and in the action of the writing, I would visualize my Higher Power receiving my quandaries and concerns. I found that I was drawn to ritualizing the turning over and for many years placed my writing in a God Box to concretize the letting go. Sometimes, I would take my writing and bury it in my garden underneath a Quan Yin statue (Chinese Goddess of Compassion.) I liked the idea of my troubles decomposing in my garden and turning into fertilizer for my flowers.

All of the tools of SAA are faith building. They are both

By: [Name] Date: [Date]

material and pragmatic as well as spiritual and continually serve to deepen and strengthen my faith in SAA and in my recovery. No matter what comes up in me, whether it be urges toward addictive behavior, lust of the mind, euphoric recall or any of the myriad challenges of my life, taking a Third Step becomes an action I can trust. Over

time, it develops into a solid faith; a faith that helps me to withstand the trials of withdrawal and the challenges that accompany putting down any aspect of addiction. Step Three is not simply a periodic action to be taken when things get tough, but it can become a way of life. Every moment, every occasion, even every breath

is an opportunity to take a Third Step and lean into the faith that is the guiding principle behind it. With the help of our Higher Power we can heal from the ravages of our addiction and create meaningful lives and not only restore our dignity and self-respect but also enhance of the lives of those around us.

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San Francisco Bay Area SAA Announcements

Visioning

The next Visioning meeting will be held after the June 13 Intergroup meeting in San Francisco. The Intergroup meeting will begin early at 10 a.m. and will try to end early so that more time is given for the visioning meeting. The planned ending of the meeting is at 1 p.m. This is an open meeting for any member of SAA who wishes to attend, and who would like to give their input on what the Intergroup can do for SAA. The address for this meeting is at the Alano Club at 1748 Market St., San Francisco.

Picnic

There is an Outer Circle picnic event happening on June 13 from 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Meet at 9:45 in Howarth Park, Santa Rosa to walk or bike to picnic site. Additional details can be found on a circulating flyer.

Outer Circle Events

Each meeting is encouraged to create an Outer Circle event for the Bay Area. Speak with your Intergroup representative. Also, send your ideas for Outer Circle events to the Intergroup at info@bayareasaa.org.

Spanish Translation

A new edition of Sex Addicts Anonymous in Spanish is available from ISO.

Meditation Walk Outer Circle Event

Deep Breath Silent Meditation Walk to Kite Hill City Vista on June 4, 2015. Meet at 8 a.m. at corner of Diamond and 18th St. (in front of Post Office across from Most Holy Redeemer).

Camping Trip

Sept. 4, 5, and 6. Location to be announced.



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 Ten: *'Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.'*

Reading:

SAA Green Book: "Step 10," pp. 52-55.

In the Tenth Step we embrace the discipline of regular spiritual housecleaning. Just as we took action to repair the damage we caused in the past, so we continue taking inventory of our behavior, and making amends when needed in our lives today. Working Step Ten helps us deal with our shortcomings on a daily basis. Even with our best efforts we make mistakes. We are human, and we all fall short of the mark regularly, even when we are abstinent from our addictive sexual behavior. In taking the Tenth Step, we commit to keeping our house in order, whether failings reappear or new ones arise, as they inevitably will.

Regular inventory is the cornerstone of the Tenth Step. We set aside time to review our behavior, our dealings with others, our emotions, and our spiritual condition. Quiet time for self-reflection, without distraction, is essential. We may find different ways to set aside this time, and different methods for taking stock. However we work for step, we act in our commitment to making continued self-examination part of our new way of life.

Honest self-examination can take many forms we may mentally review the events of our day or write our inventories in a journal. We may check in with our sponsor or others in recovery, or we may pause for a "spot check" inventory in the moment. Many of us work the Tenth Step daily, though we can also work out as needed when we feel upset, angry, or off-balance. Some of us set aside a block of time weekly, monthly, or annually for a more thorough inventory. The important thing is that we repeat the process we began in steps four through nine, in order to keep the games we have made in recovery and to strengthen our connections with ourselves, with others, and with our

Many of us took inventory at the end of the day. As we look back, we note what emotions we have felt throughout that day, checking whether particular emotions, such as anger or fear, took center stage. We take stock of our attitudes, the things we say to others, and whether we're taking care of our own needs. We look at any character defects or old habits that may have revealed themselves. We consider whether we have harmed anyone and need to make amends. We also find it helpful to remember the things for which we are grateful or the things we have done well. Gratitude provides a needed perspective on our problems and helps us feel connected with our Higher Power. We ask God's help with the challenges that face us, while thanking God for the blessings of life and recovery.

Taking regular inventory doesn't mean that we beat up on ourselves. Neither self-punishment nor excessive vigilance is the purpose of this step. Instead, we come to accept that making mistakes is a fact of life and an essential part of recovery. Step Ten says "when we were wrong," not "if we were wrong. Our experience shows that we will be wrong on a regular basis. We adopt the attitude of learning from, rather than denying our mistakes. Working this step allows us to let go of both perfectionism and grandiosity. We gradually discover the relief and humility of not having to be perfect.

At this step in our recovery, we may have already experienced surprising growth in the quality of relationships and the quality of our faith. Practicing our Tenth Step helps us continue to grow in self-acceptance, self-awareness, and rigorous honesty. We are living in such a way as to keep our accounts balanced and our serenity intact. In gratitude for all we have received from our Higher Power, we move on to Step Eleven.

Bay Area SAA

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