

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



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 and dependency.

Subscribe!!!

Save the trees and sign up to receive each quarterly issue of *Out of the Fog* by email.

Send your request to:

newsletter@bayareasaa.org

Looking for a meeting?

A complete list of current Bay Area SAA meetings can be found at:

www.bayareasaa.org/meetings.php

If you cannot make a meeting in person, a complete list of electronic meetings can be found at:

www.saa-recovery.org/Meetings/ElectronicMeetings/

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Gratitude List

Many recovering sex addicts find that acknowledging things in their life that they are grateful for, helps them avoid succumbing to self-pity and despair and keeps their life in perspective. Each issue we'll share examples from SAA members who employ this tool in their recovery practice.

Today, I am grateful for:

- ✓ My home, my sanctuary
- ✓ Sobriety and the gift of my life back, one day at a time
- ✓ Homemade spring rolls
- ✓ Hot water and fragrant soap
- ✓ Children laughing in the playground nearby
- ✓ Poignant shares at yesterday's meeting
- ✓ Beginning to make better choices. Thank you, higher power

What are you grateful for? Submit your suggestions to:

newsletter@bayareasaa.org

Attention Newcomers: Keep Coming Back!!!

Usually at the beginning of each meeting, time is set aside to welcome “Newcomers” – those who are in their first 30 days of sobriety.

Those who step forward to acknowledge themselves as such seem to fall into three categories:

- 1) Those new to SAA, have recently hit bottom and, as a last resort, decided to give the program a try;
- 2) Those who have maintained relatively long periods [6 months or more] of sobriety but have fallen prey to the ‘cunning, baffling, powerful’ nature of this disease; and
- 3) Those who teeter on the edge of sobriety constantly, achieving short periods of sobriety – 30, 60, 90 days, etc. – but who end up returning over and over to “Newcomer” status.

This last group, whom we might call ‘chronic’ or ‘veteran’ newcomers, is as varied as the faces with which this disease presents itself in our ranks.

They include those who spend many days ‘white knuckling’ it, not using the tools of recovery when triggered or faced with life’s challenges.

They include those who sustain a ‘light’ program, attending meetings sporadically, and/or not working the steps rigorously...or, those at the other extreme, practically anal compulsive in their program, going to lots of meetings, praying every day, and seemingly doing everything possible to stave off the beast.

Whatever the case, the fact that these ‘veteran newcomers’ exhibit the courage and the honesty it takes to ‘keep coming back’ to these rooms and self-declare, bodes well for their chances, **IF** they do not fall into complacency or acceptance that this is the best they can expect of the program and for themselves.

While everyone’s solutions may be different, I’m willing to suggest that a refocus on program literature and readings may help some to get over the hump and progress to a more stable sobriety.

One reading in particular comes to mind and that is, **“How It Works.”** [see P.3] This piece from the AA Big Book is as close to a recipe for success as one can get. It may be a good exercise to dive in and do a self-check as to how one is using the ingredients of this ‘recipe’ in their program.

Are you *“willing to go to any lengths”* to achieve success in the program, i.e.,

make the program a constant conscious presence in your life?

Are you practicing *“rigorous honesty”* in all your interactions with others, but especially within your intimate partner relationship?

Have you been *“fearless and thorough”* in your program and *“let go absolutely?”*

These key phrases in the text indicate that success will only truly come if your program is **THE** top priority in your life for *“half measures...avail us nothing.”*

There is no shame in falling short on

“...ain’t nothing wrong with going down. It’s staying down that’s wrong.”
-- Muhammad Ali

these measures as we mark progress and not perfection in our programs.

And as The AA Promises promise: *“They are being fulfilled among us— sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. But they will **ALWAYS** materialize **IF** we work for them.”*

So, keep coming back!

– Edwin F., Editor



Letter to the Addicts Who Still Suffer

From time to time, some of my sponsees struggle a great deal with addictive behavior. Therefore, I wrote this letter in the hopes it will be helpful to them and others in recovery.



Dear Brothers &
Sisters in Recovery -

My experience as an addict & sponsor, have allowed me to witness many addicts (including myself) proclaim the desire to get sober but, instead, sabotage recovery over and over again. In my view, a critical reason for this sabotage is fear and pain.

Recovery demands we discover things about ourselves we may be afraid to know or are too painful to accept. In my opinion, fear and pain are the most important issues in an addict's recovery.

Without sobriety, addicts run away from their emotions and, thereby, continue self-destructive behavior because it doesn't challenge them to face their fear and pain. And, while acting out, addicts continue to believe the big lie: I can get sober anytime I want, but not today.

To get sober and stay sober, I had to unravel and examine my fear and pain. Fear and pain are flip sides of the same "human" coin. During my recovery, I learned fear and pain were the reason(s) for my addictive behavior.

However, I had to hit bottom many times to figure that out. Once I truly became clean and sober something incredible happened. I was no longer afraid of my addiction. Letting go of fear and pain is how I finally got sober.

First and foremost, we must have the courage to face our fear and pain. We must make a 24/7 commitment to recovery, no matter how difficult it

may be. We must be open and honest with ourselves, our sponsor, and in our other relationships. And, we must never permit ourselves to give up and fall into inner

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

-Galatians 6:9

circle behavior(s). We must embrace life and sobriety.

With God's grace, I'll celebrate seven years of sobriety on July 20th. Throughout my decades long struggle with addiction, I've learned many things. Most importantly, I've learned we always have the choice to be free and not a slave to addiction.

-- Anonymous

How it Works [excerpted from Alcoholics Anonymous ("Big Book"), 4th edition, pp 58-59]

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has ***thoroughly followed*** our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not ***completely give themselves to this...program***, usually men and women who are....naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living ***which demands rigorous honesty***.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like...and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are ***willing to go to any length*** to get it — then you are ready to take certain steps.

At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to ***be fearless and thorough*** from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until ***we let go absolutely***.

Remember that we deal with sexual addiction — cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power — that One is God. May you find Him now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care ***with complete abandon....***

Readers Share

An SAA Poem

It's 1am in the morning
 My body is tired, I'm alone and it's boring
 But my mind is wired and busy
 Working angles getting me dizzy

Trying to find the crack to acting out
 Once I start there's little doubt
 I'll be in deep for several hours
 Pushing away my higher power



In the morning my brain will be foggy
 I'll be wiped, irritated, and groggy
 Mad at myself for turning from light
 I'll be quick to anger for the smallest slight

Sick from losing another fight for my soul
 Losing peace and self-love is getting old
 Now in SAA, I look to my outer circle
 Poetry is more fulfilling than another jerkle

A sponsor who understands and doesn't judge
 Caring speakers give a helpful nudge
 Good literature and the AA tradition
 Food for the mind and soul's nutrition

This is the stuff to feed my being
 Better days ahead I'll be seeing
 It's been 57 days of sobriety
 I have new ways to deal with anxiety

My outer circle has a lot to offer
 And more cash to put in the coffer
 I'll be in more tune with my inner core
 And the mundane won't be such a bore

Because I won't need to run from what's real
 Or be afraid to sit and really feel
 What's going on, what's the stir
 Right now, my tummy says hunger

So let me go and eat a late night bite
 I'll leave my dumb smart phone out of sight
 Instead I'll read from the good green book
 Thankful I worked the program and the urge was shook

---- Kevin S.

Step Corner

The Power of Step 3

"Made a decision to turn our will and our life over to the care of God as we understood Him."

Some who work Step 3 interpret it as direction to pray and then sit back and expect their Higher Power to take over and release us from the throes of this disease. After all, the 1st Step tells us we are powerless....so?

To the contrary, as the 12 by 12* states, "...Step Three calls for affirmative action, for it is only by action that we can cut away the self-will which has blocked the entry of...a Higher Power into our lives."

A "...decision to turn our will..." over to our Higher Power can begin simply. We can pause when in the throes of emotional disturbance and become willing to supplant our self-will, that leads us towards escapist and/or self-medicating actions, with that which our Higher Power suggests: the will to take actions designed to bring our lives back to sanity – using the SAA tools, working the Steps, reaching out to others, etc..

* AA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

SF Bay Area Intergroup of SAA - www.bayareasaa.org

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The SF Bay Area Intergroup of SAA (BAISAA) manages the business of SAA in the SF Bay Area. Each SAA group is encouraged to elect a representative to provide input to the Intergroup and relay relevant info back to their group.

Monthly Intergroup Meeting

The Bay Area Intergroup Meeting is held on the second Saturday of each month from 11:15 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. at the Lutheran Church of the Cross located at: 1744 University Ave., Berkeley, upstairs in room 210.

DISCLAIMER

The views and opinions contained in *Out of the Fog* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Bay Area SAA or the Int'l Service Org. [ISO]

Call for Submissions for: Winter 2018 Issue on Long-term Recovery

Out of the Fog is seeking submissions from sex addicts in recovery with 3 or more years of sobriety. Share your story of how you got there. What has helped you most to stay sober?

Send content/queries to:
newsletter@bayareasaa.org