



# Gentle Currents



THE NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM SEX AND LOVE ADDICTION

TampaBaySLAA.org

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## DECEMBER 2023

SLAA Helpline (727) 896-SLAA

THE JOY OF LIVING IS THE THEME OF AA'S TWELFTH STEP AND ACTION IS ITS KEYWORD. HERE WE TURN OUTWARD TOWARD OUR FELLOW ALCOHOLICS WHO ARE STILL IN DISTRESS. HERE WE EXPERIENCE THE KIND OF GIVING THAT ASKS NO REWARDS. HERE WE BEGIN TO PRACTICE ALL TWELVE STEPS OF THE PROGRAM IN OUR DAILY LIVES SO THAT WE AND THOSE ABOUT US MAY FIND EMOTIONAL SOBRIETY. WHEN THE TWELFTH STEP IS SEEN IN ITS FULL IMPLICATION, IT IS REALLY TALKING ABOUT THE KIND OF LOVE THAT HAS NO PRICE TAG ON IT.

TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS, PG. 106

TAMPA BAY INTERGROUP IS  
ACCEPTING ONE TIME AND MONTHLY  
RECURRING 7TH TRADITION  
CONTRIBUTIONS THROUGH PAYPAL

[HTTPS://TAMPABAYSLAA.ORG/DONATE/](https://tampabayslaa.org/donate/)

**Step 12:** Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to sex and love addicts and to practice these principles in all areas of our lives.

**Tradition 12:** Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

**Sign of Recovery 12:** We are restored to sanity, on a daily basis, by participating in the process of recovery.

**Concept 12:** The Conference observes the spirit of S.L.A.A. Tradition, a. taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; b. that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; c. that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; d. that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; e. that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; f. that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the Fellowship it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

*We will do our best to keep this List updated to reflect changes in SLAA In-Person locations or Online meetings. Please contact our Helpline to notify us of any Meeting Changes.*

CLICK HERE FOR OUR CURRENT MEETING LIST: (it's updating regularly)

<https://tampabayslaa.org/find-a-meeting/>

IN NEED OF A PHONE MEETING? CLICK HERE: <https://slaafws.org/telephonemeetings>

EMAIL: [Help@tampabayslaa.org](mailto:Help@tampabayslaa.org)

PHONE: (727) 896-7522 (Helpline)

# *Gentle Currents*

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We discovered that we could continue to affirm our recovery by working with other sex and love addicts. Minus the guilt, our experiences in addiction had been transformed to lessons for living of profound depth and durability. We shared our experiences freely and openly with others, establishing a healing bond, through that language of the heart, which could move others to recognize their own straits, and point them towards the source for their own healing. No experience in living was more meaningful for us than letting ourselves become channels through which healing and redeeming grace could flow. The paradox that was our usefulness as channels for healing, was a direct result of our experiences in sickness, as well as in recovery.

The Augustine Fellowship Basic Text, pg. 102

### SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF S.L.A.A. WHO SPEAKS ANOTHER LANGUAGE? ARE YOU WILLING TO TRANSLATE S.L.A.A. CONFERENCE-APPROVED LITERATURE? IF YOU SPEAK: SPANISH, ITALIAN, HEBREW, HINDI, CHINESE, FRENCH, GERMAN, DANISH, POLISH, DUTCH, SWEDISH, ICELANDIC, NORWEGIAN, JAPANESE, RUSSIAN, ARABIC OR ANY OTHER LANGUAGE PLEASE CONTACT US AND VISIT:

[HTTP://WWW.SLAAFWS.ORG/CTC](http://www.slAAFWS.org/CTC)

### WORKING WITH OTHERS

Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is our twelfth suggestion: Carry this message to other alcoholics! You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail. Remember, they are very ill. Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends— this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers, and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.

Alcoholics Anonymous, pg 89



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### December 6 THE TWELFTH STEP

*Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to sex and love addicts, and to practice these principles, and all areas of our lives.*

– SLAA Core Documents, “The Twelve Steps of SLAA”

A key here is the spiritual awakening as the result of these steps. If my therapist had been able to cure me of my addiction, I probably would have made her my higher power, and eventually drifted away from the program. The steps can bring about some kind of spiritual awakening, hopefully sufficient enough to help us stay sober, and want to give back to the program. Spiritual awakenings can vary from little “aha” moments to lightning bolt experiences. Any variety can be enough to help us try to carry the message and practice the principles. No one wants to work for free. In early recovery, when I was asked to speak on the other side of town, or to clean up after a meeting, my first thought was, *I should be getting paid for this.* I came to realize that my payment is sobriety. carrying the message can sometimes be payment itself. When people express gratitude for our service, or when we see even hopeless cases recover, it can be self-gratifying, (as long as we stay humble). practicing the principles in all areas of our lives can be a difficult task. Attempting this sometimes brings out my perfectionism. But if I’m doing a thorough Tenth Step every night and practicing the Eleventh Step, it is possible.

*It is my Higher Power’s will for me to be of service to others today.*

A State of Grace Daily Meditations, pg 341

We had sought full partnership with God, and knowledge of God’s purpose for us. By seeking to live with honesty and integrity, and to be of service to others, we had discovered that the source of love, which was of God, had begun to flow from within us. We had lived our way to step 12.

The Augustine Basic Text, page 101

**One area in which we often experienced difficulty was in continuing to be open and forthright about our feelings and motives, and our expectations of others. We would hide disappointment, hurt, fear, or anger, under a façade of accept...[we needed to concentrate] on our own faults and failures. We were coming to know that our own attitudes and actions were the only aspects of our lives, which we stood any real chance of influencing.**

**-SLAA Basic Text, page 97**

### WE ARE BETTER WHEN WE’RE UNITED

The SLAA FWS board of trustees (BOT) stands for Unity among our members. We celebrate the rich, diverse tapestry of our global membership by fostering supportive spaces for individuals of all ethnicities, gender identities, ages, religions, sexual orientations, physical or mental abilities, histories, legal consequences, and experiences. the SLAA FWS BOT encourages all SLAA members to value our differences and bring our authentic, whole selves to the Rooms. Our diverse voices bring tremendous value to our fellowship. It is our hope that all sex and love addicts feel welcome and accepted in these safe spaces of recovery.

THE TWO GROUPS PREVIOUSLY MEETING AT ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CLEARWATER ARE NOW MEETING AT ST. JOHN’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH AT 1676 S. BELCHER ROAD, CLEARWATER. THE TUESDAY NIGHT CLW MEN’S WILL MEET AT 7 PM AND THE SATURDAY MORNING WILL MEET AT 9AM

**BENEFITS OF SERVICE: GOD DOES NOT “KEEP SCORE”**

I grew up in the land of the manipulators. The “shell game” was always an active endeavor. Who was on top? Who “owed” me? Who had the most horrible recent “trauma” to milk for days on end...playing the victim role? These seemed like life’s BIGGEST questions when I was a child.

Also, I had a sex addict mother who hid her addiction behind “romance novels” and “religion.” She spoon-fed me the romance addiction by pretending to buy the “romance novels” for me. I had a father who lost his literal “self” in the marriage and was jumping ship every chance he could get to go “do service” for others in the church and in the community.

So I grew up with very low self-esteem because of being totally ignored by both parents and milking my fears with the “romance novels” and hoping like heck — like the books implied — that “someday my prince would come to ‘save me’” bullsh\*t.

So to make myself “feel good” and “look good,” I tried to be the good girl and I grew up being an active volunteer in the community. I do not attend church since my view of religion was and is severely impaired by my mother’s ruse of covering up her addiction.

What I kept doing was the definition of insanity. I kept volunteering big chunks of time to various non-profits to try to fill that void — that void where self-esteem is supposed to be in the psyche. I was constantly keeping score of all the good karma points I was accumulating. Yet, it really did not make me feel good for any length of time. So I kept going back — trying to volunteer, campaign for worthy causes and donate funds from time-to-time. I did all this to try to get that “high” of self-esteem — to somehow “prove” to myself that I was “worthy”, that I was “lovable” and not just some dirt bag piece of sh\*t (that I truly felt like inside).

Since my introduction into several 12-step meet-

ings (I have multiple addictions coming out of the system I grew up in) I have come to realize no amount of time put into service to any one person, place or thing can help me increase my self-esteem. That work is very well addressed when I do the 12-steps. It is also addressed when I attend S.L.A.A. meetings that show me a healthy model of intimacy by listening and by sharing with total honesty, true commitment and willingness to learn.

It has dawned on me that I was the only one keeping “score” all those years when I volunteered. Also, the reason the “feel good” part did not last was because I was attaching a hell of a great deal of EXPECTATIONS to my paltry efforts to somehow “fix” this massive lack of self-esteem that was buried deep within my psyche. I now understand that the best service I can provide and the times I have true lasting effects is when “I show up” time and time again — when I consistently work the 12-steps to bring clarity and understanding to the “mind games” of the past. Also, I show up to show my fellow travelers on this journey. I need every last one of them to keep my head and heart on healthy paths. Any service I can do to make it easier on all of us is worth it. I show that we all count by my efforts to love them unconditionally without expecting anything in return. I am finally seeing what is modeled through my service duties. I am learning my own methods of how (for the first time) to nurture myself.

Slowly, the service of giving without any strings attached is showing me that this is how I should love myself. No other relationships can truly happen for me until I come to a place of full acceptance of myself and understanding there is no clinging, no keeping score, no head/mind games in unconditional love.

**Lois T, Ohio**

the Journal, Issue #155