

THE OUTER CIRCLE

Oh, the Serenity You'll Know!



Celebrate and Explore!

Plus:

- » LEGO®-style recovery
- » Tools of Freedom
- » The Tradition of Inclusivity





International Service Organization of SAA, Inc.

TOC articles contain the experiences and opinions of individual SAA members and do not represent the official views or positions of the ISO of SAA, Inc. or the SAA fellowship as a whole.

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The Outer Circle Mission

The mission of *The Outer Circle* is to provide information from the ISO and to share the experience, strength, and hope members have obtained from working the SAA program of recovery. As the first iteration put it in 1988, *The Outer Circle* newsletter “carries the message of hope to the sex addict who still suffers” — especially prisoners and others who don’t have the Internet.

Through *TOC*, SAA members contribute articles and poems that focus on working the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. It also communicates ISO news, regional activities, and other items of interest.

SAA meetings are encouraged to reproduce *TOC* at no charge and display it alongside other SAA literature. To keep costs down, please print out the online version.

If you have comments or suggestions, please see contact information on page 30. To have an article considered for publication, see our Submission Guidelines on page 31.

To ensure that future issues can be offered without cost, please consider making a tax-deductible donation now to support publication of the newsletter.

CONTENTS

Columns

- 4 From the Editor
- 5 From the Director
- 6 Dear Grace
- 12 Living in Sobriety
- 20 Dear Will
- 22 Stories of Service
- 23 From the Board

Poetry

- 14 Oh, the Serenity You'll Know

Departments

- 2 TOC Mission
- 25 Letters
- 27 ISO News
- 30 Calendar
- 30 Contact ISO
- 31 Submissions
- 32 Twelve Steps

Articles



- 8 **Brick-by-brick**
LEGO® and Recovery



- 10 **My Real Life**
Tools of recovery are tools of freedom



- 16 **Celebrate and Explore**
A look at the life of recovery versus the life of acting out



- 18 **Roots of Tradition Three**
Exploring the foundations of the Twelve Traditions: Tradition Three

FROM THE EDITOR

Challenges and Gratitude

BY CHRISTIE K.

What good is recovery if it doesn't make life smooth sailing?

Lately, I've been wondering what recovery is all about. What's it for? What's the point? Reality still falls short of my hopes and expectations. I go to meetings. I read literature. I've worked through all twelve steps with a sponsor, and I'm still not happy, at least not as happy as I think I ought to be by now.

My kids don't make the decisions I think they should. My spouse is often irritating. Our dog sheds everywhere, and I just get so tired of it all sometimes. Every day there seems to be something else to get upset about. People don't always get things right, even when they're trying their best. So, what good is recovery if it doesn't make life smooth sailing?

From my perspective, life is always going to be challenging; that's why I need recovery so desperately. Prior to recovery, my reactions to life's imperfections made everything worse. My addiction ruined my relationships, kept me from enjoying time with my kids, and buried me in a pit of anguish and despair.

I'm still going to get hurt and frustrated at times, but now, I no longer seek a temporary fix to get me high, to keep me from feeling my painful feelings. I allow myself to feel what I feel now. I learn from my mistakes and use life's challenges to grow my connections with others instead of pushing them away.

Recovery might not fix everything, but it gives me the tools I need to correct my trajectory. The program provides people I can turn to for support in times of depletion and distress. I can greet each new day with an attitude of gratitude and a determination to celebrate and enjoy my life regardless of the daily challenges I may have to face.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

From Convention to Conference

BY PAUL M.

**Elect the delegate
for your area
so they can
hear your area
assembly's group
conscience
about this year's
motions.**

Things are looking up for our fellowship. Here in Houston, some of our meetings are starting to go back to face-to-face and some are becoming hybrid meetings. We are currently working on the code to our website to help members find these hybrid meetings more easily. Zoom has opened our meetings up to more international participation. I hope that fosters more international face-to-face meetings as well. There are many sex addicts in the world who have never heard about us; we need to continually have the hand of SAA there to help.

The 2021 international convention, hosted by the Ohio Valley Intergroup on the Zoom platform, was a success. We had 538 participants from forty-six US states, six provinces and one territory of Canada, and nineteen other countries. We had interpreters in Italian and Spanish on many of the workshops and speaker sessions thanks to the new language feature on Zoom. The Literature Committee is currently reviewing the recordings. We hope to have them for sale soon.

The 2021 Conference will be held in October. The Board of Trustees voted to hold it face-to-face. It is now time to elect the delegate for your area so they can hear your area assembly's group conscience about this year's motions. The deadline for motions was June 30. They should be posted on the service website later in July.

Finally, in response to some recent concerns, the ISO encourages groups to use SAA literature in their meetings. Recognizing that groups are autonomous, and some groups may use material other than SAA literature, the ISO recommends in such instances that attribution be given to the author(s) of such literature.

DEAR GRACE

Is it abstinence or is it anorexia?

BY WOMEN'S
OUTREACH COMMITTEE

**This clarity
doesn't happen
overnight, and it
can require a bit
of trial and error.**

*Statement of Purpose for Dear Grace: to reach out to all women with a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior through this printed medium and share with the fellowship the types of questions the Grace e-mail (grace@saa-women.org) receives. *Names have been changed to protect anonymity.*

Dear Grace,

How do I, as an SAA member, know the difference between abstinence from my inner-circle behavior and sexual anorexia?

Wondering

Hi Wondering,

First, a brief explanation of the three circles. We draw three concentric circles. In the very inner circle, we list the behaviors that are addictive, harmful, or demoralizing to us as individuals, the behaviors from which we must abstain. In the outer circle, we list self-nurturing activities that enhance our lives, our recovery, and our sense of spiritual connection. These practices may include sexual behaviors that are healthy for us.

In the middle circle, we list behaviors of which we are uncertain. Over time, we may track where these behaviors lead us, into the inner circle and addiction or toward the outer circle and healthier sexuality. In SAA each member “discovers what they can and cannot do sexually, and progresses along the road to a sane and non-addictive sex life” (“Three Circles: Defining Sexual Sobriety in SAA”). Each individual is different. We are encouraged to seek the guidance of a sponsor or others in recovery from sex addiction for help in deciding what to include in our circles.

When a member has achieved abstinence from inner circle activities, they may worry that they have also become sexually anorexic – compulsively stopping any and all means of sexuality. “In the same way that compulsive starving of oneself, or anorexia, is considered an eating disorder, avoidance of sex can be seen as an addictive sexual behavior. Some of us have found



ourselves ‘shut down’ sexually in recovery, afraid of sex because of its association in our minds with our addiction or with past sexual trauma, or because of a fear of intimacy and vulnerability. Trying to control our sexuality in this way is just another symptom of our disease” (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, p. 72).

Sharing these concerns with our sponsor and in meetings is important. It may also be helpful to attend intimacy and sexual avoidance meetings to hear the experiences of others recovering from sexual anorexia to gain more clarity on our own behaviors. The pamphlet “Intimacy Avoidance – Another Aspect of Sex Addiction” has a list of common symptoms that intimacy and sexual avoidants may struggle with, which can help us determine for ourselves if our behaviors are abstinence or signs of sexual anorexia.

Through prayer, step work with a sponsor, and regular evaluation of

all three of our circles, we might also learn more about our ideas of what comprises our sexuality and see ways that we might be avoiding healthy behaviors out of fear or out of our desire for control. In recovery, we find the opportunity to explore healthier concepts of sexuality that can add a new layer of nurturing and spirituality to our lives.

This clarity doesn’t happen overnight, and it can require a bit of trial and error. We work our program to find clear boundaries and to discover a joyful life that works for us. As always, “the solution lies in turning our will and lives over to the care of our Higher Power, knowing that however unfamiliar we are with the challenges of healthier sexuality, we can put our trust in the God of our understanding” (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, p. 72).

Grace



BY VINCE V.

Brick-by-brick: LEGO® and Recovery

When I was a child, I loved to create things out of LEGO® building blocks — houses, tall buildings, machines, cars, and planes. I could build just about anything my mind imagined. LEGO® bricks were the building blocks I used to create things, and I was often surprised by my own creations.

They were simplistic, but impressive to me at my young age. That was over fifty years ago. Back then, LEGO® bricks were simple. There were only a dozen or so different pieces that came in a few different sizes, shapes, and colors.

Since then, LEGO® bricks have become much more complex, leading to ever more complex creations by today's children. I've seen entire cities, streets and life-like three dimensional statues of famous people made entirely from these more sophisticated LEGO® bricks. It is really amazing what we can create when we use our imaginations.

Though it may seem silly, I see a direct comparison between those LEGO® bricks and the Twelve Steps of SAA. When I first heard of the Steps, I did not fully understand them or how and why they are so important. My mind could only imagine them to be of limited use.

How could such a simple thing like twelve little steps restore me to sanity? How could they rebuild my life, restore my relationship with my wife, and save my marriage? I could not imagine how this could happen because of twelve simple steps.

Though I was a skeptic, I was also desperate. I knew working the Steps had helped others. My therapist and my family urged me to start and to stick with it no matter what. I promised myself and my family that I would do just that, and I gave it my all.

After two and a half years of sobriety, my life has changed drastically for the better. My wife is still with me, and our relationship is better than ever because it is now built on a foundation of openness, honesty, trust, and sincere compassion for one another. There are no more lies or deception on my part.

My relationships with my two daughters have also improved in a profound way. I listen to them and speak with them in very meaningful ways instead of brushing them aside and ignoring their “exaggerated emotions” that used to bewilder me. I recognize and acknowledge their feelings, fears, concerns, and aspirations better than ever before.

The list goes on and on. Each day, week, and month in recovery has brought me to new and profound levels of understanding of myself, others, and my relationships with them. This spiritual awakening happened because I opened up my mind and my heart to new possibilities.

I was changed, completely and whole-heartedly. My wife and two daughters were not changed, but they have witnessed the dramatic changes in me. I have since discovered a new world full of immense possibilities, a fulfilling world full of richness and complexity that is miraculous and beautiful.

All of these renewed relationships and experiences were built from the LEGO® bricks of my mind. My new and improved LEGO® bricks are better, more diverse in size and shape. So, I can now imagine and create a new and improved life which is as amazing as those cities and life-like figures built out of LEGO® bricks.

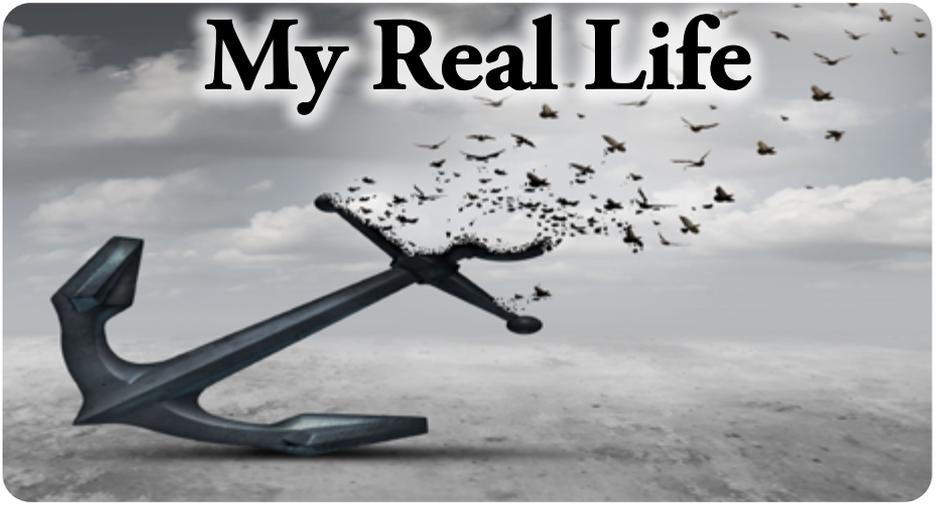
This transformation all happened because of the Twelve Steps of SAA. They are not as simple as I first thought. They are profound and powerful. I am forever grateful for the changes they have created in me and in my life. ●

Get Your Story Published in *The Outer Circle*



The Outer Circle newsletter relies on submissions from the SAA fellowship. It's a great way to carry the message to other sex addicts in the spirit of Step Twelve — and be of service! Articles may be submitted to toc@saa-recovery.org or to the ISO office at info@saa-recovery.org. Please submit articles via email in Microsoft Word format with the **RELEASE FORM** that can be found, with additional guidelines, on page 31.

My Real Life



BY RANDY H.

My real life began when I was ten; you know, in the imagination and in the fantasy years. I was being medicinally treated for ADHD and was enduring parental abuse, which included being tied to a chair and shoved into a dark closet, regularly.

Surviving to age eleven, I ventured out, enduring the Hollywood, California street life. (I doubt you can imagine it — what an eleven-year-old runaway on the streets endured in the early 1980s.) At the age of twenty, after having been somewhat off the streets for nearly three years, I moved to another type of street life — PRISON! (For a crime I committed to cover my infidelity.)

Twenty-four years later, I was RELEASED! I was productive and successful! I had two businesses, a home, a truck, a fiancé, and a dog. Then, at forty-eight, as if twenty-four years had meant nothing to me, I fell into the spiral of degradation, that unknown and untreated sex addiction.

My underlying behaviors and desires led me to uninhibited acting out and back to prison on a new charge. My world crashed down around me. I didn't understand or know what to do. I had no idea how I had come to this point in my life. I mean, I was successful! Then, I was back in prison. My despair and grief were deep!

Incarcerated, confronted with my shame and the reproach of others, I was at my bottom and desperate! Then, I remembered an address I once saw in one of my prisoner-resource books for SAA. I had nothing to lose, so I wrote. I received a Newcomers' Packet from SAA! A treasure trove! I devoured the literature! My vision began to clear. There were tools, circles, steps; there was a way out!

In time, I needed another voice — someone to tell me the specific tool for each job. I

needed an ear — someone to just listen. I received a magazine, *The Outer Circle*. (Labeled a newsletter, but way more valuable and informative and more on point than a regular newsletter!) I knew then that I wasn't alone!

I saw a reference to pen-pals. (My old criminal mind saw: "money, romance, free-world connections!") I suppressed the old nature because I also knew that all twelve-step programs require "rigorous honesty." So, I humbled myself and knuckled down to my real need for help! I wrote and asked to be added to the pen-pal list. Someone wrote once; then no more. It was disappointing.

It wasn't until three years later, after having given up hope on that endeavor, that I was confronted again with my addiction. I reached out again to SAA for a pen-pal. I desperately needed to hear a voice of recovery. (I had been reading off and on the persistently delivered magazine, *The Outer Circle*, that came to my cell at mail call — ever being reminded of my "NOW KNOWN" addiction and my original desperation in reaching out for help.)

One day, a letter from over 1500 miles away landed in my cell. "A voice!" I thought...a voice to guide me, to confront me, to comfort me, to soothe me with words of the program. As if providence brought this specific voice to me. (He in his own valid attempt to work his successful program reached out, uncertain of what he would find.) My gratitude for the writers program is unspeakable! Life-saving!

Now, in the words of my pen-pal (whom I gladly call my sponsor): "We can contin-

ue to write in spite of the difficulty of not being able to be completely open in our correspondence...I feel lucky you have so much to say, and the only problem is that I do need time to digest everything you write and respond as fully as I can. And please, remember that our work together benefits me as much as you - along the way, service is a powerful tool for sobriety."

One thing I'm learning about sobriety — it's not just about controlled or conditioned abstinence; it's about peace of mind. It's about feelings of control over one's life again. It's about finally knowing I'm not alone in life. I have a community of people who care for me in whatever efforts I make to be better and live sober!

I have two more things left to share. First, to my fellow free-world fellows: never forget how LOW you fell into your addiction. Remember the secret things you did. As it stands, many addictive sexual activities are a form of criminal activity. I/We weren't as fortunate as many of you were, my dear community, so remember us and reach out. Help us to overcome!

Second, to *The Outer Circle*, your most recent magazine: Jan–Feb, 2021 is my favorite! A great and honest article on "The Power of The Pen" (p. 18). A salutation to ME... speaking to my courage and fortitude with the grace of a Higher Power, sobriety, and life on life's terms, and living in gratitude, contentment, and peace of mind (p. 27). [Thank You!] Now, I don't feel lost or forgotten...I AM human just like you!

*In Sobriety. In Friendship. In Kind.
Recovering together. ●*

LIVING IN SOBRIETY

**He had to
lose it all to
gain a new
life**

BY DANIEL B.

**Slowly, I went
from being
totally alone and
isolated, down
and depressed, to
being a member
of the local group
in the fellowship
of SAA.**

I got into recovery after a patchy addiction story. When life dumped on me, I went looking for sex. When I got bored, I went looking for sex. When I was excited, I went looking for sex. When I had to deal with actual people, I went looking... well, you can guess.

From early in adolescence, it was obvious to me that I had a problem, but I was too scared to admit anything to my conservative Catholic parents. My addiction was too strong, and too enjoyable, for me to give it up. I was attracted to other boys – a major taboo.

Later, I dated girls my own age, learned to backpack, played the guitar, and generally tried to have sex with everyone I knew (women and men) until I got married. The addiction slowed down then, but it never went away. I grew up, but the people in my fantasies didn't, and eventually, I was abusing my own children.

The result was losing a military career, my wife, and all contact with our children. My sentence was ten years of probation and a lifetime on the sex offenders list. Those years taught me hard lessons about giving up my anger: at myself, my situation, and at other people.

In therapy, I worked through most of the steps, but there was no emphasis on spiritual growth and no acceptance that I was powerless over my addiction. After those ten years, my therapist asked what I wanted to do for "maintenance." And I knew I had to work the Twelve Steps of SAA.

The therapy people balked, but they couldn't stop me. I was no longer under court supervision. That first meeting included two women, and for one of them, it was her second meeting. I was scared to death to reveal my reasons for being in SAA because I thought it would scare them all out of the room. Imagine my surprise when everyone welcomed me to the meeting.

My family supported me too, again, to my grateful surprise. Jobs were hard to find, and my depression sent me into suicidal thinking. But slowly, I went from being totally alone and isolated, down and depressed, to being a member of the local group in the fellowship of SAA.

They encouraged me, inspired me, and fed me dinner after meetings when the money wasn't there. I don't know what it was that motivated them but I'm forever grateful for their support.

The idea of service wasn't new to me. I'd been an Eagle Scout, guitarist for the choir at Sunday service, an executive director for the Boy Scouts, and served my country in the military. So, it was pretty easy to set up chairs, voice my concerns in group conscience, volunteer as a group representative to the newly formed intergroup... things like that.

I'd taken up computer support after losing my military career so, cautiously, I agreed to learn HTML and managed the local SAA website. It wasn't much but I was proud of the effort, and it earned me some welcome recognition in the local fellowship. In therapy, as in recovery, I learned to ask for help, read the directions, respect others... you know, all the things I'd ignored during the first fifty-three years of my life.

In 2008, I cautiously asked my parents for money to go to the convention. They made it a birthday present. It was the first time I'd left the state since my conviction sixteen years past. I agreed to represent my group at the Conference, flew to Seattle, and wandered into the convention bookstore. There was a line of people waiting to have their badges printed but the printer was not cooperating.

Suddenly, it occurred to me that I knew how to help. I wandered behind the table, introduced myself and sat down to the recalcitrant computer. Several minutes later,

I found myself in charge of printing the badges.

I spent the rest of the convention solving users' problems with that computer and never left the bookstore. I missed a bunch of really great workshops, but I'd made an impression, and the feedback from everyone around me banished my depression more thoroughly than all the previous years of drugs and therapy.

That "impression" had consequences too. I received a job offer the next year that gave me an opportunity to help recovering addicts. It was the first permanent job I'd landed in almost ten years; a position I could never aspire to because of my criminal history but one that actually turned my negative experience to an advantage.

I may regret my past (in spite of the AA promises), but here was an opportunity to open the door to it – to use that past to benefit people who really understand what it means to be an addict in recovery. I am honored to continue a life of service to those around me.

Your mileage will certainly differ, but I would encourage you to find ways to "be of service" – to be the hand of your Higher Power – within your SAA community. You will certainly be the better for it.

If you have five or more years of sobriety and would like to write a Living in Sobriety column, please contact toc@saa-recovery.org.

Oh, the Serenity You'll Know!

Penned by Tom J., based off of the classic poem,
"Oh, The Places You'll Go" by Dr. Seuss.

Congratulations, today is your day,
You're addressing your addiction,
You are making your way.

You have brains in your head,
You have feet in your shoes;
You are focusing on good things,
Not things that you'll lose.
You were on your own, for so many years;
But now it's a fellowship – removing your
fears.

You'll look up and down streets, some you've
been down before.

But you realize life can be – oh, so much
more!
With your head full of brains and your shoes
full of feet,
Your program is helping you be more com-
plete.
And some streets, you'll come to – and you'll
stop and you'll think,
Your pride may even cause you to shudder
and blink.

But it's calm you'll devour, courtesy of your
Higher Power.

In the world, things can happen and fre-
quently do
To people with problems they have to work
through.
And when things start to happen, don't
worry, don't stew,
Just open the Green Book – there's some-
thing in there for you.

Oh, The Serenity You'll Know!

You'll be on your way up,
You'll be feeling much better,
Whether it be through a meeting, a call, or
a letter.

You won't lag behind, because you'll have
momentum,
You'll work through the Steps, and you will
not forget 'em,
Wherever you fly, you'll rise above sadness,
And work yourself far from the isolated
madness.

Except when you don't, because sometimes
you won't.

I'm sorry to say so, but sadly it's true
That apathy and complacency can happen to
you.

You can get all hung up
And stuck in your head
And pretty soon things will creep in
And fill you with dread.

And you will find, in your dread,
There are unpleasant bumps;
And chances are, then,
You'll be down in the dumps.

And that's right where your addict
Will want you to be;
You're back into slavery,
You're no longer free.

You will come to a place where you're con-
nected with others;
To a room for recovery – with sisters and
brothers.
A place you could sprain both your passion
and pride –
Do you dare to stay out? Will you venture
inside?
The choices are yours. Only you can decide.

And if you go in, should you share or just
listen -
And just let the pearls of wisdom rain down
and glisten?

Or choose to embrace the mistakes from behind?

Simple it's not, I'm afraid you will find,
To surrender yourself and no longer be blind.

You can get so confused, you'll want to revert
To things so familiar; those things that can hurt;
That throw you down and cover you with dirt.
You turn your eyes away; the truth you've averted.
But land in a place where you've been diverted.

The Obsessing Place ...
... where people are obsessing.
Obsessing about a Facebook posting
Or a former friend ghosting;
Or waiting for that ship to come in;
Or worrying about losing out yet again;
Everyone is just obsessing.

Obsessing about thoughts, projected with bite;
Or telling another to "go fly a kite",
Or sitting alone on a Friday night,
Or a mindless numbing; or a mournful moan;
Or just staring, refusing to pick up the phone.
Everyone is just obsessing.

But no, that's not for you!
You'll overcome all that waiting and staying,
And avoid all the places
Where your addict is playing.

With the Green Book to guide you, once more,
You'll ride high;
You'll embrace the sunlight as you look to the sky,
And live in the present – not in a lie!

Oh, the Serenity you'll know!
There are points to be scored, relationships fixed;
Inner-circle behaviors are largely nixed.

And the magical things that sobriety brings
Will have you soaring on the lightest of wings.
Freedom! A freedom you've never before known.

A feeling you'll pray that you'll never disown.

Except when you fall, because that's part of it all.

Sadly, whether you like it or not,
Failure is a place where your addict runs hot;
He'll push you, and push you,
Once everyone's gone;
He'll try to convince you
To let him lead on.

But on you will go, though your mood may be foul,
On you will go, though your enemies howl,
On you will go, though your addict many prowl,
Onward, up many a frightening path,
Though your fear may be high, and you have feelings of wrath.

On you will travel, both near and afar;
And accept responsibility for things as they are.

Some things you'll make better, but some things you can't;
But there are always seeds of hope you can plant.
When you scatter the seeds, do so with goodwill,
Be honest of heart even when lacking the skill.
Just remember to remain dexterous and deft.
Let go of the bad things; hold on to what's left.

And will you succeed? Yes, you will indeed.
Just remember, you're human – and ever in need.

So be your name Evans or Williams or Gray,
No matter the debts that you're having to pay;
Sobriety's waiting - it's a gift, I would say,
But it still needs pursuing,
Each moment, each day. ●

Celebrate and Explore



BY NINO L.

When I first entered recovery, if I'd been asked to share on the topic of celebration and exploration, I would have asked for another topic. Or, I'd wax on it, go all poetic and mystical. Or, I'd go off on how the lack of it was all my dad's fault. I was a major player in the blame game.

The truth is, when I entered recovery, I was an island not worth celebrating or exploring. I had few friends and fewer still with whom I could honestly discuss my inner demons. While I could be candid about certain things, to some degree, no one came close to understanding my desperate desire for sexual conquest.

My friends back then weren't addicts. If they were, they didn't know it. Sex addiction doesn't look like sex addiction to the uninitiated. It just looks like a good time. There are so many sex-positive rationalizations: Everyone likes sex. Humans are sexual beings! You're a young man, it's normal! I could subscribe to these views because they were the perfect alibi for what was really happening deep inside me.

Sex feels good, and yet, most of the time, I felt rotten. Feeling good feels warm and fuzzy. Feeling bad feels bleak, black, and speckled with various shades of yuck. I was all for the oblivion that my sexual addiction swallowed me into, but I couldn't bear feeling decimated by loneliness, grief, rage, and fear.

I could have recognized those feelings in a line up. But feel them? Nah. I'll pass. And sure, addiction is insanity, but there is an undeniable logic to avoiding that which is perceived as threatening one's existence. I'm all for character building, but you don't pet a lion just because it requires courage. That's crazy.

So, I avoided those gutter-rat feelings. I made it my mission in life to seize every opportunity to get that sexy oxytocin rush, which lovers and pixels briefly provided. Why lie in the gutter when you can float among the stars?

I was an explorer. Who cares if I came up gasping for air after the rush was over? I still got my fix. And sex addiction? Pfft. I was ready for a party of Dionysian proportions. Acting out was a celebration of over-the-top excess, an exploration confined to the contours of an anonymous, faceless lover, but an exploration all the same.

However, in 2007, high-speed internet exploded onto the scene with a frenzy. It marked the beginning of the end for my addiction, packaged neatly as convenience and faster downloads. Faster downloads meant faster downloads. I no longer had to wait for that one image to creep onto the screen. My brain gorged on novelty, pumping in the dopamine. I could sample whenever I dang-well pleased. Broad coverage of a different kind in my brave, albeit cramped, new world.

Honestly, I'd still be out there scoring dopamine if I hadn't finally discovered that oblivion has edges, and, depending on which way you swing the metaphor, I either fell off or almost did. Either way, I was coming full circle back to the bleak, black, and speckled-with-yuck feelings I'd made it my mission to circumnavigate.

To this day I still think it a cruel irony of the gods that the hand that led me out of despair would be the same one that dragged me right back to it. That's just how it goes, I suppose.

Back on earth, my brain was starting to gaslight me. One minute it was "I can't go on anymore!" and the next "Keep going! I can see the summit!" I never reached the summit though, not really. I was running out of everything: gas, breath, and time.

Porn addiction is a game of Russian Roulette. It has high stakes. You only get so many clicks before your chances of coming out alive are greatly diminished. The longer I played the game, the faster I came to pulling the trigger on one, big, final bang.

Metaphors aside, my online behaviour was becoming brazen. I was no longer enjoying the sexual experiences I was having. I took less care to keep my addiction a secret, viewing porn even in public: transportation, toilets, in libraries using public Wi-Fi. I stopped caring.

Who cares? I didn't. Everyone does it. In my sexual relationships, I sought to mirror the one-upmanship depicted online. People think advertising doesn't work, but they also grasp intuitively that achieving a desired outcome requires visualising it first.

In my addiction, I learned that images are powerful. When I acted out, I wielded this power to achieve undesirable ends, manifesting for myself a bleak future: prison.

Thankfully, I read somewhere that you can actually use the internet to research topics unrelated to the graphic depiction of sex. Naturally though, when I looked up the words "sex addiction" it took several attempts before I finally clicked "freedom from" rather than "free-for-all". Once an addict, as the poets say. In any case I was done. "No more,"

I cried aloud after a porn binge.

Hours later, after taking six or seven more rides around that magical merry-go-round of porn, I found an "S" meeting and hauled myself there. From then, things got better, then worse, then better, on repeat but with an upward trajectory. It turns out, that's life for most people.

For me, recovery is about the exploration of my shadow. The celebration of my darkness. It's re-discovering and redefining who I am, and exploring fresh answers to stale questions: Who am I? What do I want? Am I gluten-intolerant?

If you think the latter is a joke, you're mistaken. Every part of my life is connected. What I eat affects what I feel, think, and do, as well as how I move and in what direction. Decisions regarding food, exercise and sleep compound over time like interest. It's in my best interest these days to choose wisely in the rebuilding of my identity.

As far as internet use goes, I don't keep smart devices anymore. My sponsor keeps my phone in a drawer, and I get supervised access when I catch up with him before a meeting or after step work.

A list of all the sordid details of my last acting out binge and the consequences that resulted are on a cue card. I read it aloud to him as a reminder of my vulnerability. It's a drag, and that's the point. Of course, it's inconvenient not having a smart device, but it forces me to prioritize what really matters.

My spirituality is functional and easily practiced. As an addict, my inner circle represents a boundary I can no longer explore. It's tough, but I deal with it. The steps are a practical set of tools that, however irritating, emancipate me from my old ways. I'm currently working step nine, and yesterday I made an amends to someone I had not contacted for five years: my mum.

I've also been exploring my top lines. I'm finding ones that connect me to my body, to my darkness, to other people, and to the earth. For me, these are lifelines that, when I reach for them and grasp them firmly, I stay sober. And just for today, isn't that worth celebrating? Yeah! ●



Our Traditions and Their Roots: Tradition Three

The only requirement for SAA membership is a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior.

Editor's Note: This is the fourth in the series which will look to the Green Book's exposition of each Tradition, along with the history of the problem each Tradition sought to address from AA source material. The authors of this series are varied individuals.

BY ANONYMOUS

When Alcoholics Anonymous was first starting, there wasn't even a program yet. There wasn't a book. There wasn't literature. Nothing. There were just a few alcoholics desperate enough that they were willing to do anything they had to do to get and stay sober. Keeping their own sobriety was really the only thing they cared about. So, they went looking for other alcoholics to help.

They didn't go looking for just anyone, though. They went to hospitals and jails to find the absolute worst cases out there, those who were as desperate to recover as they were, who would do whatever it took to get sober because they didn't have a choice. They had to get sober or they were going to die.

No one really knew anything about them yet. Alcoholics Anonymous was just a small group of guys who were trying to stay sober by helping other alcoholics

get sober. That's it. As word starting getting out, though, other alcoholics started wanting in on it. People started coming to them and asking to join their meetings, and they didn't really know what to say.

They wanted to turn people away, and there were a lot of good reasons for it, too. They were meeting in people's homes, so safety was a real concern. They were afraid of letting just anyone in. "What would decent people say about us?" was revealed to be an issue too (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 140). They were just starting to get their lives back together, and they didn't want anyone to ruin their reputation and make their lives fall to pieces again.

Overcoming this fear and their natural intolerance of certain people was finally addressed in the Third Tradition. The alcoholics who had found sobriety in their meetings wanted to "be sure that you get the same great chance for sobriety that we've had" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 139) regardless of who that "you" was.

The "Big Book" goes on to say, "to take away any alcoholic's full chance was sometimes to pronounce his death sentence, and often to condemn him to endless misery. Who dared to be judge, jury, and executioner of his own sick brother?" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 139), and so that became the bottom line for the Third Tradition. We don't judge anyone as too far gone. We don't execute anyone for their sickness

via exclusion. And, we don't take away anyone's full chance for recovery.

SAA adopted the Steps and the Traditions of AA because they had the same problem and needed the same solution. We might use a different drug, but the outcome is still the same. Just like the disease of alcoholism, "the disease of sex addiction does not discriminate" (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, p. 81). Anyone can be a sex addict, and no one else gets to tell them otherwise.

People die from sex addiction. I'm lucky not to be one of them, especially with all of my previous acting-out behaviors. People end up in hospitals and jails because of their addictions. We let anyone in the doors because that's how we all get and stay sober. We keep coming back. That's why "Sex Addicts Anonymous is open to anyone with the desire to stop addictive sexual behavior" (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, p. 82).

Next up: Tradition Four. ●



DEAR WILL

What are the requirements to join SAA?

BY WILL

Whether SAA is appropriate for someone is not based on the behavior itself, but rather on the inability to stop.

Dear Will...

I'm not sure if I qualify as a sex addict. I don't seem to resonate with the shares of the other men in these meetings even though there is a sexual behavior I return to over and over again regardless of many attempts to stop. I feel a lot of shame around my sexuality and masculinity. I'm afraid I'll be humiliated. I often leave meetings feeling more unsettled than when I entered. Is there hope and healing for someone like me in this program?

Signed,

Lost

Dear Lost,

I'm glad you contacted us. There are probably many others who come to the rooms of SAA who can relate to your question: wondering if they are really addicts, wondering if SAA can actually help them. We belong in SAA "as long as we seek to stop our addictive sexual behaviors...even if our acting-out patterns differ from everyone else's in our meeting" (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, p. 81).

The SAA twelve-step program of recovery is about allowing a Power greater than ourselves to remove our desire to participate in compulsive, addictive behaviors. Whether SAA is appropriate for someone is not based on the behavior itself, but rather on the inability to stop. If you have compulsive sexual behaviors that you want to stop, that you need to stop but cannot — then welcome to SAA. We're glad you're here.

It's not a requirement of the SAA program that you be willing to share or describe your sexual behaviors in an SAA meeting. If you want to



*If you have a question for Will,
please send an email to
Men4SAA@saa-recovery.org.*

share from your experience without disclosing specifics, it's fine for you to share generically about the compulsion without going into detail about the behaviors themselves.

Reading chapter one of our SAA Green Book may be helpful for you. It lists various ways that we have acted out — which could help you understand that you are not alone. Chapter one also describes the helplessness, hopelessness, and powerlessness we have all felt as a result of our compulsive behaviors. Compulsion and obsession are common threads that unite us as addicts. We are also united in gratitude and celebration: there is a solution that can lead us to freedom from our compulsive sexual behaviors.

My main recommendation is this: If you have not already done so, please

get a sponsor and let him lead you through working the Twelve Steps of SAA. Working the Steps is the heart of our program. Working through these Steps with a sponsor “leads to a spiritual transformation that results in sustainable relief from our addiction” (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, p. 20). Being open and honest with a sponsor can help you to recognize and alleviate these feelings of shame and isolation you may feel regarding the specific behaviors themselves.

My prayer for you is that you would be able to find individual SAA members — especially a sponsor — to whom you can open up about your past behaviors. May you find the healing and freedom that this program of recovery offers to us all.

Will

The Twelfth Step says that, “we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts and to practice these principles in our lives.” At the ISO level, this is done through the work of the Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) committee. Both of these are forms of outreach. If you would like to work the Twelfth Step at the ISO level, contact PhillipB@saa-iso.net or call the ISO at 713-869-4902.

STORIES OF SERVICE

Healed by Service

BY ANONYMOUS

Today, I don't even think of acting out when I get stressed.

My sex addiction goes back to when I was ten years old, when I first found porn. When I was thirteen, an uncle was playing around and had his way with me. As I got older, I started going to porn shops and played around with women and men. My addiction got very bad and messed up my learning, so I prayed to God it would stop. I was ashamed of acting out and tried to stop the porn and sex but I couldn't figure out how.

My recovery is a story of how service and giving back are the way to stop sex addiction. Even though the kin of mine who had his way with me was dead and gone, I could not forget him or forgive him. I had been getting worse in my addiction. I was sick. I would feel an attack of pain and anger and I would want to see porn or act out to feel better, but SAA showed me how I don't need that anymore.

Today, I don't even think of acting out when I get stressed. I pray to God that I don't go back to that life. The man I am today doesn't like porn. When I feel an attack of pain and anger coming on, I pray to God and God helps me. God gives me a way to be of service to someone else in the program.

The other thing that really helps me is reading the Green Book, which I read every day. I read about a better way of life without the old addiction. I love SAA; it really helps me overcome my addiction, and all the people here help me overcome the lifestyle I am leaving in the past.

Stories of Service inspire others to be of service. Send your 250-300-word story to toc@saa-recovery.org.

FROM THE BOARD

Join Us This October for the Conference

BY BOB L.
BOARD CHAIR

**Delegates use
their best efforts
and thoughts
to recommend
changes to the
fellowship to
enhance our
efforts to carry
our message to
the addict who
still suffers.**

As most of our members know, this year's convention was a resounding success. More than 575 members participated in the meetings and workshops, including eighty-nine attendees from outside the United States. Here's a big shoutout to the Ohio Valley Intergroup for their fantastic efforts in planning and execution of the convention, with outstanding assistance from the ISO office.

With the convention now in the rearview mirror, much attention of various committees and the office staff is now focused on the forthcoming annual meeting of the Conference of the International Service Organization ("Conference"). This year, the Conference will convene face-to-face in October. For many members of the fellowship, this is the most important ISO event of the year, because its purpose is to express the spiritual voice of the fellowship. During the meeting, the delegates will consider, debate, and vote on several motions brought forward by committees and members of the fellowship.

Delegates are Group Service Representatives ("GSR") chosen by their areas to represent the areas' constituent groups, and in that manner carry the voice of the members to the Conference. In addition, pursuant to the bylaws of the ISO, members of the Office, the Literature Committee (LitCom), and the Board are ex-officio delegates with voting rights. Collectively, delegates use their best efforts and thoughts to recommend changes to the fellowship to enhance our efforts to carry our message to the addict who still suffers.

FROM THE BOARD

Serving as a delegate or alternate delegate is an opportunity for a member of the fellowship to serve the ISO and enhance one's sobriety. The experience of considering motions that can affect the direction of the fellowship contributes to a broadening of perspective about how we carry the message to our fellow addicts. In addition, meeting with addicts from around the world, and having the opportunity to engage in face-to-face fellowship, can be a life-enhancing experience for every delegate. Being a delegate also can serve as an entry point to further international service. Many delegates have been inspired to submit their service résumé for election to the Conference Steering Committee, LitCom, the Nominating Committee, the Area Coordinating Committee, or the Board. Members in these positions contribute to the important work of improving the activities of the ISO and the fellowship at large.

In the *Call to Conference* that has been distributed by email and is available on our website (<https://saa-iso.org/mbrs/delinfor/index.php> — call office for login and password) there is further detail about the purpose and structure of the Conference, how it functions, the many committees who help the ISO's mission of carrying the message, and other information

of interest, whether or not you are a delegate.

For delegates, the *Call to Conference* is essential reading. This information help delegates ensure that this year's Conference will run smoothly and be a successful experience for themselves and the fellowship as a whole.

All those who are involved in the substantial and ongoing effort to make this year's annual meeting a success encourage each of you to read the *Call to Conference* and become involved in international service. Those of us who have contributed to service, whether at the local, area, or international level, have experienced an enhancement of our sobriety, which is our Higher Power's gift in return for our efforts. Please join us.

HELP WANTED!

Letter writers/sponsors needed!

Confidential program.

*Great way to serve & carry the
SAA message of recovery to prisoners.*

Email: HarveyA@saa-iso.net

or call ISO at 713-869-4902

LETTERS



Letter from the Board of Trustees Diversity Committee

To: The Editor, *The Outer Circle*

Dear Editor,

On behalf of the Inclusion and Diversity Committee (IDC), I attach a letter received by the committee, written by two members of the fellowship. They wished their voices to be heard in addressing the issues that arose from the recent TOC cover (Nov. 2020).

I send it in the spirit it was intended. Not to lay blame, point fingers or accuse anyone. We acknowledge that the issue of the cover was dealt with and thank the outgoing editor for his amend. The intention of this letter is a simple plea that we do not forget our primary focus, as a fellowship: to be open to all who seek and need our help and support in overcoming this addiction. Also, that when issues arise, we keep them in the forefront of our minds and remain vigilant in our efforts.

The IDC was set up by the Board in response to our desire to remain open, and open-hearted, to the challenges that being a truly inclusive and diverse fellowship brings.

We welcome all to the committee who wish to join us on this journey and participate in our work.

In Service,

Karen S

The Letter

(Publishers note: Minor changes were made to this letter by authors after the Board's response in preparation for publication in the present issue of The Outer Circle.)

Dear friends,

We'd like to bring our voices together to comment on the cover image of the Nov-

LETTERS

Dec 2020 issue of *The Outer Circle* newsletter.

The appropriate place to start is with thanks for the generous service of those who contribute to TOC; our magazine has come a long way as a genuine recovery tool over the years, and we suspect that the position of editor is somewhat thankless.

It is highly important to us that our letter not be seen as an attempt to blame or criticize any person, or the ISO organization. Rather, its whole purpose is to help all of us increase our awareness of things that could be unconsciously contributing to exclusion or to a diminished welcome to any current or potential SAA members. We ourselves are committed to increasing our own awareness and sensitivity related to exclusion or offense in order to follow our first tradition of unity, and to help our spaces be more welcoming and representative for our members of color.

When we look at the Nov-Dec cover image, what stands out to us, in a sea of white masks, is the black mask- and our culture often equates black with badness. And the image does not lend an air of inclusiveness; rather, it indicates the opposite.

So the image could be seen as reinforcing the idea of 'black' as other, as something to be eliminated.

While the graphic on its own may not appear to be egregious or blatant to some of us, and may be unsettling consciously or unconsciously to others, we know that it has felt offensive to some of our members, and aside from our own sensitivities, that is enough of an impact for us to make this call to consciousness-raising.

Since our purpose is support for all of our members, it is imperative that we watch for ways in which we are failing to do so for any part of our fellowship. In the same ways that we have made sometimes faltering efforts to be sure we are not grossly or subtly excluding women, we are asking all of us, especially our trusted servants and staff, to actively work on increased awareness of ways in which we may be contributing to exclusionary and harmful bias related to race, culture and other categories of identity.

Perhaps a place we can start is through conscious effort to offer representation of all of our members in SAA materials — and we are grateful to be witnessing the work of the Inclusion and Diversity Committee, and hold the hope that all of us can contribute to making our spaces and service groups more representative of our greater fellowship.

(This letter was written through the collaboration of several active SAA members, and has been presented to the ISO's IDC for its consideration.)

LETTERS & NEWS

Response from Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees acknowledges with gratitude receipt of the letter about the past TOC cover and related issues. After an in-depth discussion of the letter at the trustees' meeting on March 20, 2021, the Board unanimously approved this response.

The Board fully supports the letter's request to actively work on fostering awareness of barriers to increasing diversity and inclusiveness across the fellowship, especially as such efforts are part of Traditions One and Three. We note that the Board created the Inclusion and Diversity Committee in 2019 for the purpose implementing the intentions expressed in the letter, among other outreach and inward-facing efforts. In that regard, the Board looks to and supports the IDC for the work needed to carry this message to all aspects of the fellowship.

Respectfully,

Board of Trustees

Errata

Early copies of the May 2021 issue of *The Outer Circle*, listed an incorrect author on the "10th Step Inventory." The correct author is Frank T., not Keith.

The footer of these issues also stated it was the March – April 2021 issue rather than the May – June 2021 issue.

The ISO apologizes for these errors and wishes to make amends for the mistakes made.

Let's Talk Forums Time Change

The Let's Talk Forums hosted by the Conference Steering Committee will take place on the 4th Saturday of July, September, and November for 2021. Delegates and GSRs are encouraged to attend. For meeting access information, please contact the ISO at info@saa-recovery.org.

Conference Steering Committee Update

For the remainder of the current service year, the CSC is primarily focusing on preparation for the annual meeting of the Conference in October. A major part

ISO NEWS

of this effort is to communicate effectively with group service representatives (GSRs), who make up the area assemblies, and with area delegates, who make up the Conference. The ISO is best served by sober, well-informed delegates, who bring their own experience and the group conscience of their respective areas to bear on issues of interest to the fellowship as a whole.

Communication efforts include “Let’s Talk” sessions on Zoom in July and September, the quarterly GSR newsletter, and special training sessions on Zoom for area delegates, the dates of which have not been announced yet.

For the Conference meeting this year, the CSC is co-sponsoring two motions with the Board of Trustees and Literature Committee. One is to define a process by which SAA core documents—steps, traditions, and concepts—might be adopted or changed. The second is to clarify the guidelines for service at the international level.

The Charter and Bylaws Subcommittee is working on a possible motion to bring the Conference Charter into conformity with the new ISO area structure. In addition, the Service Manual Subcommittee plans to have a rough draft of the manual to showcase at the annual meeting in October.

As a reminder, any member of the fellowship may participate in CSC subcommittee meetings and projects. If interested, contact the ISO office by email at info@saa-recovery.org or call 713-869-4902.

Approved Board Actions

May

- Approved the 2022 convention theme and logo.
- Approved the following Strategic Goal for the ISO and the Board: Implement and promote four new options for communication among components of the ISO, and between those components and member groups, by the 2024 Conference Meeting.

Financial Report

Our total SAA Green Book sales were above our estimate of \$5,826 by \$628 in May. Our HCI sales (April’s numbers, a month behind) were \$315 higher than budgeted. Findaway audio sales were \$18 above our budget of \$226. For the year we are 105.27% of our estimated sales.

Our book *Voices in Recovery* sales for May were \$67 below our budget of \$2,050 for May. The ISO was \$105 below budget and HCI sales were \$39 above budget. For the year we are an average of 112.82% of our estimated sales.

ISO NEWS

Our pamphlet and booklet sales were above our estimate of \$1,000 by \$443 in May. For the year we are at 129.21% of our estimated sales.

Our plastic chips sales were above our estimate of \$405 by \$318 in May. For the year we are at 130.34% of our estimated sales.

Our bronze medallion sales were above our estimate of \$600 by \$1,216 in May. For the year we are at 199.01% of our estimated sales.

Our total sales for May were above our estimate of \$10,083 by \$2,524 in May. For the year we are at 114.86% of our estimated sales.

Individual donations were below our estimate of \$40,146 by \$1,469 in May. For the year we are at 103.76% of our estimated individual donations. The general donations were above our budget by \$7,178 and the Lifeline Partners amount was \$22 above budget. Our May Lifelines budget is \$25,815 with an average over the year as \$26,000 (increasing each month to \$26,665 in December) and our goal is \$50,000 per month.

Group donations were below our estimate of \$11,363 by \$1,535 in May. For the year we are at 101.90% of our estimated group donations. Group Lifeline partners are \$198 below above our budget of \$2,581 and general donations for groups was \$1,535 below our budgeted estimate.

Our total donations were \$3,006 below the budgeted amount of \$61,779. For the year we are at 103.37% of our estimated donations.

Our product inventory is valued at \$74,207.

Our operational reserve is fully funded at \$200,021. Our estimated three-month reserve is \$175,691.

Our total expenses were \$2,658 higher than our budget of \$62,246. This is mainly from the \$2,645 training for the executive director on strategic planning that was not budgeted.

Our net income was \$4,359 below our budget of -\$3,887.

For May of total income was \$63,910, our cost of goods was \$7,241, resulting in a gross profit of \$56,868. Our total expenses were \$64,905 resulting in a net income of -\$8,236, which was \$4,359 under budget.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

In Your Service,

Paul M.

Executive Director

CONTACT THE ISO

Office

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The Outer Circle

Editor: Christie K.: toc@saa-recovery.org

The ISO of SAA Board of Trustees also has an e-mail box, which may be used to register comments, positive or negative, from the fellowship about the ISO staff: board@saa-recovery.org

Board of Trustees and Literature Committee

Board

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Eddie N (Treasurer); Karen S; Les J (Secretary);
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CSC: csc@saa-recovery.org
LitCom: litcom@saa-recovery.org

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Associate Director: Chris F.
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Public Information, Cooperation with the Professional Community, and 7th Tradition Manager: Phillip B.
Project Manager: Tracy R.
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Charlie K; Christie K (TOC Editor); Deb W; Don R;
Doug S (Vice-Chair); Jackie J; Jim L (Chair);
Maud D (Secretary); Mike K; Rachel R

Calendar

The most up-to-date committee schedule and information about joining any ISO committee can be found at saa-iso.org.

Prisoner Letter Writing Program

New letter writers and sponsors are always needed for the prisoner letter writing program. If you are interested in confidentially spreading SAA's message of recovery from sexual addiction through the Twelve Steps, email HarveyA@saa-iso.net or call the ISO at 713-869-4902.

PI/CPC (Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community)

The Twelfth Step says that, "we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts and to practice these principles in our lives." At the ISO level, this is done through the work of the Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) committee. Both of these are forms of outreach. If you would like to work the Twelfth Step at the ISO level, contact PhillipB@saa-iso.net or call the ISO at 713-869-4902.

LifeLine Partners

LifeLine donations provide steady income that allows the ISO to operate and help groups carry the SAA message. Become a LifeLine partner today by calling 713-869-4902 or by going to saa-recovery.org and clicking "Contribute."

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Get Your Story Published in *The Outer Circle*

The Outer Circle newsletter relies on submissions from the SAA fellowship. It's a great way to carry the message to other sex addicts in the spirit of Step Twelve — and be of service! Articles may be submitted to *toc@saa-recovery.org* or to the ISO office. Please submit articles via email in Microsoft Word format with the **RELEASE FORM** at the bottom of this page.

Deadlines for Submission and Topics

Jan/Feb:	“First Three Steps”	Nov 5
Mar/Apr:	“Taking Action”	Jan 5
May/June:	“Changes, Hope”	Mar 5
July/Aug:	“Celebration and Exploration”	May 5
Sept/Oct:	“Letting Go, Giving Back”	July 5
Nov/Dec:	“Prayer and Meditation”	Sept 5

Here are some general writing guidelines:

Living in Sobriety: For those with five-plus years of sobriety. 750-900 words on how you got sober and what you're doing to stay sober.

Stories of Service: 300-500 words on why you do service and how it helps your recovery.

Feature articles: 650-1,200 words on any of the topics listed above. It may be helpful to think of your submission as a written form of a share you'd give in a meeting — something that's working for you or that you're struggling with in recovery as it relates to the steps or traditions.

General Release Form

In consideration of being reviewed for possible publication, I hereby transfer and release to the ISO of SAA, Inc (assignee) all legal rights to the publication of my submission(s) or any edited version thereof in any official ISO publication, including Sex Addicts Anonymous, The Outer Circle, the SAA meditation book, the SAA websites, or any other SAA program material, such as pamphlets, booklets and audio recordings.

With this submission, I transfer to the assignee without limitation the legal title and all literary rights, including copyright and/or trademark and the full right and license to reproduce, copy, edit for content, modify, distribute, and create derivatives from the submitted work. I understand that every effort will be made to safeguard my personal anonymity in the publication and distribution of this material. I also understand that I may or may not receive further communication regarding my submission prior to its publication.

I hereby further attest that I possess full legal capacity to exercise this authorization, and I hereby Release the assignee from any claim whatsoever by me or my successors.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Printed name: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Printed name: _____

SAA TWELVE STEPS

- 1.** We admitted we were powerless over addictive sexual behavior - that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2.** Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3.** Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.
- 4.** Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5.** Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6.** Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- 7.** Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
- 8.** Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9.** Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- 10.** Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
- 11.** Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.
- 12.** Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts and to practice these principles in our lives.