

Why Is PI/CPC Work Important to Recovery?



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Step Twelve: 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 (emphasis added).

Let's start with "What is PI/CPC?" PI/CPC stands for Public Information / Cooperation with the Professional Community. PI occurs when we inform the general public about SAA. When we inform professionals (such as therapists, doctors, judges, etc.) about SAA, this is CPC.

Why is PI/CPC important?

First, PI/CPC work is important to the fellowship and to the still-suffering sex addict. PI informs the general public about SAA, which can help change attitudes about sex addiction. This may encourage people to seek help for themselves or for others who might benefit from SAA.

While PI work reaches the general public, CPC work fosters relationships with professionals who work with sex addicts. There are many professionals who are not aware that SAA exists. We can help them become familiar with the program's positive impact on the lives of suffering sex addicts. Once professionals learn about SAA, they have an additional resource to offer their clients. This is important because many of our members found SAA as a result of a recommendation from a professional. A recommendation from a trusted professional can be a powerful incentive for an addict to attend their first meeting. CPC work is vital for this purpose.

Second, but just as important, doing this work strengthens our own personal recovery. Carrying the message through PI/CPC work is a tangible way of putting the Twelve Steps into action.

"Carrying the message to our fellow addict is as important in maintaining our own recovery as it is in helping others find theirs." (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, p.59)

Is PI/CPC work consistent with the traditions?

“...it is our responsibility as a fellowship to make SAA’s presence known, in order to carry our message to the still-suffering sex addict.” (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, p. 95)

Some might say PI/CPC work is promotion rather than attraction. What does Tradition Eleven mean by “attraction” and “promotion”? The principle of attraction that Tradition Eleven speaks of “...means that we are letting people know that there is a way to recover from sex addiction that has worked for us, and that anyone who wants to stop addictive sexual behavior is welcome to try.” (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, p. 94) Attraction simply focuses on the fellowship and program of SAA. With promotion the focus shifts to the individual giving the message. For more information, see *Sex Addicts Anonymous*, pp. 94-95.

So why so much resistance?

In spite of the benefits PI/CPC work brings, it has been difficult for many of us to do it. Why? The short answer is because PI/CPC work requires that we step outside of our comfort zone. We are letting those outside the fellowship know that we are sex addicts, which can be extremely uncomfortable. This pamphlet is provided as a resource to encourage us to strengthen our recovery by overcoming whatever barriers we may have and engaging in PI/CPC work as part of working our Twelfth Step. Barriers might include fear, apathy, misunderstanding, self-centeredness, and shame, to name a few.

Working Step Twelve involves practicing spiritual principles which helps us overcome our barriers. Three of the spiritual principles at work in doing PI/CPC work are **surrender**, **courage**, and **compassion**. It starts with surrender.

SURRENDER - Letting go of self-will

“...every step of the program contributes to a fundamental change in our outlook, from self-obsession and control to surrender and acceptance.” (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, page 59)

Surrendering to a Power greater than ourselves is essential to our long-term recovery. This often means doing things outside our comfort zone, which might include informing professionals about SAA.

Our natural disposition is to avoid discomfort, and for many of us, it’s hard to imagine a greater discomfort than talking to non-members about recovery from sex addiction. We need to surrender to a Power greater than ourselves to move forward.

One way we can put our surrender into action is by being of service to others. In doing so, we learn to trust that our Higher Power will guide and support us, even if we are initially reluctant or frightened to do PI/CPC work. We need courage.

COURAGE - Feeling the fear and doing it anyway

“Through the process of the Twelve Steps, we let go of ways of thinking and acting that are based on fear, shame, and isolation, and we learn to rely on the guidance and care of a Higher Power.” (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, pp. 58-59)

Trusting our Higher Power in the face of fear requires courage. Courage is necessary because fear is such a common characteristic of our disease. A common fear is that others will judge us negatively if we reveal to them that we are sex addicts. Fear that we will be shamed often says we have to hide in the shadows, keep our addiction secret, and never let anyone know. We need courage to move past the fear so we are able to carry the message to sex addicts who still suffer.

We found that our efforts to carry the message allowed us to face our fears, which reduced our shame and helped us to grow spiritually. In general, the professionals we have spoken to expressed gratitude for our willingness to share with them. For the most part, they didn't know SAA existed, and were glad to discover that our help was available to people caught in the grip of sex addiction.

COMPASSION - Moving away from self-centeredness and towards others

“Through the Twelve Steps of Sex Addicts Anonymous, I have been given the gift of compassion for myself and others.” (*Sex Addicts Anonymous*, page 223)

Once we mustered the courage and started carrying the message of recovery to those outside the fellowship, we got out of our own heads. Doing so strengthened our compassion for those we wanted to help. The surprise bonus was that our growing compassion for others increased compassion for ourselves. This helped us see how carrying the message in Step Twelve is intricately interwoven with our spiritual awakening. By getting out of our comfort zone we enlarged our audience to include the public and members of the professional community who work with sex addicts. In this way, we helped many more sex addicts find recovery.

Who can do PI/CPC work?

We all can! We all have a powerful story to tell. We benefit when we tell our story. Others benefit when they hear our story. The suffering in our past allows us to help other sex addicts in ways that those who are not sex addicts cannot. This includes the professional community, who can use our help as they seek to help still-suffering sex addicts.

Putting this all together

In this pamphlet we have explored the relevance of the spiritual principles of surrender, courage, and compassion to PI/CPC work. We see how our program calls us to carry the message to sex addicts who still suffer. Helping others also helps us. It increases meaning and purpose in our lives, redeems our painful past, and brings joy to ourselves and those around us.

What's next?

SAA does not tell us exactly how to convey the message to sex addicts who still suffer. Each group (or individual) needs to work out how to use their time and resources to reach out to others. However, SAA has developed and continues to develop tools and resources to assist groups and individuals to do PI/CPC work. These can be accessed free at saa-recovery.org/literature. For more information email info@saa-recovery.org.

We invite all to join us as we take recovery to the next level. No matter where a person is in their spiritual journey, now is a good time to come out of the shadows and get involved with this effort!

If not you, then who? If not now, then when?

Whenever I think that PI/CPC service is a hassle or “overkill”, I remember someone’s service work paved the way for my recovery. I first heard of SAA from my therapist, who must have heard it from an SAA member’s CPC work. I’ll never know who reached out to her, but I am so grateful they did! We often think only of sponsorship and chairing meetings as service, but it was CPC work that got me into the rooms in the first place. - Julia B, Texas

Meeting with professionals in a local therapy practice was so far outside my comfort zone I didn’t think I could ever muster the courage to do so. But I’d been in the program long enough to know that when I don’t feel like doing something like this, then it is *exactly* what I need to do. It turned out to be a positive experience – no shame, no judgment – just an appreciation of my honesty and a genuine interest in learning more about SAA. - Mike H, Florida

I belong to a small therapy group for men as part of my external support. At some point I began sharing with them about SAA and my recovery. Eventually, one of them asked to have coffee to know more. A few months after we spoke, he visited an SAA meeting and has been going for over a year now. I am very thankful for having him as part of the fellowship. And for not wasting what I didn’t know then was a bit of PI/CPC work. And a beautiful service opportunity. - Sergio C, Costa Rica

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