

SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover.

- The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober. There are no dues or fees for SA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

- SA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

- Our primary purpose is to stay sexually sober and help others to achieve sexual sobriety.*

Sexaholics Anonymous is a recovery program based on the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous and received permission from AA to use its Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in 1979.

* Adapted with permission from The AA Grapevine, Inc.

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*A program of recovery for
those who want to stop their
sexually self-destructive
thinking and behavior.*

THE PROBLEM

Many of us felt inadequate, unworthy, alone, and afraid. Our insides never matched what we saw on the outsides of others.

Early on, we came to feel disconnected—from parents, from peers, from ourselves. We tuned out with fantasy and masturbation. We plugged in by drinking in the pictures, the images, and pursuing the objects of our fantasies. We lusted and wanted to be lusted after.

We became true addicts: sex with self, promiscuity, adultery, dependency relationships, and more fantasy. We got it through the eyes; we bought it, we sold it, we traded it, we gave it away. We were addicted to the intrigue, the tease, the forbidden. The only way we knew to be free of it was to do it. "Please connect with me and make me whole!" we cried with outstretched arms. Lusting after the Big Fix, we gave away our power to others.

This produced guilt, self-hatred, remorse, emptiness, and pain, and we were driven ever inward, away from reality, away from love, lost inside ourselves.

Our habit made true intimacy impossible. We could never know real union with another because we were addicted to the *unreal*. We went for the "chemistry," the connection that had the magic, *because* it by-passed intimacy and true union. Fantasy corrupted the real; lust killed love.

First addicts, then love cripples, we took from others to fill up what was lacking in ourselves. Conning ourselves time and again that the next one would save us, we were really losing our lives.

TEST YOURSELF

- 1 Have you ever thought you needed help for your sexual thinking or behavior?
- 2 That you'd be better off if you didn't keep "giving in"?
- 3 That sex or stimuli are controlling you?
- 4 Have you ever tried to stop or limit doing what you felt was wrong in your sexual behavior?
- 5 Do you resort to sex to escape, relieve anxiety, or because you can't cope?
- 6 Do you feel guilt, remorse or depression afterward?
- 7 Has your pursuit of sex become more compulsive?
- 8 Does it interfere with relations with your spouse?
- 9 Do you have to resort to images or memories during sex?
- 10 Does an irresistible impulse arise when the other party makes the overtures or sex is offered?
- 11 Do you keep going from one "relationship" or lover to another?
- 12 Do you feel the "right relationship" would help you stop lusting, masturbating, or being so promiscuous?
- 13 Do you have a destructive need—a desperate sexual or emotional need for someone?
- 14 Does pursuit of sex make you careless for yourself or the welfare of your family or others?
- 15 Has your effectiveness or concentration decreased as sex has become more compulsive?
- 16 Do you lose time from work for it?
- 17 Do you turn to a lower environment when pursuing sex?
- 18 Do you want to get away from the sex partner as soon as possible after the act?
- 19 Although your spouse is sexually compatible, do you still masturbate or have sex with others?
- 20 Have you ever been arrested for a sex-related offense?

THE SOLUTION

We saw that our problem was three-fold: physical, emotional, and spiritual. Healing had to come about in all three.

The crucial change in attitude began when we admitted we were powerless, that our habit had us whipped. We came to meetings and withdrew from our habit. For some, this meant no sex with themselves or others, including not getting into relationships. For others it meant "drying out" and not having sex with the spouse for a time to recover from lust.

We discovered that we could stop, that not feeding the hunger didn't kill us, that sex was indeed optional! There was hope for freedom, and we began to feel alive. Encouraged to continue, we turned more and more away from our isolating obsession with sex and self and turned to God and others.

All this was scary. We couldn't see the path ahead, except that others had gone that way before. Each new step of surrender felt it would be off the edge into oblivion, but we took it. And instead of killing us, surrender was killing the obsession! We had stepped into the light, into a whole new way of life.

The fellowship gave us monitoring and support to keep us from being overwhelmed, a safe haven where we could finally face ourselves. Instead of covering our feelings with compulsive sex, we began exposing the roots of our spiritual emptiness and hunger. And the healing began.

As we faced our defects, we became willing to change; surrendering them broke the power they had over us. We began to be more comfortable with ourselves and others for the first time without our "drug."

Forgiving all who had injured us, and without injuring others, we tried to right our own wrongs. At each amends more of the dreadful load of guilt dropped from our shoulders, until we could lift our heads, look the world in the eye, and stand free.

We began practicing a positive sobriety, taking the actions of love to improve our relations with others. We were learning how to give; and the measure we gave was the measure we got back. We were finding what none of the substitutes had ever supplied. We were making the real Connection. We were home.

THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1—We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—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 Him. 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 Him 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 Him, praying only for knowledge of His 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 alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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THE SA PROGRAM OF RECOVERY THE TWELVE STEPS

- 1 We admitted that we were powerless over lust—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 Him.
- 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 Him 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 Him, praying only for knowledge of His 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 sexaholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

If you feel you may be addicted to lust or sex, you may be interested in knowing something about Sexaholics Anonymous.

Though the idea of sex addiction is new to many, sex is increasingly understood as another in the growing list of addictive means people use to reduce isolation, lack of emotion and tension; to resolve conflict, gain power and provide escape; or supply false emotional and spiritual security.

Many of us saw that regardless of how, why or when it began, there came a time when we were acting against our wills. Only when we tried stopping did we see that we were addicted to lust, sex, or relationships. We were *sex-aholics*.

Sexaholics Anonymous was started by those who found that the 12-Step program originated by Alcoholics Anonymous was the instrument of their recovery when nothing else worked. As they stayed sexually sober and grew stronger, they saw that these principles were a way of living that transformed their lives from the inside out.

Coming from all walks of life, members are united by their common problem, though most of us felt ours was unique, the most painful, and that no one else could identify or understand. Meeting regularly, talking and helping other sexaholics *together*, we are able, under God, to stop our acting-out and lose the obsession.

If you feel you may identify and want to stop, we offer you our hand and our fellowship.

Anyone who turns to SA can be assured that his or her anonymity will be protected.