



Gentle Currents



THE NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM SEX AND LOVE ADDICTION

TampaBaySLAA.org

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SLAA Helpline (727) 896-SLAA

JANUARY 2024

February 16 SATISFACTION

The sex and love addict would come to substitute the thrill of sexual adventure or intensity of "love" for the more encompassing satisfactions, founded first and foremost on self-respect, and later, realized in family, career and community. – SLAA, basic text, Page viii

I used to live by the phrase, "I can't get no satisfaction." I thought it made me cool to be continually on the search for more – more attention, more and better sex, etc. When my sponsor told me to embrace the boredom, it sounded like assigning myself to hell. Life, without the thrill of sexual adventure, made me feel like I needed to jump out of airplanes in my early withdrawal. But I was told to sit with the feelings and act like I thought a "normal" person would. It was uncomfortable for a very long time. I had to grieve my former thrilling life in order to let go of the longing for "the one." But the self-respect I gained in return was definitely worth the effort. The freedom of holding my head up high and giving back to family and community is all the satisfaction I need. **Today, I enjoy dignity and self-respect.**

State of Grace Daily Meditations, pg 47

IMPORTANT: To help keep our members informed, Intergroup has created a confidential contact list. Please send us a contact person for your group and include that individual's first name, email address, and a phone number that can receive text messages. Please send that to help@tampabayslaa.org or

Step 1: We admitted we were powerless over sex and love addiction - that our lives had become unmanageable.

Tradition 1: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon S.L.A.A. unity.

Sign 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.

Concept 1: Ultimate responsibility and authority for S.L.A.A. world services always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

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The S.L.A.A. Inspiration Story Line is available 24-hours a day. A weekly episode from one of our members shares their story of experience, strength and hope. (215) 574-2121





JANUARY 2024

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES '24

GDVI SECOND SATURDAY WORKSHOP SERIES



Jan. 13th: Establishing Bottom, Middle & Top Lines

Feb. 10th: The Gift of No Contact

Mar. 9th: Spirituality & The Steps

Apr. 13th: Sponsorship

ALL WORKSHOPS ARE HELD AT THE SAME TIME (Eastern U.S. Canada)

2-4:30 pm ET / 11 am-1:30 pm PT / 7-10:30 pm GMT /

Sunday, 6-9:30 am Australian Eastern Time (AET) (for January and February sessions) 5-8:30 am AET (for March session) and 4-7:30 am AET (for April session)

The virtual room will open 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the session listed above.



Learn More & Register at

[SLAADVI.org/obstacles](https://slaadvl.org/obstacles)

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

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

Those of us who tried to deceive ourselves in the way we tried to define our sex and love addiction either found ourselves slipping back into the old behavior or getting into real trouble with our new "steps forward." We learned the hard way that there was no such thing as half-surrender. The "freedom" to define our own addictive pattern, could not be used in a self-serving way. Our addictions are a reality that persists regardless of any shortsighted, convenient, definition.

Basic Text, Step 1, pg. 72

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>

GROWING TOWARDS CONNECTION

I find that the more comfortable I get with myself, my feelings, and the world as it is — the less I need to escape.

The more I can feel pain, sensation and safety, the more I can feel love and connection too and the more available I am for other people. When I am not allowing the Truth to exist in me — I cannot help but use and control and neglect or abuse myself or others. It is not bad. When I or others are in that place, it is because we feel threatened, afraid, unloved — somehow unsafe. I judge myself less and less for my 'bad' behavior or when I am shut down, or shutting people out. I know and trust that there was/is a reason for it, but that my true nature is love, and so I ask for strength and power to open more to Love and then let go.

I find that the healthier I get, the less I need to work out if others are healthy. I am in touch with the aliveness of being — and I don't have to figure it all out so I can control it as I did before. I can accept people in pain and love them. Then when

people are in pain, instead of making them wrong or 'unavailable,' I see that I can maybe bring a little kindness or encouragement or love to their lives. No one wants to be unavailable. It helps to remember that. We are all just doing the best we can do.

I also can accept my genuine need for love and connection and feel that as a good thing, rather than something to fear or be ashamed of as I used to. Things are more straight forward. I am now realizing that a lot of my behavior as I was so desperately wanting 'love and connection' was because I was actually scared of real love, intimacy, connection and so I was seeking substitutes. If I judged myself as bad, I would be stuck in that place still. I am grateful for the support of the fellowship and the journey of finding a new ground — a new basis of life — that naturally just keeps opening my heart to learning about who I am and who others are.

—Elise

The Journal, Issue 167



Why all this insistence that every AA must hit bottom first? The answer is that few people will sincerely try to practice the AA program unless they have hit bottom. For practicing AAs remaining 11 steps means the adoption of attitudes and actions that almost no alcoholic, who is still drinking, can dream of taking Who wishes to be rigorously, honest, intolerant? Who wants to confess his faults to another and make restitution for harm done? Who cares anything about a higher power, let alone meditation and prayer? Who wants to sacrifice time and energy in trying to carry AA's message to the next sufferer? No, the average alcoholic, self-centered in the extreme, doesn't care for this prospect — unless he has to do these things in order to stay alive himself.

Under the lash of alcoholism, we are driven to AA, and there we discover the fatal nature of our situation. Then, and only then, do we become as open-minded to conviction, and as willing to listen as the dying can be. We stand ready to do anything which will lift the merciless obsession from us.





JANUARY 2024

Five Ways to Tell if Someone Is Emotionally Available

1. They say they are emotionally available. This might seem simple, and may not come up as clearly as I am writing it here, but the first step to someone being emotionally available is them saying they are emotionally available...if they say they AREN'T emotionally available, then that is a huge giant billboard that says LOUDLY they are not emotionally available...if they aren't saying whether they are emotionally available or not, I'm not afraid to ask.
2. They act like they are emotionally available. Congruence between what one says and what one does is really important for me as a sex and love addict. My sponsor always says, "look at the actions" and "what are the ACTIONS saying."
3. There is little to no ambivalence to how someone feels about me. An emotionally available person will not bring ambivalence into the relationship (and this includes friendship and family relationships as well). I look back at my relationships with unavailable friends, family members, and romantic partners and so many times the relationships that activated my sex and love addiction were relationships full of ambivalence. In fact, in our Basic Text in the withdrawal chapter, it says, "We have found that wherever ambiguity is present, the potential for reactivating sex and love addiction is present also" (110-111).
4. They aren't emotionally tied to any other partner or past/present/future relationships (or are working on getting untied). A person doesn't need a blank slate in order to be emotionally available, although I know early on in my acting out days I thought that THAT was the problem: that if only I could find someone who had never loved anyone else before (or that had never BEEN loved before), then my sex and love addiction would be quiet. But I don't really want that. I want someone who has loved, and lost, and moved passed those feelings and can love again.
5. Emotionally available people set and maintain boundaries. Boundaries... like a four-letter word with more letters for extra measure. Boundaries are good, healthy, and amazing, but sometimes in relationships, one person's boundaries can feel to another person like a lack of emotional availability. Boundaries are essential for a healthy relationship and show a sign of emotional availability, provided they are set and maintained with the best interest of others and oneself in mind.

The Journal, Issue 167

We reached a point of surrendering unconditionally. The proof that our surrender was indeed unconditional was that we now refrained, one day at a time, from every form of bottom line behavior, we saw as part of our own addictive pattern.

Basic Text, Step 1, pg. 72