

# THE OUTER CIRCLE

Carrying the message of hope to the still-suffering sex addict since 1988

## THE OUTER CIRCLE: BRINGING A NEW WORLD OF RECOVERY



### PLUS:

- RECOVERY GPS
- BEING JUDGED
- THE POWER OF WORDS

The Newsletter of SAA's International Service Organization





## 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.

**March - April 2024**

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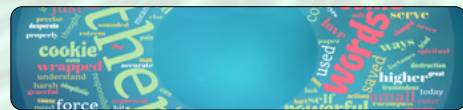
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Share *The Outer Circle* with your recovery friends in SAA and encourage them to submit their experience, strength, and hope (see page 31).

# FROM THE EDITOR

## The outer circle

BY ALEX B.

THE OUTER CIRCLE  
EDITOR

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*If you feel inspired  
to share your story,  
remember they  
can be submitted  
online ([saa-recovery.  
org/tocsubmission](https://saa-recovery.org/tocsubmission)) or via  
[toc@saa-recovery.  
org](mailto:toc@saa-recovery.org).*

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There is definitely something self-referential – or maybe I should say “circular” – in organizing an issue of this newsletter around the topic of “the outer circle.” But among the many tools available to me in recovery, the deep well of inspiration I find in my outer circle is possibly the most important.

I remember how my previous behavior had me looking inward, concerned only with my own well-being and my immediate, selfish concerns. Thank God for a chance to turn that energy outward! The life I have found in a thriving, active outer circle has led me into a new kind of environment. My outer circle has me making connections and building others up, rather than withdrawing and sheltering myself from the world.

Early in my recovery, when I first learned about the three circles, I placed a handful of items in my outer circle. I thought it needed to be maintained and curated, focused only on building time in sobriety and repairing familial ties.

Fortunately, an early sponsor inspired me to make my outer circle expansive. Today, my recovery is grounded in a thriving, enormous collection of activities, moods, and patterns of thought. My outer circle is a place to find my Higher Power, express gratitude for the life He has given me, and engage productively with others in my recovery journey.

I hope this issue of *The Outer Circle* helps you expand your own outer circle into a reflection of the possibilities we can find in recovery.



# FROM THE DIRECTOR

## The end is the beginning

BY TRACY R.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
ISO OF SAA, INC.

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*I encourage  
anyone reading  
this to step out  
and step into  
service.*

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When I first came to SAA, I saw Step Twelve as the destination. “When I complete the steps, I’ll be done and have my life back in order.” Now, having worked the Twelve Steps, I see Step Twelve as the beginning. Working this step means embracing a new way of life. Today, I live according to spiritual principles rather than my own egocentric demands.

Service is a huge piece of my new way of life. Step Twelve states specifically that “we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts.” Service to my fellow addict is called out specifically apart from other spiritual principles, so it must be important.

I have been involved in service at some level since I entered SAA. At first, I volunteered to read. Then, when I had some recovery, I shared what was working for me in meetings. Next, I began to lead meetings. I made outreach calls from the beginning, and I learned that doing so is service – either I am allowing another to serve by supporting me or I am serving by supporting another. Then, having completed the steps and maintaining sobriety, I started sponsoring, serving on the Women’s Outreach Committee, and in time, serving on the Literature Committee.

When I started my journey in SAA, I was suicidal and filled with shame and self-loathing. I could not imagine ever having anything to give. However, by doing service as I was able, I learned that I do have value and am able to serve – that I do have something to give. I never would have known that had I not taken the risk to go ahead and serve, regardless of what I thought of my worthiness or abilities. And, I never would have known the joy of service.

I encourage anyone reading this to step out and step into service. You may have much more to give than you know, and you may just find a joy such as you have never known.

For information on how you can serve, visit the service website at [www.saa-iso.org](http://www.saa-iso.org) or email [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org).

# DEAR GRACE

## Should I take on service before finishing the Steps?

BY WOMEN'S  
OUTREACH  
COMMITTEE

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*While it's important  
to stay focused on  
the Steps, there are  
many ways you can  
get involved and do  
service now.*

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» Reprinted from May/June  
2018 issue.

**Disclaimer:** We cannot guarantee that this advice will be equally applicable to every woman, although it is our hope that such will be the case. – SAA Women's Outreach Committee

**Dear Grace,**

I would like to do more service within the fellowship, especially for women. I don't have any idea what I can do, though, beyond reading and sharing at meetings, since I haven't finished the Steps yet.

How can I find service opportunities?

**Signed,  
Wanting to Help**

**Dear Wanting to Help:**

Your enthusiasm and desire to do service is to be commended! A sincere desire to give back is evidence of growth and the beginning of your spiritual awakening. While it is important to stay focused on working the Steps, there are many ways you can get involved and do service now.

Here are a few:

- Chair meetings, in person, on the phone, or on a video teleconference.
- Receive calls from newcomers, sharing your experience of getting started and finding a sponsor.
- Contact the Grace group (via email, [grace@saa-woman.org](mailto:grace@saa-woman.org)) and ask for a list of various service committees and the times they meet. If you see one you would like to attend, ask them for the Zoom information.
- Attend a Women's Outreach Committee meeting (2nd Saturday of each month). Find out how by emailing [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org).
- Get a service position in your home group.

*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](mailto:grace@saa-women.org)) receives.*

*\*Names have been changed to  
protect anonymity.*



- Go to your local intergroup meeting and see what positions they have open. Starting at the local or intergroup level is a good idea if these are available.

The Women's Outreach Committee recommends finding a committee where you feel you can serve, or you can choose from a number of different "work groups" that function under that committee to do the tasks assigned.

As the Green Book says: "However we do service, we receive much more than we give. First and foremost, our experience has shown that working with others safeguards our own abstinence. We keep the priceless gift of our sexual sobriety by being of service to other sex addicts. We receive many other gifts as well. We break out of the isolation and self-centeredness of our addiction. We grow as we

practice generosity, empathy, and humility. We forge new bonds with others that nourish and sustain us. And we experience the joy and satisfaction of giving something of ourselves to a larger cause."

The most important way we do service in SAA is to sponsor other members. It is important not to get so caught up in committees and service work that we lose sight of working our own program and completing the Twelve Steps. Working the Steps should be the first priority at this time, but if you can work on a service committee while still remaining committed to your step work, this would be a wonderful way to serve the fellowship.

**In service,  
Grace**



# I want to change!

BY NANCY F.

**D**octor, I cannot go on like this! I have everything to live for? I must stop, but I cannot. Please help me!”

When I read these words in the AA Big Book, they bring back a distinct memory: I was sitting alone on my couch in December 2010. I had a tank of helium sitting next to me, ready to end my life. I screamed, “I want to change!” But, sadly, I could not.

Thankfully, on December 21, 2010, I found the rooms of SAA. I went to my first telemeeting never having been in a twelve-step fellowship before. I heard women tell my story. They helped me realize I was not a freak, a perverted person that could not stop acting out, hurting myself and others, deserving to die.

No, I had a progressive disease, they told me. I had the cunning, baffling and powerful disease of sex addiction. And for the first time in a long, long while, I was not alone.



The women in the meeting stayed on the call with me and answered all of my questions. One of the women became my sponsor, and I began the journey of recovery.

My sobriety date is June 21, 2013. I struggled for two-and-a-half years with the whole “God thing.” I resisted admitting I couldn’t change myself and struggled to surrender in Step Two. I heard that the program offered a spiritual solution but I wanted no part of it. I got angry – so angry, I almost left the program. But I knew I had nowhere else to go; it was this or the grave.

I said I was an atheist. In fact, I was a very angry agnostic, due to sexual trauma growing up. I proclaimed that I didn’t believe in God. Then, one day, my sponsor heard my ranting and said, “I don’t think you can be angry at something you don’t believe in.”

I was pissed, but I knew in my heart of hearts she was right. My resistance began to melt. A few weeks later, I finally worked Steps Two and Three, and I found myself believing in a Power greater than myself.

A common saying in the fellowship is “though perhaps he came to scoff, he may remain to pray.” That has been my story: moving from angry

agnostic to someone who knows the transforming power of my Higher Power in my life.

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**It is only when I admit I can’t,  
that I begin to change.**

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Today I serve my Higher Power in my outer circle, grounding my activities by living in Steps Ten, Eleven, and Twelve on a daily basis. If God can redeem my dark past, recovery is possible for anyone.

I have developed some helpful reminders along my way. I use these to stay grounded in my outer circle when necessary:

- My circles are not deprivation but God’s protection.
- Stay in the sunlight, not the spotlight.
- Pray for the willingness — but don’t wait for it to come!
- If my will and my life could be in God’s will every moment, I would be God. I wouldn’t need God.
- God can only be everything in the present moment.
- Neutrality with my acting out is good, but neutrality in life is what I’m after.

- The word “difficulties” in the Third Step prayer is separation from God.
- I don’t need to feel good, I need to do good. And by doing good, then I get the benefit of feeling good.

I am so grateful to SAA, my fellow sisters and brothers, sponsors, and sponsees who walk this path with me, past and present. But most of all I know my recovery is due to a power greater than myself.

I want to change!! But it is only when I admit I can’t, that I begin to change. ☺

## ***Abstinence***



What does abstinence mean?

Free

Serene

Helpful to others

Happy

Whole

It means to be something entirely different

Than being an addict

Manipulative

Controlling

Selfish

Abstinence is a whole way of life

Abstinence is whole and holy

Abstinence is surrender

# Recovery GPS



BY JIM L

**M**ost of us have become accustomed to using the Global Positioning System (GPS) to find our way around the world, as we can tap into it with the phones in our pockets. Not only does the system know where I am, but it can guide me to a specified location of my choosing. The thought that at any moment millions of people are using that information to find their way to unfamiliar destinations is daunting.

Initially, I found it a bit disconcerting that someone, something, or some system would know where I am at any given moment. But over time, the utility of the GPS system overshadowed that initial uneasy feeling. Now, using GPS has become routine, and it can even direct me around a traffic jam or road repairs with an estimate of how long the best route will take. If I take a wrong turn, GPS recalibrates and redirects me to the best route to my destination.

Although no analogy is perfect, the Twelve Steps have many characteristics of GPS. The steps can help me know where I am in the recovery process. The steps guide me along the path to my goal—recovery from sex addiction—even when I am uncertain about where I am going. Both when working with my sponsor and attending meetings, the steps often provide a touchpoint for how to proceed, how to correct a misstep, or how to start over if that is needed.

How gratifying and comforting it is to have the Twelve Steps as a reference point that anchors our recovery program and guides our path! ©



*"Without knowing the force of words, it is impossible to know people."*

These words of wisdom came from the small piece of paper wrapped inside the fortune cookie I had after dinner recently. What a delightful surprise this was. So much wisdom wrapped up inside a small cookie.

It's my hobby to collect the fortunes that are meaningful to me, and this one was especially valuable. I have always tried to be accurate and precise in my wording, believing that accuracy in language was what mattered above all else.

What I didn't realize was that I was being selfish. I only cared about how I sounded. I wanted to sound eloquent and polished, which stemmed from my character trait of low self-esteem. I wanted to sound and look good in the ears and eyes of others. I didn't care about the impact of my words on others. I lacked compassion and empathy for others.

Many times over, I have witnessed my words have a tremendous impact on others. I have hurt others with my words, time and time again. Just like my actions, the force of my words can cause great harm.

Words are incredibly expressive. They can be soft and compassionate, or harsh and hurtful. Words are vehicles that convey powerful human emotions like fear, pain, shame, gratitude, joy, and love. Words can be used either to divide into destruction or to connect in meaningful ways.

The words I've learned in recovery are so powerful that they have changed me in ways I could never imagine. Words like honesty, hope, courage, strength, accountability, responsibility, self-care, self-worth, compassion, empathy, love, spirituality, higher power, and God.

These words all meant nothing to me before recovery. I did not understand their real meanings or the power they yielded. In my simplistic mind, they were just letters representing concepts that I didn't value or appreciate.

Today, these words are so much more than I thought they were. They are important principles that serve as guiding lights for me as I build an outer circle in my recovery. When used properly these words cannot only help, but they are even capable of healing.

When I came into SAA, I was a sex addict who had hit rock bottom. I was a broken man who was hurting and in desperate need of help from others. What ultimately saved me was the compassionate and loving words uttered by the men and women in the fellowship of SAA, who had come to know the healing power of these words.

Those miraculous words of recovery carried with them the experience, strength, and hope of others who had already been saved by the Twelve Steps of SAA. Because of those words, I have come to know many brothers and sisters in the fellowship of SAA. But the single most important person I have come to know because of them is myself. Through the words of others, I have come to know my true self.

I am grateful to have learned these incredibly powerful words of recovery. For me, they encompass and represent the spiritual principles of SAA. They sound beautiful and graceful to my ears, and I practice using them every single day. They serve to connect me to others, to myself, and to my higher power. ©





## Post-slip recovery to-do list

BY BRAD

**M**y name is Brad and I'm a sex addict. A few hours ago, I had my most recent slip with pornography and on-line chat. Before that, I'd been abstinent from those inner-circle behaviors for twenty-seven days straight.

As of this writing, it has been 316 days since I last acted out with anyone else in person. For further context, the longest stretch of abstinence from all inner-circle activity I've had in recovery was just two days shy of seven months.

Nevertheless, today I had another slip. It wasn't among my worst, but it is a slip and so I need to be real about it. Honesty is a saving grace of this program which I believe comes from the God of my understanding. And, as one who writes, I've decided to share my truth about this with you in real time, while I'm still feeling everything one feels in the immediate wake of a slip in addiction.

So, why did this happen today?

Why does any slip happen in recovery?

I felt lonely, worried about a bunch of things I know I can't control. I fell into self-pity, unable to imagine finding the energy or courage to face these uncontrollable things at the moment. I indulged my ego over some political

issues, took someone else's inventory (while failing to take my own), sampled some especially tasty resentments, blah, blah, blah....

Bottom line: The other "me" who I disdainfully refer to as "Lizard Brain" took over. It doesn't know I'm in recovery and doesn't care.

Ultimately, I forgot everything I'd learned in recovery just long enough to find one of my old on-line stomping grounds. And after venturing into that territory, it felt like there was no going back. But, of course, I was always free not to head in that direction, and, once I did, I was always free to turn around.

What did I forget? True to form, I forgot twelve important facts:

1. That feelings are not facts and that they always pass. I forgot that no matter what I'm feeling right now, good or bad, it will pass, and probably a lot sooner than I expect. As an addict, I fall into the trap of believing that difficult feelings may last forever unless I act out. This is false.
2. That I have a complete list of outer-circle activities I can engage with instead of acting out. That I can log onto an on-line meeting, walk my dog, make a sandwich, take a nap, write an article, make music, go to the gym, or do any number of outstanding household chores. That I can do anything other than act out.
3. That I have a sponsor and an entire community of SAA fellows I can reach out to when I'm feeling wobbly. That these people truly want to hear from me when I need to talk. That connection is the opposite of addiction.
4. That there's a God who loves me and who's never let me down and — when I'm feeling badly, anytime, anywhere — I can reach out to God.
5. That, no matter how badly I'm feeling, engaging with inner-circle behaviors will never leave me feeling better than I felt beforehand. That acting out always, always, always leaves me feeling smaller and weaker than I felt before, no matter how small and weak that might be.
6. That, at times, there's power in deliberately sitting with difficult feelings.
7. That whenever I'm faced with the choice between sitting on the couch and going into action focused on others, recovery comes through action focused on others. In other words: I need to stay out of my head and inside real life.

8. That I need to consciously work at self-discipline. I need to remind myself every day that self-discipline means doing what I'm supposed to be doing, when I'm supposed to be doing it—especially when I don't feel like it.
  9. That sometimes, all I need to do to be okay is nothing.
  10. That, instead of indulging my ego in taking anyone else's inventory or rehearsing resentments, I can ask myself, "What shortcomings of my own are these other people's stories bringing up?" That I can stay focused on keeping my side of the street clean, inside and out.
  11. That I have so much to be grateful for every single day and that a grateful addict will not want to pick up or act out.
  12. That everything important takes time, but I've got time. It took me decades of chaos in addiction for me to get into recovery and I'm not going to find complete freedom from addiction in less than a year. It's about progress, not perfection. Slow down. Breathe.
- 

## **I forgot everything I'd learned in recovery just long enough to find one of my old on-line stomping grounds.**

---

If I had remembered any of these basic facts of life in recovery, what happened earlier today would not have happened. But I'm an addict, so I forgot all of it.

Recovery seems to come in phases. "Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly." And as the SAA Green Book says on page 67, "It is no surprise that many of us have experienced relapse." So I need to remember at times like these to show myself a fraction of the grace that I've been shown by my Higher Power. On that note, I am forgetting everything that I forgot today a lot less frequently than ever and, when I do forget, the consequences are far less dire than they've ever been.

That said, how can I help myself remember the principles of the program that keep me sober and keep me alive? Not necessarily forever, but maybe for this phase of my recovery? After all, principles without action are just words, no matter how eloquent they might sound. And faith without works is dead.

To start, I can write out my twelve facts of life in recovery that I listed above by hand every morning. It will only take a couple of minutes. They say that writing ideas out by hand commits them to memory in ways that typing them out on a keyboard doesn't accomplish. So, starting tomorrow morning, I will write those twelve principles out in my notebook, and I will do it every morning thereafter as part of my morning routine.

By doing this every day, I believe that the principles themselves will become harder and harder for me to forget and will govern my actions more and more reliably over time. I hope that my writing this so closely on the heels of a slip helps someone. It's certainly helped me. ☺

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*Did you resolve to  
find a sponsor or be a  
sponsor in 2024 and  
are "still working" on it?  
Now is the time!*

Finding a sponsor can be as simple as putting your name on a list. Most often, however, you'll need to ask someone personally. Ask someone whose story speaks to you. If they say no, ask someone else! For more information, go to <https://www.saa-recovery.org/literature> to read the pamphlet "Getting a Sponsor."

If you are unsuccessful at finding a sponsor, or if you want to sponsor long-distance, we have resources for you. If you identify as a man or male, please email [men4saa@saa-recovery.org](mailto:men4saa@saa-recovery.org) for the "Men's Support List." If you identify as a woman or female, you may email the Grace List at [grace@saa-women.org](mailto:grace@saa-women.org). If you do not identify as either or are not comfortable emailing either list, you can reach out to the LGBT Outreach Committee at [lgbt@saa-recovery.org](mailto:lgbt@saa-recovery.org).

# DEAR WILL

## Being judged in SAA?

BY WILL

---

*It stung a little,  
but I really  
couldn't argue  
with what he was  
saying.*

---

Dear Will,

I have been in recovery from sexual addiction since March of 2021 and started attending meetings in the fall of that same year. Recently, I was at an SAA meeting and left with a resentment. After the meeting, a few of the guys were talking about their program and the things in their outer circles that were helping them.

I shared that I have been so busy with work and family commitments, going to school for my master's degree, and going to a meeting when I can, that I am just too busy to act out. One guy quickly said being busy is not the same as being in our outer circle. Who asked him? He said he tried it, and it didn't work for him. He suggested I reread the "Three Circles" pamphlet and give him a call so he could help me work on my circles.

I don't want to call him. This is my program, and I don't need someone else judging me.

Sincerely,

**On the Outs with the Outer Circle**

**Dear On the Outs-**

It always amazes how we are all so different, yet we can share so many similar experiences in addiction and in recovery. I think I may have run into that same fellow or someone like him at the SAA meetings I attend. Like you, I was sharing with some folks after a meeting about how good things were going. I had finally put together sixty days of sobriety when one of the guys asked me how I was doing it. I listed out how I was staying away from the people, places, and things (porn, strip clubs, and my affair partners) that used to trigger me. I was staying really busy so I



would not have too much downtime where I could get myself in trouble.

This fellow shared that it sounded like I needed an outer circle, and the outer circle is a lot more than staying busy. Addicts are never too busy to act out, he said, speaking from his experience. If we were able to find time in our addiction to act out, we could just as easily find time to act out in recovery. Just as before, we could take that time from our families, our work, our commitments, our lives.

It stung a little when he said that, but I really couldn't argue with what he was saying. Fortunately for me, the fellows I was with offered to share what the outer circle is really about and even shared with me what was in their own outer circles. This helped me understand how I could switch my mindset from being "too busy to act out" to having an outer circle that supported my recovery. You can have this, too!

I encourage you to reach out to others in the program — maybe even the gentleman who was compassionate enough to challenge you — to learn how you can develop your outer circle. If you do not have a copy of the "Three Circles" pamphlet, you can read it on the SAA website ([saa-re-](http://saa-recovery.org/literature)

[covery.org/literature](http://saa-recovery.org/literature)). Here is some information on the outer circle from *Sex Addicts Anonymous*, page 18, to get you started.

"Finally, we put those behaviors in the outer circle that we consider healthy, safe, and beneficial to our recovery. Practicing these behaviors is a way of being gentle with ourselves. These are acts of self-nurturing that help bring meaning, fulfillment, serenity, and joy into our lives. Outer circle

behaviors include healthy sexuality. Healthy sexual behaviors are ones we choose that enhance our life, our recovery, our connection to others, and our spiritual life. Examples might include dating, non-abusive sex within a committed rela-

tionship, healthy masturbation with or without fantasy, taking a dance class, wearing attractive clothes, or enjoying affectionate touch. Many of us include in our outer circle other healthy activities in our lives, not just healthy sexual behaviors. These are frequently the things we didn't have time to do when we were acting out."

**Will**

*If you have a question for Will,  
please send an email to  
[Men4SAA@saa-recovery.org](mailto:Men4SAA@saa-recovery.org).*



# STORIES OF SERVICE

## Unique to me

BY WILLIAM S.

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*There are ways I  
can be of service  
that are unique to  
me.*

---

When I was in graduate school, I was studying the writings of a famous first millennium theologian, whom I'll call EOC.

I said to my professor after class, "The world needs another EOC." She turned that around and said, "Well, there never will be another EOC. Fortunately, we have a William S."

I remember this encounter whenever I am serving the fellowship. It is easy for me to huff and doubt my own unique contributions to the world. It is easy to pride myself with false humility which says that I am good for nothing.

But it takes true humility to admit and be comfortable with the fact that there are ways I can be of service that are unique to me.

In SAA, I share my experience, strength, and hope whenever I serve or attend a meeting. No one else has the same experience, strength, and hope as me.

Therefore, I necessarily and absolutely have a unique contribution that I can and must offer in service to others!

*Stories of Service inspire  
others to be of service. Send  
your 250-300-word story to*

*[toc@saa-recovery.org](mailto:toc@saa-recovery.org).*

## Registration for Conference Begins Soon

The delegate Conference (business meeting) is coming October 11 - 13. Watch for an email with a link to the Conference website or email [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org). The Conference meeting will be virtual this year. Deadline to submit a motion is June 30. This event is separate from the ISO convention.

### Contact the ISO:

- » Phone: 713-869-4902
- » Email: [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org)
- » Board: [board@saa-recovery.org](mailto:board@saa-recovery.org)
- » Literature Committee: [litcom@saa-recovery.org](mailto:litcom@saa-recovery.org)
- » Conference Steering Committee (CSC):  
[csc@saa-recovery.org](mailto:csc@saa-recovery.org)
- » TOC Editor: [toc@saa-recovery.org](mailto:toc@saa-recovery.org)
- » Submit literature to LitCom:  
[saa-recovery.org/submit](http://saa-recovery.org/submit)
- » Submit to *The Outer Circle*: [saa-recovery.org/toc](http://saa-recovery.org/toc)
- » Find a meeting: [saa-recovery.org/meetings](http://saa-recovery.org/meetings)
- » More on page 30

# FROM THE BOARD

## Getting to Know the ISO Board of Trustees

BY JIM L  
MEMBER OF THE BOARD

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*We value your  
input. Email the  
board at*

[board@saa-recovery.org](mailto:board@saa-recovery.org)

These pages often feature reports from the Board of Trustees of ISO. But do you know what your Board does for you? And do you know what committees it works through? Here is a bit of background – for newcomers and veterans alike – to get to know your ISO Board better.

As a nonprofit corporation, the International Service Organization of SAA (ISO) operates under the oversight of a Board of Trustees, which is made of at least seven and no more than fourteen trustees elected by the delegates making up the ISO Conference. The Board is legally responsible for the financial integrity of the ISO and for oversight of the operation of the ISO office.

The Board meets monthly to review finances and to consider any issues relating to the ISO and its policies. There are four internal standing committees (ISCs) of the Board, each of which also meet monthly.

The Finance and Operations (F&O) ISC reviews the monthly income and expenses and assists the executive director on issues relating to finance and management of the office in Houston. The F&O ISC brings monthly financial reports to the Board for approval. Their efforts include recognizing trends and preparing the annual budget of the ISO.

The Policy ISC researches questions that may arise relating to ISO policy and makes recommendations to the Board, which is ulti-

mately responsible for overall policy of the ISO. The office staff are responsible for implementing ISO policies.

In addition to members of the Board, the Fellowship ISC is made up of representatives of the various ISO committees, including the Conference Steering Committee (CSC) and the outreach committees. The Fellowship ISC provides the unique opportunity for the committees to be apprised of the activities of the Board, the CSC, and other committees and to share best practices discovered within the ISO.

The Seventh Tradition ISC is charged with the responsibility of tracking financial giving by members of the fellowship and recommending to the Board ways to encourage giving both financially and in service. The Lifeline Partner program is under the auspices of the Seventh Tradition ISC.

The members of your Board take very seriously their responsibilities and serve without compensation to ensure the financial and operational integrity of the ISO, recognizing that the integrity of our fellowship is partially dependent on the services provided by the ISO.

Any member of the fellowship who might be interested in serving on the Board should submit a service résumé for consideration by the Nominating Committee. If you wish to know more about the Board or to submit a service résumé, contact the ISO office by email at [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org).

## **Board Actions**

### **January 2024**

- Approved Zoom room to parallel convention, primarily for international members
- Approved convention pricing and contracts

### **February 2024**

- Approved Conference pricing



# ISO NEWS

## Watch for Conference registration email

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The delegate Conference (business meeting) is coming October 11 - 13. Watch for an email with a link to the Conference website or email [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org). The Conference meeting will be virtual this year. Deadline to submit a motion is June 30. This event is separate from the ISO convention.

## Register now for this year's convention

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Registration for this year's convention (recovery event) is on-going. Act now to reserve your room.

The Conference and convention are separate events. For more information, call the office at 713-869-4902, or email [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org).

## Do you have computer skills?

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The Information Systems and Online Presence Committee (ISOPCom), a joint committee between the Literature Committee, Board, and the office, seeks volunteers who are able and willing to help with the ISO's technical computer needs. These include, but are not limited to, database management (Salesforce), web design (especially Wordpress, JavaScript, CSS, and PHP), and security. If you are skilled in these or similar areas and would like to use your skills to serve the fellowship, email [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org).

## Service Opportunities at the International Level

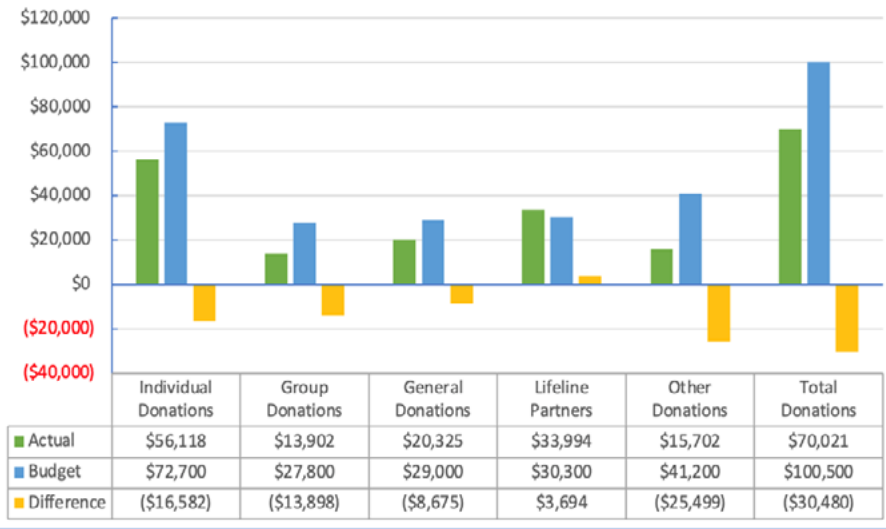
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The Conference Nominating Committee (NomCom) presents a slate of nominees at the annual Conference to fill open positions on the Board of Trustees, Literature Committee, Conference Steering Committee, and Conference Nominating Committee.

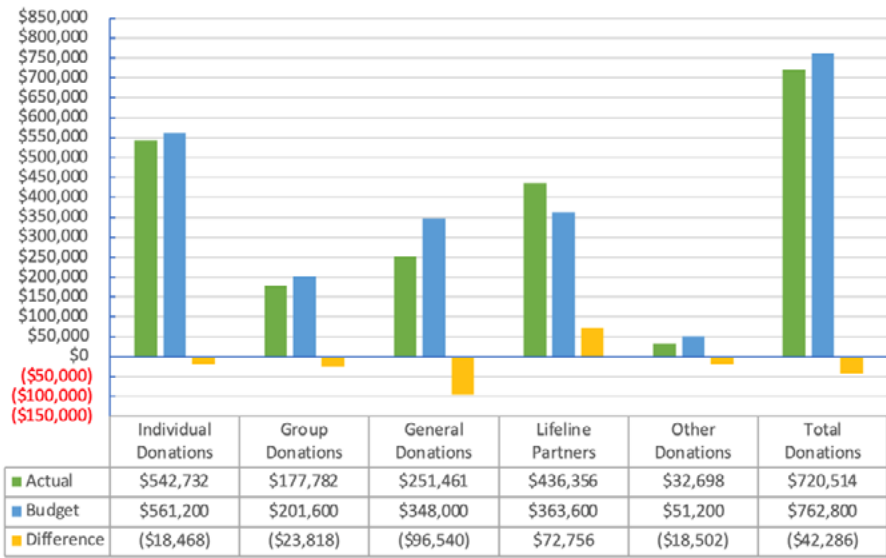
For more information, please visit the service website [saa-iso.org](http://saa-iso.org) and click on the International Service tab. Contact the ISO office via phone, (713) 869-4902, or email, [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org), for the username and password to access these documents.

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

December 2023 Donations

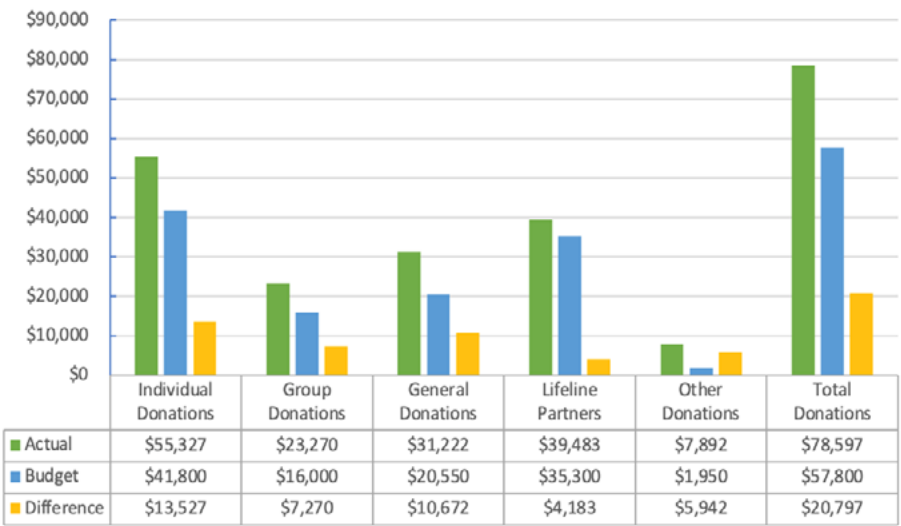


2023 Donations



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

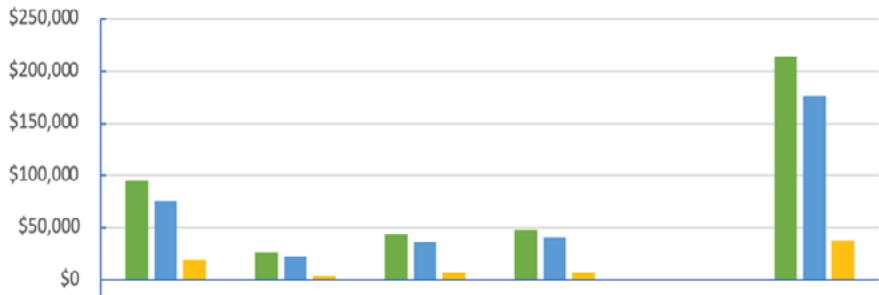
January 2024 Donations



December 2023 Sales

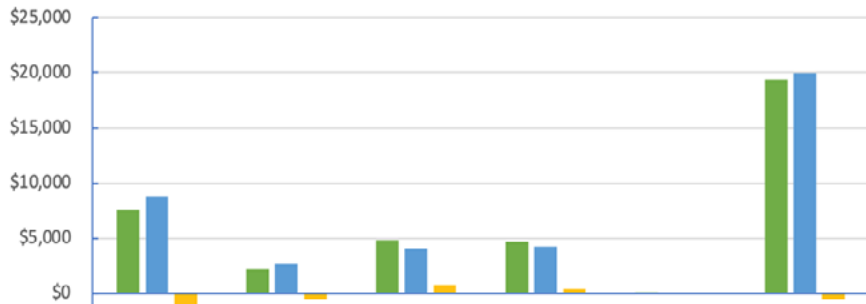


### 2023 Sales



	Green Book	Voices of Recovery	Pamphlets & Booklets	Chips, Medallions, Key Tags	Other	Total Sales
Actual	\$94,850	\$26,467	\$43,744	\$47,887	\$741	\$213,689
Budget	\$75,600	\$22,800	\$36,000	\$40,800	\$900	\$176,100
Difference	\$19,250	\$3,667	\$7,744	\$7,087	(\$159)	\$37,589

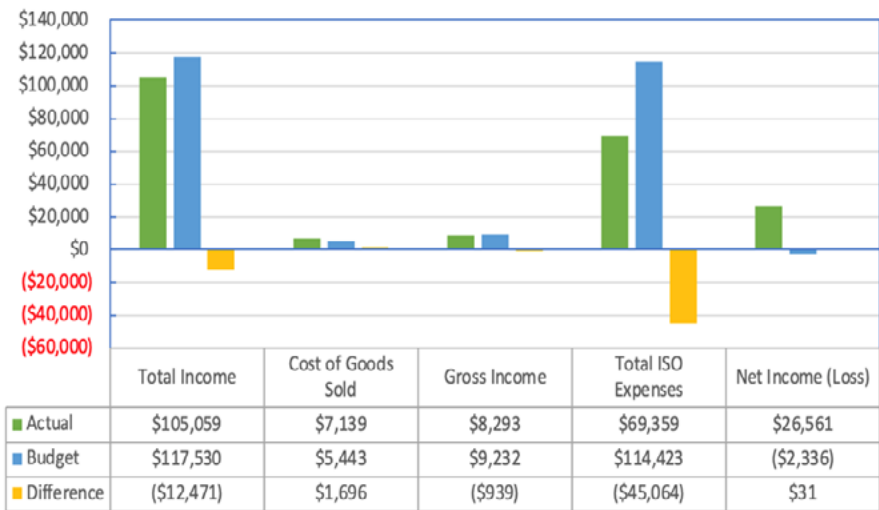
### January 2024 Sales



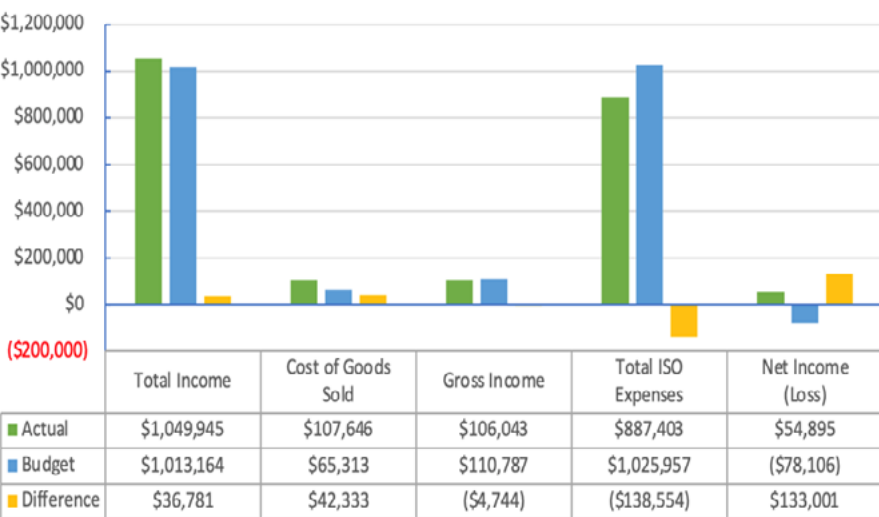
	Green Book	Voices of Recovery	Pamphlets & Booklets	Chips, Medallions, Key Tags	Other	Total Sales
Actual	\$7,585	\$2,178	\$4,833	\$4,702	\$123	\$19,420
Budget	\$8,862	\$2,700	\$4,025	\$4,265	\$86	\$19,938
Difference	(\$1,277)	(\$522)	\$808	\$437	\$37	\$(518)

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

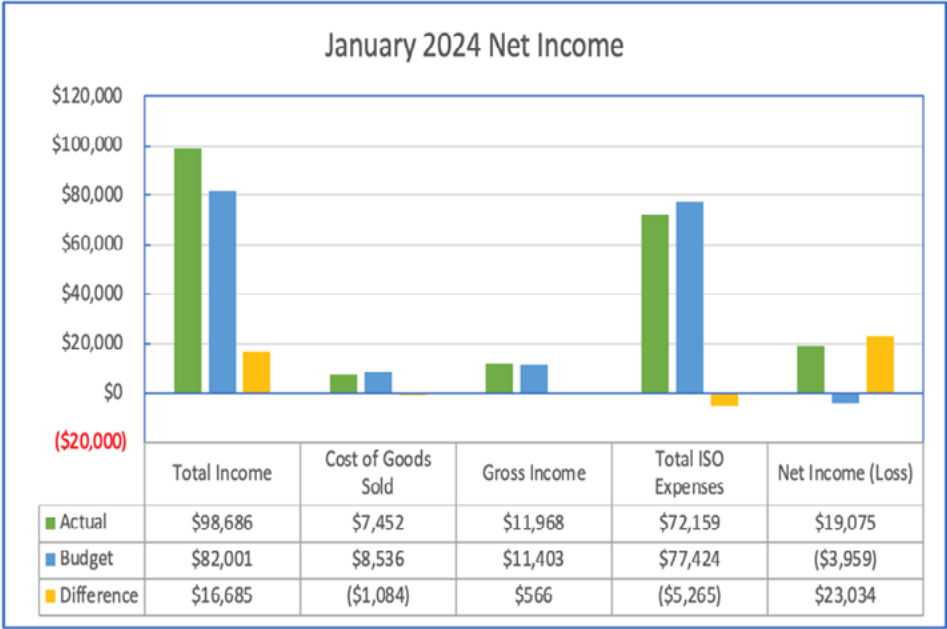
December 2023 Net Income



2023 Net Income







The 2022 audit is wrapping up and will be posted on the service website when it becomes available.

2023 donations were in line with the budget. Sales were above budget. Expenses were below budget in part due to the ISO office operating short one staff person for most of the year.

January donations were up from December. Donations were received for the 2023 Annual Appeal in January, so the Annual Appeal goal of 20,000 was exceeded by \$523. The \$15,000 LifeLine Partner match goal was also met.

Thank you all for a great 2023 and a fantastic start in 2024!

**Tracy R.**  
*Executive Director*

# CONTACT THE ISO

## Office

ISO Office Mailing Address:  
PO Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270

Phone: 713-869-4902  
Fax: 713-692-0105

Office e-mail: [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org)  
*The Outer Circle* e-mail: [toc@saa-recovery.org](mailto:toc@saa-recovery.org)  
Website: [www.saa-recovery.org](http://www.saa-recovery.org)

## The Outer Circle

Editor: Alex B.

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](mailto:board@saa-recovery.org).

## Board of Trustees and Literature Committee

### Board

Bill I (Chair); BJ M; Bob H; Brian S (Treasurer);  
Carl D; Carol Ann M; Eddie N; Jim L (Secretary);  
Karen S (Vice-chair); Michelle W;  
Tim A (Vice-secretary); Wayne K

Board: [board@saa-recovery.org](mailto:board@saa-recovery.org)  
CSC: [csc@saa-recovery.org](mailto:csc@saa-recovery.org)

## Office Staff

Executive Director: Tracy R: [director@saa-iso.net](mailto:director@saa-iso.net)  
Associate Director and Publications Manager:  
Cody S  
Public Information, Cooperation with the Professional Community, and 7th Tradition Manager:  
Phillip B  
Information Technician and Prison Outreach  
Manager: Jonathan C  
Administrative Assistant: Jerry B  
Administrative Assistant: Harvey A

LitCom: [litcom@saa-recovery.org](mailto:litcom@saa-recovery.org)

### Literature Committee

Alex B (TOC Editor); Chris D; Darren S; David  
C; Deb W; Jim P; Juan K; Mike K; Peter L; Ruth  
(Chair); Sergio; Stephen P; Zach R.

## Calendar

The most up-to-date committee schedule and information about joining any ISO committee can be found at [saa-iso.org](http://saa-iso.org).

## Prisoner Letter Writing Program

Writing and sponsoring prisoners by correspondence continues to be the mainstay of the ISO prisoner outreach program. In addition, the Prisoner Outreach Committee has encouraged members of the fellowship to consider the possibility of starting SAA meetings in a nearby prison. As a result of the pandemic, a new possibility has emerged—namely, meeting by video-conference.

While face-to-face remains the preferred meeting modality in most situations, recent experience in Arizona suggests that meeting by video-conference can open new opportunities to carry the SAA message of recovery into prisons. If interested in learning more—whether you are in the free world or in prison—contact the ISO office by telephone (713-869-4902), email ([info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org)), or postal mail (PO Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270).

## 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 in part through the work of the Public Information/Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI/CPC) committee. If you would like to work the Twelfth Step at the ISO level, contact [PhillipB@saa-iso.net](mailto: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](http://saa-recovery.org) and clicking “Contribute.”

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# SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

## Get Your Story Published in *The Outer Circle*

*The Outer Circle* newsletter relies on submissions from the SAA fellowship. Don't worry if you're not a writer. Tell us your story and we'll do the rest. If we have any questions, we'll contact you.

There are three ways to submit your story.

- First, you can submit online at [saa-recovery.org/toc](http://saa-recovery.org/toc). This is the easiest for most people.
- Second, email [toc@saa-recovery.org](mailto:toc@saa-recovery.org). If possible, include a copy of the release form below.
- Third, mail your submission, with the release form, to ISO of SAA, PO Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270.

Requested deadlines and suggested topics are below. Email [toc@saa-recovery.org](mailto:toc@saa-recovery.org) if you have any questions.

Issue	Deadline	Topic
» January/February	» December 1	» Sponsorship
» March/April	» February 1	» Outer circle
» May/June	» April 1	» "From Shame to Grace"
» July/August	» June 1	» Higher Power
» September/October	» August 1	» Pathway to recovery
» November/December	» October 1	» Amends

## 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 AND TWELVE TRADITIONS

## The Twelve Steps of SAA

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.

## The Twelve Traditions of SAA

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SAA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for SAA membership is a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or SAA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the sex addict who still suffers.
6. An SAA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SAA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every SAA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Sex Addicts Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. SAA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Sex Addicts Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SAA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.