



Gentle Currents



THE NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM SEX AND LOVE ADDICTION

TampaBaySLAA.org

AUGUST 2023

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Like other people, we had been life's victims in many respects. Many of us had memories of emotional deprivation, or of being physically or even sexually abused. It mattered little whether this abuse was objectively true in every detail, or merely perceived, as such the point was that our feelings about these events had hardened into a great bitterness, which we held for those people who have mistreated us. We had also turned this hatred inward, re-directing it against ourselves, using our self loathing to justify our unworthiness to be loved by others, letting them off the hook!

The Augustine Fellowship SLAA pg. 90

Willingness

Humbly, we turned to God. "I am not responsible for the conditions which created me, but I am willing to try to be responsible for myself," we prayed. "Help me to be willing to make right what I have done to each and every person in my life." We had closed "there" side of the books, and audited hours, sparingly. In the god, consciousness called love, we found compassion for ourselves and a new awareness of our responsibility to others as sober people. During our active addiction, we had been the embodiment of sickness, tinting reality for all those who came in contact with us our spiritual, emotional, mental, and sometimes physical disease had contaminated even those relationships, which could otherwise have been healthy.

The Augustine Fellowship, SLAA pg 92

Step 8: Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Tradition 8: S.L.A.A. should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

Sign of Recovery 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.

Concept 8: The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, including their ability to hire staff.

Tampa Bay Intergroup is accepting one-time and monthly recurring 7th Tradition contributions from individuals and meeting groups through PayPal.
<https://tampabayslaa.org/donate/>

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Now we need more action without which we find that "faith without works is dead." Let's look at steps eight and nine. We have a list of all persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took some inventory. We subjected ourselves to a drastic self end appraisal. Now we go out to our fellows and repair the damage done in the past. We attempt to sweep away the debris which has accumulated out of our efforts to live on self, will, and run the show ourselves. If we haven't the world to do this, we ask until it comes. Remember it was agreed. At the beginning, we would go to any links for victory over alcohol.

Alcoholics Anonymous, Into Action, pg. 88-89

Whenever our pencil falters, we can fortify and cheer ourselves. By remembering what a experience in this step has meant to others. It is the beginning of the end of isolation from our fellows, and from God. 12 steps and 12 traditions, Pg 82

"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."

This is a very large order. It is a task which we may perform with increasing skill, but never really finish. Learning how to live in the greatest peace, partnership, and brotherhood with all men and women, whatever description, is a moving and fascinating adventure. Every AA has found that he can make a little headway in this new adventure of living until he first backtracks and really makes an accurate and unsparing survey of the human wreckage he has left in his week. To a degree, he has already done this one taking moral inventory, but now the time has come when he out to re-double his efforts to see how many people he has hurt, and in what ways.

Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions, Step Eight, Pg 77

February 27

The SLAA Life Preserver

Alcoholics Anonymous grew from the principle that one alcoholic could maintain recovery by reaching out to help another one... That "caring the message" principle of the 12 step recovery ensures, that lonely, sex and love attics... Will have the opportunity to find that special friendship and fellowship with others, which is so vital – so life-giving. NSL a a basic text, Page, viii

The symbol of the life preserver is about throwing a lifeline. Members of SLAA, save each others lives. The life preserver doesn't work on its own. Someone has to choose to throw it into the water and the person in the water has to choose to grab it. That lifeline comes in the form of our basic text, fellowship, sponsorships and meetings. And outreach call could save someone's life. Our message of hope is in the SLAA basic text, but the addict has to read it and choose to hear the message and follow the plan of recovery. Sponsors, fellowship and meetings are all available to help. As long as the newcomer is willing to reach out for that help, they can recover, instead of drowning, an addiction. The life preserver logo is on all of SLAA's literature, chips, and medallions to remind us that we are not alone. Other members are there for support. We help ourselves by helping others. It feels good to see others recover, and Lita, Happy, more productive lives. If we can have some small part in making that happen, it's strengthens us to continue this journey of recovery.

Today, I reach out to my fellows and help in whatever way I can.

A State of Grace Daily Meditations pg 50



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Characteristics of Sex & 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.

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

I Still Thrive in the Relationship

It has been a difficult road for me, but 4 years into my relationship, I feel like I have gained a lot of perspective in terms of navigating sex with my partner. As a sex addict, I used to have sex in the past to feel better, as a drug. Dating someone who is not a sex addict has been really confusing, since they don't turn to sex for comfort, entertainment, fun, or to just feel good, as I do. I've learned that while I might want sex more often than my partner, I can live without it and still thrive in the relationship by focusing on the principle of acceptance. These days I am in the place of "I'd rather have sex with my partner than anyone else in the world, and I will wait until they are ready" rather than complaining about not getting enough sex, pressuring them to have sex when they don't feel like it, or acting like it's a dealbreaker when it's not.

I've realized that I didn't initially choose my partner based solely on sexual attraction or sexual compatibility, but rather on friendship, a spiritual, emotional, intellectual connection, and a mutual willingness to explore intimacy through following the dating plan. Because the basis of the relationship wasn't a sexual connection, it's been harder to learn how to enjoy sex together. I would say that the sex we have is wonderful and fulfilling, but it definitely doesn't provide an addictive rush or a "high."

The sex is just one aspect of a relationship built on shared interests and values, quality time spent together, humor, friendship, hobbies, support, and love. I am so grateful to the program that I've been able to heal from my sex addiction and experience sex within a loving, safe context. If anyone is struggling with sexual frustration in their relationship, I would just encourage them to look at the bigger picture and focus on what's going right in the relationship, all that their partner brings to the table, and the overall joy of being together even when not being sexual. It's also a great idea to refocus on top lines. I've gotten so focused on top lines that I sometimes forget about sex completely, which is really mind-blowing for a sex addict. Focusing on top lines means I am happier and that I provide a more inviting and nourishing atmosphere for my partner instead of being demanding, deprived, and resentful. Whether we have sex or not, I want to live life to the fullest and be my best self. At the end of the day, sex with the right person once in a while is far more fulfilling and satisfying than sex 3 times a week with strangers or hookups. It's actually the most beautiful experience in the world and I wouldn't trade it for anything. — Anonymous

The Journal, Issue #201

I feel that communication is the basis of forming intimacy. I would set up a time to speak about each other's needs. Almost like a 10 minute meeting we each share for a number of minutes and come up with a compromise and a plan for connection. — Cara L., NY