

# The SCAnner

---

The SCA NEWSLETTER International Service Organization © 1999 SCA  
VOLUME 10, Number 1 Summer 1999 \$1.00

---

## **Contents** **The 12 Traditions**

*Special Lift  
Out Section  
In Flemish*

**5**

ISO Conference Washington DC Bill E (Washington DC)

**8**

LA Conference 1998 Interview with Chris P and Phideaux X

**11**

My Story Larry B (NY)

**13**

- Tradition One: All About Us, by Bill E (Washington DC)  
Tradition Two: Anyone Can Be an Authority and of Service Too, by Jim U (NY)  
Tradition Three: A Sense of Belonging, by Joe F (NY)  
Tradition Four: All Four One, by Phillip E (NY)  
Tradition Five: Recovery Is Not A Picnic, by David A-S (NY)  
Tradition Six: United Yet Separate, by Peter C (LA)  
Tradition Seven: Shared Responsibility, by David W (NY)  
Tradition Eight: No One Paid Me to Write This, by Eric H (NJ)  
Tradition Nine: Relationships Based on Service Not Control, by John F (NY)  
Tradition Ten: Oprah, Sally, Recovery and Me, by Jeff Z (NY)  
Tradition Eleven: Not That Kind of Attraction, by John S (NY)  
Tradition Twelve: The Whole is Greater Than the Parts, by Karen (NY)

**34**

Doing SCA Outreach Work David D (Milwaukee)

**SCA Special events**

Memorial Day Weekend, 1999 Los Angeles Retreat  
 August 13-15, 1999 NY Retreat  
 Labor Day Weekend, 1999 Los Angeles Retreat  
 December 3-5 1999  
 Chicago "S" Conference, with Milwaukee participation

**The SCAnner is YOUR Newsletter.**

The SCAnner is published twice a year (in the summer and in the winter), by ISO, the International Service Organization of SCA. It is meant to serve as a forum for SCA members, who want to share their experience strength and hope with other members, particularly those who may be isolated and can not reach a meeting easily or regularly. Your contributions and comments are greatly encouraged and always sincerely invited. Please send your contributions to:

**The SCAnner C/o SCA NY PO Box 1585  
 Old Chelsea Station New York NY 10011**

The opinions expressed in the SCAnner are those of the individuals who gave them and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of SCA as a whole.

# SCAnner Subscriptions

## ✂-----Order Form-----

The SCAnner, the Newsletter of Sexual Compulsives Anonymous. Annual Subscriptions are now available for groups, individuals or concerned professionals.

**Annual Subscription is only \$2.00 or \$1.00 per issue (Plus P + H)**

Name/Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

_____ Summer 1999	_____ Copies @ \$1.00 \$	_____ Total
_____ Winter 2000	_____ Copies @ \$1.00 \$	_____ Total
<b>Add Postage and Handling (per issue)</b>		<b>\$1.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>		<b>\$ _____</b>

Please make checks or money orders payable to SCA SCAnner Subscription.  
 Send to SCA Subscriptions c/o SCA NY,  
 PO Box 1585 Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY, 10011

**Editor's Note**

Welcome to another issue of the SCAnner. In this issue we have an extensive report by Bill E from Washington DC about the 1999 ISO Conference that took place the weekend of February 26-28 in Washington DC. There is also an interview with the Co-chairs of the Tenth Annual LA West Coast SCA Conference that took place the weekend of February 12-14. From Milwaukee, David D reports on the process of doing SCA Outreach work. The rest of the issue is devoted to The Traditions. Many of us don't know much about The Traditions or else just take them for granted. The Traditions are the backbone of our fellowship and continue to steer us safely through difficult times, guarding us against the unscrupulous as much as the over-zealous. We all need to be aware of our rights and obligations and the Traditions serve us as a bit of both. If you have ever done any service, you will no doubt have come into contact with The Traditions. They are a great set of ideas to ensure the survival of our fellowship.

Bill E (Washington DC) kicks us off on the Traditions with Tradition One and tells us how they are All About Us. Jim U (NY) tells us how Anyone can be an Authority and of Service Too in Tradition Two. Joe F (NY) speaks of the Sense of Belonging that comes from Tradition Three. Philip E (NY) reveals All Four One in Tradition Four. David A-S (NY) in Tradition Five tells us that Recovery is not a Picnic. David W (NY) explains how Tradition Seven is about Shared Responsibility. Eric H (NJ) tells us why No one Paid Me to Write This in expounding Tradition Eight. John F (NY) shows us the difference between Relationships Based on Service Not Control in Tradition Nine. Jeff Z (NY) lets us in on some secrets about Tradition Ten in Oprah, Sally, Recovery and Me. John S (NY) delineates Tradition Eleven in Not That Kind of Attraction. And finally, Karen sums it all up in Tradition Twelve with The Whole Is Greater Than The Parts.

Once again I have tried to get people from across the country to contribute, but my arms are only so long, so I've had to fall back on old New York when all seemed bleak. On the bright side though, SCA continues to spread around the world. I have included a letter verbatim sent by one of our members in Belgium. As an added bonus for our readers in Belgium I have included a special pull out section in the middle of the SCAnner that features the Fourfold in Flemish. Perhaps soon we will be able to publish the SCAnner in other languages too.

You can also find the SCAnner on the web at: <http://www.sca-recovery.org/scanner>  
 Yours in Recovery,  
 David A-S Editor

**The Serenity Prayer**

God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I can not change,  
 Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference



## Letters to the Editor

Hallo David, I can tell you that last Tuesday, there was a very, very nice program on the national television here at Flanders in Belgium. The program was about Sexual Compulsion, and there was a friend of our group who was testimony about his compulsion. All this was within our eleven and twelfth tradition, that means, the face was in dark and his words were transformed...It was a very, very good program. We were proud to bring such a good program. By the way, we had made a contract with the television makers to guarantee our anonymity... and they signed too! At the end of the program, there was a national well known number, where the people could make a phone call. This number was in five regions with +- 10 people ! They know what to say about SCA, because we gave them a paper with the preamble and the two meeting places and telephone numbers ! Isn't it great ? Last thursday there was a new one in Antwerp... At this moment there is a group in the West-Flanders, but they don't have a place to meet yet... They meet each other on invitation, but they stay having contact with us...It seems that Belgium is ready to grow...Best regards David !

PS. If it's possible to receive the scanner on the net, I 'm interesting...but a year ago, I received it, but also all other mails of the US, and that was too much... So, if you could send only the Scanner info... I 'll be glad ! Paul C. (Belgium)

### ISO Officers 1999

Chair: Frank T. (Chicago)  
 Vice Chair: Joe L. (Los Angeles)  
 Treasurer: Brian B. (San Francisco)  
 Secretary: John F. (New York)  
 National Coordinator: Michael R. (Los Angeles)  
 800 # Coordinator: Todd R. (Chicago)  
 SCanner Editor: David A-S (New York)  
 Literature Coordinator: Paul N. (Milwaukee)  
 Electronic Communication Coordinator: Rod F. (Washington, DC)

The SCanner is published twice a year (Summer and Winter) by SCA ISO PO Box 1585 Old Chelsea Station New York NY 10011. Editor: David A-S, Proof Reader: Andy M, Distribution: Rob S, Richie P. Printed by Advance Copy Center in 552 La Guardia Place New York 10012 Tel (212) 388 1001. The opinions expressed here are of the individuals who gave them and do not necessarily reflect SCA as a whole. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of SCA ISO. © 1999 SCA ISO.

## ISO Conference February 27-28, 1999 Washington DC

by Bill E (Washington DC)

From Friday February 27 to Sunday February 28, 1999, 22 delegates representing 99 meetings around the country met in Washington for the SCA Annual ISO (International Service Office) Conference. Cities represented were New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis, San Francisco, San Diego, Phoenix, and Washington, DC. Attending were David A-S (New York), John F (New York), David W (New York), Vito A (New York), Frank H (New York), Gary S (Los Angeles/Orange County), Jerry J (Los Angeles), Michael R (Los Angeles), Joe L. (Los Angeles), Frank T (Chicago), Todd R (Chicago), Susan F (Milwaukee), Paul N (Milwaukee), Jim M (St. Louis), Brian B (San Francisco), Julie (San Diego), Trip B (Phoenix), Rod F (DC), Bob C (DC), Steve S (DC), and Bill E (DC). Kyle W (DC) and Tim E (DC) attended as observers.

### Intergroup reports

**New York** The Gay and Lesbian Center has moved temporarily during renovations to a swing space. Rent has increased for the new space. Intergroup has been experiencing fewer contributions as a result. NY Intergroup is doing a survey about the state of recovery in NY, and they expect to incorporate the results into workshops at their annual conference scheduled for May 21-23. They are doing an outreach mailing to therapists.

**Los Angeles** Intergroup has started meeting monthly, instead of bi-monthly. They are doing step workshops in conjunction with the Intergroup meeting. They had a Thanksgiving dinner that was very successful. They are continuing to do outreach to the courts. They are also promoting their retreats, which are three per year. Their conference, February 12-14, had a good turnout. The show was wonderful, and the closing meeting was extremely well attended. The local information line handles 800-900 calls per year.

**San Diego** There are nine meetings. The fellowship is small, and the meetings are all close together. There has been good interchange with L.A., and there are two noon meetings. San Diego also has its own web site.

**Phoenix** Intergroup has just re-formed. There are two meetings and they are both 90-minute meetings. The Intergroup reps attend both meetings, and they are working on how to do better outreach. They have started a local telephone contact number for the meetings.

**Milwaukee** Intergroup just did a mass mailing to clergy and lawyers, in cooperation with SLAA. They have a mailbox and a phone line. They pass a second envelope during the meetings to support Intergroup. They also have a monthly social and they're planning a dance. They are down to three meetings and have been experiencing decreasing attendance at meetings. They combine with Chicago for retreats.

**Chicago** There are currently five meetings, down from previously. The ones that survive are centrally located. The Midwest conference will be held the weekend of December 3. They had a dinner party and talent show fundraiser. They have socials once a month,



mostly bowling and movie outings. They will be hosting next year's ISO Conference. They have an ad in the gay paper, and their phone line callers are primarily married people from the suburbs. They maintain a joint meeting list for all S-meetings, and they give out meetings information for other fellowships.

**St. Louis** Intergroup served as point of contact for a major story on sexual compulsion that appeared in the *Riverfront Times*, a weekly paper. They also picked up some other media exposure from that article, and they had an increase in visits to meetings as a result of the article. They have just started a 9th meeting in Bellevue, Illinois. They did a group inventory and discovered that they weren't focusing enough on the Steps, so they started a Step-study meeting and it has become their strongest meeting.

**San Francisco** No Intergroup. They have two meetings a week, and Brian is contact person. Attendance is about 10 per meeting. SLAA and SAA are both strong in SF.

**Washington, DC** Intergroup has just started in the last year. Set up a phone line and helped to start a meeting in the Virginia suburbs. The group is planning to start a Tuesday night meeting, to give them one meeting for each weeknight. They have contacts with a treatment program for priests and an outpatient treatment program. The local gay paper prints the meeting list, along with the phone line number. There has also been a COSA meeting that has started.

**Literature** The beginner's pamphlet "For the Newcomer" that has been draft literature was approved to become SCA Conference approved literature. "Progress Not Perfection" manuscript was returned for further editing. On the SCA Book project, David A-S gave a report and moved that a committee be formed to begin creating an SCA Book and that the committee attempt to produce an outline and as much of the content as possible by next year's ISO Conference. Bill E volunteered to edit "What About Masturbation" in order to clarify the difference between abstinence and celibacy in the pamphlet.

**Election of officers** A new position Electronic Communications Coordinator was created. The following officers were elected: Chair: Frank T. (Chicago) Vice Chair: Joe L. (Los Angeles) Treasurer: Brian B. (San Francisco) Secretary: John F. (New York) National Coordinator: Michael R. (Los Angeles) 800-Coordinator: Todd R. (Chicago) SCAnner Editor: David A-S (New York) Literature Coordinator: Paul N. (Milwaukee) Electronic Communication Coordinator: Rod F. (Washington, DC)

**Web site meetings** It was agreed unanimously that Web site meetings be recognized as regular meetings under the Traditions.

**SCAnner** Since it costs more to send a copy of the SCAnner to a subscriber than we are currently charging it was agreed to charge \$1 postage for each issue of the SCAnner sent to subscribers.

**2001 SCA ISO Conference** San Diego's bid to host the 2001 meeting was accepted.

## ISO BUDGET 1998

7th Tradition			
Chicago	699.13		
LA	500.00		
NY	1,808.85		
Washington DC	427.03		
Total 7th Tradition		3,435.01	
Donations		517.61	
Literature Sales		4,843.37	
Scanner Sales (Subscriptions)		63.00	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>			<b>8,858.99</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
ISO Meeting 98	410.00		
1998 Mtg Travel	632.00		
ISO Meeting		1,042.00	
Literature			
Lit-postage	749.81		
Lit-printing	2,131.31		
Production	33.45		
Literature Other	156.61		
Literature Total		3,071.18	
National Coordinator			
Phones			
Sprint	1,489.98		
Voicemail	261.10		
Phone total		1,751.08	
Web Site			
Registration	50.00		
Other	258.95		
		308.95	
Scanner	500.00	500.00	
Interfellowship	404.36	404.36	
Service Charges			
Service Charges	144.15		
Bank charges	10.00		
Total		154.15	
800 Coordinator			
Phone Charges	34.18		
Postage	173.40		
Other	270.23		
Total 800 Coordinator		477.81	
Total Expenses		7,709.53	
Total Income minus Expenses			<b>1,149.46</b>



### Tenth Annual LA CONFERENCE February 12-14, 1999

#### Interview with the Co-Chairs of the Conference Chris P and Phideaux X

*I had an opportunity to meet both Co-chairs of the LA Conference this year when both of them had reason to come to New York. I took advantage of this situation by interviewing each independently, Chris by phone just as he was about to go to New York, and Phideaux in a café, just before he left New York to return to LA. Then in Post-Modern fashion I spliced the two together to create what follows. Ed*

DAS: I believe the theme of the Conference was The Promises. How did the Promises manifest themselves throughout the Conference.

CHRIS: One of the things that we tried to do was to make sure that the people that were asked to speak at the meetings talked about how the Promises have come true in their life and what they have got in their lives as a result of their recovery. We asked them to tell what they had got but also the work it took to get there. In this way people in different stages of their recovery could look and see where they were and what they had to look forward to, or maybe areas where they had to do more work.

PHIDEAUX: We wanted something that was hopeful. SCA gets that bad rep. in the sense that there is not a lot of recovery, people are constantly slipping....it's not like in AA where people have 20 years sobriety. It's hard to have as much sobriety in SCA, so we really wanted the theme this year (the tenth) to be about the success of the Program, that we are a successful program and that we do get the Promises. To that end Peter C devised the workshops so that they would be strictly along the lines of the AA Big Book, very much about taking actions and actualizing recovery in one's life.

DAS: What were some of the highlights and some of the workshops you had this year?

CHRIS: There was a really good 4th Step workshop. I've never heard such good feed back on a workshop. They actually did two mini 4th Steps in this workshop. There was a great workshop on sponsorship, which seems to be one of the great problems on the West Coast lately. A small number of people are sponsoring a lot of people. People wrote in the surveys that they felt they had tools now that they could use to be a sponsor as a result of doing the workshop.

PHIDEAUX: After the opening speaker meeting some members from San Diego did a skit that they had had at their Conference, so that was an added bonus to begin the Conference on a light and fun note. We had a really great final brunch, in the courtyard of the Gay and Lesbian Center. The show was really well received. It was a review that Scott D put together based loosely on the show Chicago. There was good attendance at the workshops, which featured workshops on Fantasy and Masturbation, Sponsorship, Incest and Child Sexual Abuse, Dating, Committed Relationships, and pragmatic workshops on working certain Steps and Traditions and the Promises.

DAS: Why did you decide to take on such a large service commitment?

CHRIS: My sponsor says that if you are asked to do service and it is not going to infringe on any previous commitment, then you have to do it. You are asked to do it, because people believe you can do it. I had worked on two committees previously, so I guess the group felt I had the background and the competence to do it. It was an easy "yes". From working on the committees I also knew the responsibility. Also my decision to move back to LA 2 years ago was to re-root myself into working seriously with the program

and to be of service and to be elected within six months to that post was "God doing for me what I could not do for myself". It was an easy decision and I had a phenomenal committee.

PHIDEAUX: I was quite moved at last year's final meeting. The conference had been such a revelation to me. Prior to that I hated LA and at the Conference I came to accept that where I was, was okay, and that I owed so much of my new miraculous transformation to the Program in LA, and I wanted to affirm that by saying 'Yes'.

DAS: What were the challenges of the Conference? And what were the personal challenges? And did you meet these challenges successfully?

CHRIS: The first challenge was to fill all the posts required to make the Conference happen. That was one of the biggest challenges. I was really disappointed by the quantity of people who turned down the opportunity to do service, which was a personal challenge for me, coming from a service background, where you don't say "no" if you can possibly do it, it was contradicting everything I believed in. That was really, really tough. After finally getting all the people together it was smooth sailing. On a personal note, it was a matter of recognizing that this was not "my" conference. I had to let go of my ego, and do what is in the best interests of the Fellowship and the Group conscience of the Conference Committee to make it a completely democratic process by going with the majority vote on every issue. To interject my opinion of course, but to say if it doesn't go my way, that it's not my dog and I have to let it go. That was the gift I got from it.

DAS: I believe there was some controversy surrounding the Conference. Can you tell me about that?

CHRIS: There was an age-old controversy about professional non-program people speaking at the Conference. The first thing that we came up against was that having a professional to speak was against the traditions..... "SCA should remain forever non-professional but our service centers may employ special workers"....A Conference in itself is a violation of the Traditions. It is not an SCA meeting. It is related to SCA. I spoke to five former Chairs and three in New York and it became clear that it was okay to ask a professional to speak. One of the most important chapters in the AA Big Book is the Doctor's opinion which is a professional opinion on the disease of alcoholism, so to get a professional opinion on sex addiction is not really a violation of the Traditions and anonymity. I feel whole heartedly that we made the right choice. We went with the majority of the group conscience of the Conference Committee.

DAS: What about the Show?

CHRIS: The show started out as simple cabaret and turned into an incredibly well produced show Chicago-style with a live band and an elaborate cast that did a job that had me standing at the back of the room in tears. I was mesmerized at the talent. It was so well done and so well written, and so not ready to go on three hours before the show! Then all of a sudden everything just changed. They all went to have dinner and came on stage and we got this performance that was just phenomenal. It was standing room only, about 175 people showed up for the show. It was just amazing.

DAS: What did you learn as a result of doing this service and how would you recommend service to others.

CHRIS: I didn't learn it till Saturday night at the show. We were cleaning up after the show and I was counting the money, and a wave of gratitude came over me.....there were 30 or 40 or more people who specifically sought me out to thank me. To get that kind of gratitude from people who were able to go to a safe place that is so shame based,



and to be able to have an outlet, to have a place to cry, and a place to have fun and to watch the look on everyone else's face, and to hear their gratitude in the surveys....I was driving to the Conference on Sunday morning and it was all I could do to stop crying. I got up to open the Sunday morning meeting, and I started to read a meditation and I just broke down. I was so overwhelmed with gratitude and love and compassion from so many people. There's no way I can say not to.....I mean yeah, it was a lot of work, at some point I just wanted to say "to hell with it", but in that moment and ever since the confidence and the gratitude that I got by some many people that were helped by the weekend.....it was really beautiful to watch....it's strictly gratitude and it's a lot of work. It was by no means anything but worth it.

PHIDEAUX: The last time I had done service at a Conference was in New York, where I had been secretary. I attended all the preparation meetings, took all the minutes and then the weekend of the Conference, I just acted out, I didn't even attend any of the conference, aside from the show. For me the idea of following through is an important element of service. In my recovery, I sometimes slip and can't follow through on my plan, and when I can set myself a practical goal and follow through on that it allows me to see that I can follow through on the larger more spiritual goal that I have. If I can make the phone call to John Bradshaw, or if I can get the microphone from A to B....it's psychically accomplishing a task. Service becomes a detached way of following through on something, and it becomes a kind of analogue to recovery.

## PEN PAL PROGRAM

With the entry of SCA onto the Internet, our 'pen pal' program has gone there too. If you are interested in this service, we ask that you make a commitment to send one letter a month. Here's how it works:

- 1) First of all each volunteer will be paired with another member of SCA. Both SCA members ought to have a least one year in Fellowship and six months on a recovery plan.
- 2) The two SCA members are assigned with one "loner", (someone who lives too far from an SCA meeting to be able to attend it).
- 3) The work of reading and writing the letters is left to the SCA members. They can decide for themselves how to divide up the work. Sometimes one might do the writing while the other might read the letters to be on guard against inadvertent provocation and intriguing, etc. Sometimes the two might alternate months. They can decide what suits them best.
- 4) To maintain anonymity, we do not send out identifying information, including home addresses or identifiable e-mail names. (Anonymous e-mail is acceptable). If you are interested in the e-mail version of the pen pal program. Write to [info@sca-recovery.org](mailto:info@sca-recovery.org). If you want to join the regular mail version of the program write to: SCA Pen Pal PO Box 1585 New York, NY 10011

## My Story

Larry B (NY)

I come from a large family and I am the youngest of six children. Well, for some reason, my family decided to have a family reunion after 20 years of basically separate lives. The reunion and my one year AA anniversary were the same weekend. I was scared to death to go, but somehow knew that I really needed to. Since I couldn't remember at least 95% of my childhood. I had always assumed it had been pretty normal. To make a very long and complicated story short, my three sisters and two brothers and I ended up confronting our father about the overt sexual abuse he had violated us with. Separated, the memories were easier to drink, sex, work, spend, shop, gamble or achieve away; but once we all came together for the first time in twenty years, the memories started to shoot forth like an oil well. Confronting our father probably wasn't an item on my sister's list of "Things to do together." I came back to New York devastated, but sober.

When I was first getting sober in AA, I had all these ideas like, I'll stop having unprotected anal intercourse with complete strangers. I really thought it wasn't possible without drugs and alcohol. By the time of the reunion, I had participated in unsafe sex numerous times, I was addicted to porno, and I was dating people who worked in the sex industry. I had decided that "sex" fell under my sixth step and it would be taken care of by A.A. For six months, I white-knuckled it. No sex with another person. Then, one night, I had sex with a stranger who was staying next door. We had intrigued through the living room window. I was devastated. I knew once again that I was powerless over "something." All my life I had had a love/hate relationship with sex; I loved it while doing it but after I felt enormous guilt and shame. I had been raised a Catholic, so all my life I remember hearing that homosexuals were very bad people who would go to Hell. My mother was Hispanic and had the belief that sex was a woman's obligation and should only be enjoyed by the man, i.e., if she enjoyed sex she was bad and dirty. I'm quite clear today that both of my parents were themselves sex addicts. My father had been asking me from the age of eleven if I had gotten "laid" yet. It felt like he was waiting to throw me a party if I did, or on a darker note, to make sure "the sins of my father" hadn't turned me "queer."

So on New Year's of 1993 I went to my first SCA meeting at St. Veronica's Church. I read the Fourfold and said to myself, "I belong here." I got my sponsor at that meeting and he is my sponsor today. We've been through a lot together and I love him in a very special way, as I'm sure he loves me. My favorite slogan from him is "lighten up girl!" When I came to SCA, I was working four jobs, going to meetings, dance class and working out. I refused to go therapy; I was taught that only sick and weak people "air their dirty laundry." A month after my first meeting, it all fell apart, my back gave out and I was an emotionless zombie. I went to a therapist and chiropractor on the same day for the first time in my life. That day marked the beginning of my re-parenting and self-nurturing, two extremely foreign concepts to me. That day, I took myself to McDonald's and bought myself a really nice gift for being a brave, good boy.



I've gone to meetings ever since. I've sponsored people, I've done service at meetings, been on conference committees, in conference shows, and been a member of Intergroup. My therapist specializes in incest and I've worked on that issue diligently for 6 years. I have gone to two retreats for male survivors, facilitated an incest meeting, participated in two conference workshops on incest, and have participated in the free group therapy offered by St. Lukes Roosevelt Hospital. I also attend the SCA incest and child sexual abuse meeting on Saturdays in New York.

I enjoy sex now! I've kicked my parents, siblings, society, and the priests out of my bedroom and invited God in. In the past, I always felt like I was perpetrating or being perpetrated when I had sex. Now, it's just having sex with another consenting adult. Sometimes it's within dating or a committed relationship and sometimes it's with someone I don't know very well; but most importantly it is my "choice" and I have a healthier sexual life as a result. I still have times that are difficult. (I will always be a sex addict.) Now, I have tools that help me get through those difficult times: meetings, telephone, service, sponsor, sponsees, fellowship, the Steps, and most of all "God."

I've had complicated plans (I'm a perfectionist) and I've had really loose plans (I'm an addict). Right now it's just three simple things to abstain from. Simplicity is key! It's really working. I'm dating, I'm exploring areas of my sexuality that I had always had too much shame to look at. It's fun, scary, hard, but it's living and it's my life now. As long as I am true to mine own self, I can't go wrong. I'm learning to worry less. I love the slogan "why worry if you pray, why pray if you worry." Another favorite is "The doors of enlightenment are pillared by confusion and paradox." Wow!! I'll say.

I have no contact with my parents. That really works for me. I don't feel I, in any way, owe them an amends. What they did to me (I discovered after the reunion in therapy that the medical, educational and sexually based rituals performed on me by my mother were "not what mommies do to their little boys") was wrong and the effects almost drove me to destroying myself. They stole something from me that can never be replaced, and even though it may have been taken from them, too, that is no excuse. If anything, it should have been the reason to protect me.

I am building relationships with my siblings and their families. I am also working on my non-sexual and sexual relationships. One of the relationships that I'm most proud of is the loving relationship I'm having with me and God, which really are the same. This is all due to 12-step recovery. I thank God for Bill W., AA, SCA and all the fellowships that are bringing people back home. My life has never been better and as I stay in program, work the steps, and help others, my life keeps unfolding like the blossom of a desert cactus. I love you all and thank you for my sobriety.



## The Traditions

### Tradition One

*Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SCA unity.*

#### All About Us Bill E (Washington DC)

Recently, I celebrated 21 years of 12-step recovery. Looking back, I can see that the hardest thing for me to do has been the second half of the first step, to admit that my life had become unmanageable. I was raised to be independent and self-reliant. I lived in a household where my father concealed his alcoholism through force of will (except, of course, when the rage slipped out unexpectedly) and where my mother had decided that the only way to keep her men in line was to emasculate them (which she did with great efficiency). My role models took care of themselves, and even though I felt unsure of myself and was dependent. For example: it took me until age 26, for example, to decide what I wanted to do in life—and then I didn't want to tell my parents for fear they'd disapprove. I knew that I was expected to take care of myself, too. So, I didn't want to admit that my life had become unmanageable, because that would mean that I was a failure. If I could only fix the [food, pornography addiction, codependency, etc.] then I'd be just fine, I would be a success, and my parents would finally have a reason for being proud of me.

My disease had been "all about me." It had been a secret, this pornography addiction. To the best of my knowledge, I was the only one who knew about it. I had been very careful to go only to places far from my own neighborhood, where there would be little chance of being seen—and then I would go only under cover of darkness. But, when my disease got worse, I started going to places in my own neighborhood, and I became brazen enough to walk into them in broad daylight, in full view of a major thoroughfare. I'm sure that, in part, it was because the pull of these places was becoming too addictive. After all, when my first couple of years of recovery I had to go home from meetings by a less direct route, because the direct one would take me too close to these places for comfort. But, it was also as if I wanted someone to find out.

Because my disease was "all about me," I really didn't trust anyone else. At my first SCA meeting I was torn between worrying that someone would hit on me and hoping that someone would hit on me. When I was basically ignored I felt a combination of distress and relief.

I spent a lot of my early days in SCA making the program "all about me"—cowering from the men I found attractive, but slowly, tentatively, walking down the path of recovery. Why? Because, despite the fact that I knew that the **people** in the meetings were unsafe, the meetings themselves felt like safe places. That safety allowed me to surrender and to begin to work the 12 steps.

The program is full of paradoxes, and one of those is that I was not alone. As I recovered I learned that there were **lots** of people in those rooms who felt, as I did, that the program was "all about me." And yet, they kept coming back, because the meetings felt safe. The meetings were about all of us and our recovery, not about any individual.



The very format of the meetings reinforces their focus on the "we." We take turns in leading the meeting, and in reading the literature aloud. We are encouraged to share strength and hope with each other, as well as our experience. Some meetings limit the amount of time each person can speak so that as many as possible may have the opportunity to do so. Some meetings deliberately set aside times for newcomers to share, or use means other than the raising of hands to insure that getting to speak is not dependent on who you know.

But, it is how we conduct our business that brings the First Tradition into focus. Basically, nothing gets done simply because some one person wants it done. The group must agree, and groups are usually careful enough not to vote until they have achieved some measure of consensus. This idea that "we must agree, because we are nothing if we are in conflict," is almost spiritual in its insistence on "we-ness." And, that sense of the spiritual is what drives the recovery process.

It is the first tradition that makes the meetings safe places. Sexual compulsion is not yet well understood on a scientific level, and so there are many theories about its root causes. Even within the 12-step community there are currently at least four sexual recovery fellowships. The literature of each of these fellowships reflects a somewhat different viewpoint on both the nature of the disease that underlies sexual compulsion, and on ideas about what needs to be done in order to recover from that disease. Our meetings, however, are based on the shared stories of our members, and on our experiences with working the 12 steps. Whatever we think we "know" about sexual compulsion, when we attend meetings we intuitively "know" that we are in the right place. Unity brings us hope, and hope strengthens us when recovery seems far away.

At the annual business meeting of the International Service Organization of SCA, the delegates begin their work by "qualifying" as sexually compulsive people. That is, they share honestly with each other about the nature of their sexually compulsive behavior, their recovery, and the challenges that are facing them at the time of the meeting. Though thoroughly inefficient, from a business standpoint, this qualification period brings into sharp focus who those people are and why they are attending that meeting. The qualifications are helpful reminders that, whatever our differences, we are all members of the same fellowship, and our primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery to the sexually compulsive person who still suffers, both inside and outside of SCA meetings.

People recover at different rates, and some people struggle with recovery for years. But, there is a powerful sense about the group. Even if individuals do not recover, the group as a whole does. And, that's why we protect our groups and why we don't tolerate strong-willed individuals who want it **their** way for long. Recovery is not all about me, though I get to participate in it. Recovery is about us. Only together are we strong enough to overcome the physical, mental, and spiritual horrors of the disease. "This is a program of the sick helping the sicker," one of my 12-step friends once told me. How right she was.

### Tradition Two

*For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority---a loving God as may be expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.*

#### Anyone Can Be an Authority (And of Service Too) Jim U (NY)

This tradition, like all of them, comes to us from Alcoholics Anonymous. Originally they were referred to as "Twelve Points to Assure Our Future." They were not readily received by the A.A. membership: "Though the Twelve Points to Assure Our Future, basis of the traditions, had now been published, they still had not been accepted by the membership. In keeping with the Second Tradition, Bill still had to sell them to the 'Constituency', and this he now set out to do. During the last three years of the decade 1947-50, still coping with his depression, he was out in the groups, "selling" the Traditions, whether his audiences wanted to listen or not. Sometimes they did not. Bill remembered, "I received letters like this: 'Bill, we would love to have you come and speak. Tell us about where you used to hide your bottles and tell us about that hot-flashed spiritual experience of yours. But please don't talk anymore about those damned traditions.'"<sup>1</sup>

Bill's experience with the second tradition had been that in the early 40's, he and Lois were struggling financially: "They had been put out of their flat in Brooklyn and they were living in [one] little dingy room over the 24<sup>th</sup> Street Clubhouse. It was about as depressing a picture as it could get. The Big Book had been written and Bill wanted to be listed as author because he thought the royalties would recoup the family fortunes and Lois would be able to leave her job. For a man to be supported by his wife in those days—Well, for a Vermont Yankee—was a disgrace."<sup>2</sup>

He had previously been offered a job by Charlie Towns, the owner of Towns Hospital at 293 Central Park West, a facility for treating alcoholism. This was the hospital where Bill often tried to sober up or dry out. Charlie had offered him a position as a day therapist whereby he could share in the profits. Bill was elated. "Bill thought the offer verified by heavenly guidance. As he rode the subway home, the biblical quote "The laborer is worthy of his hire" came to him. By the time he arrived home, he was convinced that it was his destiny to become a paid therapist.

"He was in for a big disappointment. Lois failed to share his enthusiasm. He was even more surprised by the response of the recovered alcoholics after they gathered for the Tuesday evening meeting. Although Bill's live-in alcoholics were having considerable trouble, a number of recovered alcoholics were not in the area. The group listened with impassive faces as Bill told them of Towns' offer. Then one member volunteered: "We know how hard up you are, Bill...It bothers us a lot. We've often wondered what we might do about it. But I think I speak for everyone here when I say that what you now

<sup>1</sup> Pass It On., the story of Bill Wilson and how the A.A. message reaches the world. Copyright 1984 by Alcoholics Anonymous World Service, Inc. 1984. P. 324.

<sup>2</sup> Id. P. 271.



propose bothers us. Don't you realize that you can never become a professional? As generous as Charlie has been to us, don't you see that we can't tie this thing up with his hospital or any other? ... This is a matter of life and death, Bill, and nothing but the very best will do...Haven't you often said right here in this meeting that sometimes the good is the enemy of the best? Well, this is a plain case of it...

"Bill, you can't do this to us," he added. "Don't you see that for you, our leader, to take money for passing on our magnificent message, which the rest of us try to do the same thing without pay, would soon disgrace us all?...Why should we do for nothing what you'd be getting paid for? We'd all be drunk in no time."

Bill did understand, almost immediately, that this work could be done for love only, never for money. He declined Charlie's offer. When Bill described the incident later, he portrayed himself as the impulsive self-seeking opportunist who might have wrecked the fledgling movement had it not been for the wise and timely advice of others. Both Bill and Lois remembered the incident as an early example of the group conscience in action.<sup>3</sup> In S.C.A. we also recognize that our leaders are not authorities. They come and go with each new election by the group conscience. They work in harmony with our group conscience. They are trusted servants. Of all the subjects that are dealt with in the *12 Steps and Traditions*: admitting, believing, deciding; inventorying; asking forgiveness and so on, the one that has certainly been one of the largest for me has been the topic of authority. This tradition taken into a personal level revealed an area I had acted out over for a great portion of my life. Probably, as far back as infancy when my mother let it be known that she was in charge which did not sit well with me.

As time went on, older siblings declared their authority. I felt the kids who went to public schools had authority over me as I went to parochial and I felt they had better connections with the city. Teachers, clerics, bosses, adults, all were authorities. Religion, philosophies, political systems, work staff hierarchies, all had authority over me. I found myself choosing jobs that had few if any supervisors. The great authority was a non-loving, judgmental, punitive God and his followers who I later discovered had created Him in their own image. They governed me with their morals and their structures. I didn't know it consciously but subconsciously these factors were all affecting me. Grandparents were there as well as the advertising mega-machine "popular" opinion and general hearsay. When I began inventorying this step I touched upon such a huge area of rage. I wanted to dump my sponsor (an authority figure). So it was becoming obvious that my modus operandi was to reject any authority or run from it and what better escape than my sexual compulsion which could soothe me until the immediate threat passed.

These authorities could rise up at any moment, both obviously such as in a tyrannical boss, and more craftily through my always making choices in life that would please Mommie or Father. All of this was part of the insanity I recognized in Step 2 when I discovered that only God could restore me to sanity. In Tradition Two it becomes clear

<sup>3</sup> Id. Pp. 176-77.

that this is a Loving God and this Loving God is the ultimate authority. It expresses Itself through our group conscience which means all of us have this expression within us. I became consciously aware of this Loving God through Step 11. I realized that I have access to It; my group has access to It; my boss; my Mother; the American Medical Association; the landlord and even my older siblings. Therefore, we are all trusted servants of this Higher, Loving Power. Further I can bring people into my life to help me. I can contact the dentist who is an authority in that area, far more so than I, to attend to my teeth. I recognize that I allowed that my mom was better equipped than I to change my diapers when I was one. The landlord has authority over the building, however we enter into agreement concerning my living situation and this is outlined in our lease. When my older brother appears to be a mostly vituperative authority figure to me I can stop and realize that age is irrelevant with our ultimate Loving Authority and I can see my brother through the same eyes as I view the sick newcomer.

Slowly I became an authority also. I become the authority of me. Nobody else lives in my skin 24 - 7. I ask for guidance, help and support. I contact my sponsor for reality checks. A new me is emerging as the result of the step and tradition work I have done thus far. When I first came into program, people would say, "How are you?" and I would say, "I don't know." Today, I can say "I am confused" or "delighted" or "troubled" or "I think I need some help." Today I can choose to lightly answer the question if it is simply someone on the street asking merely to be neighborly and I don't wish to speak on the level I may with someone in S.C.A. This is all because today, I am the accepted authority of myself and nobody else is in charge of me. This Loving God shows me the way so I don't have to have feelings that someone else is in control of my life - a feeling that would almost always have me in acting out mode. I can go to my sponsor or group with a dilemma and get clarity on who's in charge, so that today when my boss goes off I can trust the situation to lead me to realizing that there is only one ultimate Authority: a Loving God who is the Author of all of this. We're all equal in God's eyes and just as when in Step Seven I pray to this God that "I am now willing that He should have all of me good and bad to do with as he wishes."<sup>4</sup> I can see that we are all good and bad in our eyes but in God's eyes it all works out and the point of all these skirmishes is to lead me to this loving God. So I can trust myself in all these situations.

Now that I can trust myself, I have choice and choice is something I never had when I was active. The Steps and Traditions all lead me to a new freedom. They give me me.

### Tradition Three

*The only requirement for SCA membership is a desire to stop having compulsive sex.*

#### A Sense of Belonging Joe F. (NY)

When I first came to SCA and heard the term "sexual compulsive," I felt anxious and scared. I knew I had a sex "problem" but I didn't like the label 'sexual compulsive'. It

<sup>4</sup> Paraphrased from Alcoholics Anonymous copyright 1939 by A A World Services, Inc., p. 76.



seemed so clinical, like a term out of a college abnormal psychology textbook. I had a lot of denial and I didn't want to surrender. Somehow, having a sex problem and not a compulsion seemed more manageable. Labeling myself a sexual compulsive would force me out of my denial, and that was just too frightening for me in the beginning. The truth was that I didn't want to be a sexual compulsive or sex addict at all.

Luckily, there was Tradition Three. I didn't have to label myself anything to be a member of SCA. The only thing I needed was a desire to stop having compulsive sex. I didn't even need to have an honest desire. I didn't need to be completely convinced of my eligibility for SCA. All I needed was a desire to get better. I could at least admit that I wanted to stop the behavior that was destroying my life. And though I wasn't sure that I was a sexual compulsive, I could see that my life got better after I came into program.

I didn't say very much in my first few months of meetings. From a distance, and in my isolation, I thought everybody in the program was 100% gung-ho, and that I had to be, too. I felt guilty because part of me didn't really want to stop acting out. I was a fraud! The people who wrote these traditions knew all about addicts like me who are terrified to commit themselves to anything. I could be as committed as I was able to be at any given moment.

I was also always comparing myself to others in the program. "I'm not as bad as that person—I can't be a sex addict. If I ever get as bad as *him*, I'll start going to more meetings", I'd think. This Tradition tells me that I don't need to be as bad as or as good as anybody in the program. I don't need a certain bottom or a certain acting-out scenario to qualify. All I need to be a member of SCA is a desire to not have compulsive sex.

Luckily, Tradition Three reassures me that it is not about how much or how little acting out I did, but how it affected my life. I could decide what defined compulsive sex for me through my sponsor and sexual recovery plan. Did I have a desire to stop whatever behavior was upsetting me? It doesn't matter whether my acting out lands me in jail. If it makes me miserable, and I want to stop, then that is all I need to claim my seat in the rooms.

For many beginners, just their mere physical presence at their first few meetings is enough of an effort. To try to get them to commit to being sexually compulsive may push them away. I know, for myself, that I called myself a sexual compulsive a long time before I actually believed it. Fortunately, nobody was checking out the sincerity of my conviction. My attendance at meetings was sufficient. In fact, I needed to come in and out of the program a number of times, and have a number of slips, before I became convinced that I really belonged. The program is for people who want it, not those who need it. Sometimes there isn't one defining event that causes us to come into SCA. Our gradual acceptance of our place in recovery can be more of a process rather than one event. It has been my experience that people tend to "visit" SCA for awhile before they actually decide to attend meetings on a regular basis. I call it the "revolving door" of SCA. That is why the flexibility and gentleness of Tradition Three is so important. We don't need to ask newcomers to do any more than sit back, relax and listen.

## SEXUAL COMPULSIVES ANONYMOUS

### DOELSTELLING

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (SCA) is een gemeenschap van mannen en vrouwen die hun ervaring, kracht en hoop met elkaar delen, om hun gemeenschappelijk probleem op te lossen en anderen te helpen bevrijden van hun seksuele obsessies. Het enige vereiste voor lidmaatschap is een verlangen op te houden met seksueel obsessieel gedrag. Er zijn geen geldelijke verplichtingen voor SCA-lidmaatschap; wij voorzien in onze behoeften door eigen bijdragen. SCA is niet gebonden aan enige sekte, genootschap, politieke partij, organisatie of instelling; steunt of bestrijdt geen enkel doel.

Ons hoofddoel is seksueel sober te blijven en anderen te helpen seksuele soberheid te bereiken.

Leden worden aangemoedigd een persoonlijk seksueel herstelplan uit te werken en voor zichzelf seksuele soberheid te bepalen. Wij zijn hier niet om onze door God geschapen seksualiteit te onderdrukken, maar om deze te leren uitdrukken op een wijze, zodat deze niet langer onredelijke eisen stelt aan onze tijd en energie, of ons in een gevaarlijke onwettige positie brengt, en zo onze mentale, psychische en spirituele gezondheid in gevaar brengt.

### TWAALF SUGGESTIEVE STAPPEN VAN SCA

1. Wij hebben toegegeven dat we machteloos stonden tegenover seksuele obsessies - dat ons leven stuurloos was geworden.
2. Wij zijn gaan geloven dat een Macht groter dan wijzelf ons weer geestelijk gezond kan maken.
3. Wij hebben het besluit genomen onze wil en ons leven toe te vertrouwen aan de hoede van God, zoals wij persoonlijk Hem opvatten.
4. Wij hebben van onszelf een diepgaande en onbevreesde morele inventaris opgemaakt.

5. Wij hebben tegenover God, tegenover onszelf en tegenover een ander mens de juiste aard van onze misstappen toegegeven.

6. Wij waren volkomen bereid om God al deze karaktergebreken te laten wegnemen.

7. Wij hebben Hem nederig gevraagd onze tekortkomingen weg te nemen.

8. Wij hebben een lijst gemaakt van allen die wij hadden gekwetst en zijn bereidwillig geworden het bij allen weer goed te maken.

9. Wij hebben waar mogelijk het rechtstreeks bij deze mensen weer goedgemaakt, tenzij dit hen of anderen zou krenken.

10. Wij zijn doorgegaan met het opmaken van onze persoonlijke inventaris en als we fout waren, hebben wij dat meteen toegegeven.

11. Wij hebben ernaar gestreefd door gebed en bezinning ons bewust contact met God, - zoals wij persoonlijk Hem opvatten - te verbeteren, smekend om Zijn wil jegens ons te doen kennen en om de kracht die uit te voeren.

12. Bij het geestelijk ontwaken als gevolg van deze stappen, hebben wij getracht deze boodschap door te geven aan seksueel geobsedeerde mensen en deze beginselen bij al ons doen en laten toe te passen.

### DE TWAALF TRADITIES VAN SCA

1. Ons gemeenschappelijk welzijn behoort op de eerste plaats te komen; persoonlijk herstel hangt af van de eenheid in SCA.
2. Voor het doel dat wij als groep nastreven bestaat er slechts één uiteindelijk gezag - een liefhebbende God - zoals Hij zich in ons groepsgeweten kan uiten. Onze leiders zijn slechts dienaren die ons vertrouwen genieten; zij regeren niet.
3. Het enige vereiste voor SCA-lidmaatschap is een verlangen op te houden met obsessieel seksueel gedrag.
4. Elke groep behoort autonoom te zijn, behalve in aangelegenheden die andere groepen of SCA als geheel betreffen.
5. Elke groep heeft slechts één hoofddoel - zijn boodschap uit te dragen aan de seksueel geobsedeerde dewelke nog steeds lijdt.



6. Een SCA-groep zal nooit steun verlenen, financieren of de naam van SCA verlenen aan eender welke onderneming, om te voorkomen dat problemen met geld, eigendom of prestige ons van ons hoofddoel afleiden.

7. Elke SCA-groep dient volledig in eigen behoeften te voorzien onder afwijzing van bijdragen van buitenaf.

8. SCA behoort steeds niet-professioneel te blijven, maar onze dienstencentra mogen medewerkers in dienst nemen.

9. SCA als zodanig mag nooit georganiseerd worden, maar wij kunnen diensten of comités in het leven roepen die rechtstreeks verantwoording afleggen aan hen die zij dienen.

10. SCA heeft geen mening over onderwerpen buiten SCA; daarom mag de naam van SCA nooit worden betrokken bij enig publiek meningsverschil.

11. Onze gedragslijn inzake "public-relations" is meer gebaseerd op aantrekkingskracht dan op reclame; ten aanzien van pers, radio, TV en film moeten wij altijd onze persoonlijke anonimiteit handhaven.

12. De anonimiteit is de geestelijke grondslag van al onze tradities en herinnert er ons steeds aan dat wij aan beginselen de voorrang moeten geven boven personen.

## DE MIDDELEN DIE ONS HIERBIJ HELPEN

*Vergaderingen* zijn plaatsen waar we onze ervaring, kracht en hoop met elkaar delen om een beter begrip te verkrijgen in ons gemeenschappelijk probleem en daarbij samenwerken aan een oplossing.

*De Telefoon* is het contact tussen de vergaderingen in. Bij het contact met anderen breken wij uit ons isolement, hetwelk zo sterk aanwezig is bij deze ziekte.

*Peterschap* ontstaat tussen twee mensen met hetzelfde probleem die elkaar helpen met het toepassen van het programma. Het kan

voorzien in een raamwerk voor een seksueel herstelprogramma en voor het toepassen van de twaalf stappen en kan tevens emotionele hulp verlenen in moeilijke ogenblikken.

*Literatuur* is ons draagbaar programma. Wij maken eveneens gebruik van AA's en OA's en andere conferentie-goedgekeurde literatuur evenals andere nuttige middelen.

*De Twaalf Stappen* zijn een gesuggereerd herstelprogramma, gebaseerd op de twaalf stappen van A.A.

*Gebed en Meditatie* zijn middelen om een nauw contact tot stand te brengen met een Kracht groter dan wijzelf.

*Een seksueel herstelplan* is een vooropgestelde wijze om onze seksualiteit uit te drukken die verenigbaar is met onze waarden, zodat - zelfs wanneer we verward zijn - we een schriftelijke leidraad zullen hebben om ons te helpen.

*Onthouding* (gedeeltelijk of geheel). We vinden hulp in SCA bij het vermijden van personen, plaatsen en dingen die we als schadelijk beschouwen.

*Socialiseren* is een wijze om ons isolement te doorbreken en anderen te leren kennen in een niet-seksuele context: kameraadschap na de vergaderingen; hulpverlenende verenigingen en groepen, en in de gehele gemeenschap.

*Afspraken* zijn een middel om de plotse bevredigingsdrang te veranderen en meer onszelf en anderen te leren kennen, alvorens ons over te geven aan eender welk seksueel besluit.

*De Slogans* zijn eenvoudige krachtige uitdrukkingen die in crisissituaties gebruikt worden, zodat we over enkele basisvaardigheden beschikken.

*Dienen* is een manier om onszelf te helpen door anderen te helpen.

## TWINTIG VRAGEN

1. Ervaar je regelmatig wroeging, neerslachtigheid of schuld over je seksuele handelingen?

2. Voel je dat je geen controle meer hebt over je seksuele gedrevenheid en activiteiten?

3. Ben je niet bij machte seksuele toenaderingen te weerstaan, of seksuele voorstellen af te slaan?

4. Gebruik je seks om vervelende gevoelens te ontvluchten zoals zorgen, angst, woede, wrevel, schuldgevoelens enz...

5. Spendeer je abnormaal veel tijd aan seksuele fantasieën of aan seksuele activiteiten?

6. Heb je uw familie, vrienden, echtgenote of uw relatie verwaarloosd door tijd te besteden aan seksuele activiteiten?

7. Belemmeren je seksuele bezigheden je werk of professionele ontwikkeling?

8. Is je seksueel leven geheim, een bron van schaamte, en niet in overeenstemming met je waarden. Lieg je tegenover anderen om je seksuele activiteiten in stand te houden?

9. Heb je angst van seks? Vermijdt je romantische en seksuele relaties met anderen en beperkt je seksuele activiteiten zich tot fantasieën, masturbatie en eenzame of anonieme activiteiten?

10. Ben je in toenemende mate seksueel onbekwaam zonder gebruik van stimuli zoals pornografie, video's, 'flopers', drugs/alcohol, 'speelgoed' etc...

11. Neem je in toenemende mate je toevlucht tot misbruik, vernederingen of pijnlijke seksuele fantasieën of gedragingen om seksueel opgewonden te raken?

12. Hebben je seksuele activiteiten je weerhouden om een hechte, liefdevolle relatie met een partner op te bouwen? Of, heb je een patroon ontwikkeld van intense romantische of seksuele relaties dewelke nooit blijven duren nadat de prikkeling afneemt?

13. Heb je enkel anonieme seks of één-nacht-vlinders? Wil je gewoonlijk je seksuele partner verlaten na de ontmoeting?

14. Heb je seks met mensen met dewelke je normaal niet zou omgaan?

15. Bezoek je geregeld clubs, bars, seksshop's, rustplaatsen, parken en andere publieke plaatsen met de bedoeling seksuele partners te zoeken?

16. Ben je ooit gearresteerd of heb je jezelf door uw seksuele activiteiten in wettelijk gevaar gebracht?

17. Heb je ooit je fysieke gezondheid in gevaar gebracht met betrekking tot seksueel overdraagbare ziekten, in 't bijzonder Aids, door 'onveilige' seksuele activiteiten?

18. Heeft het geld dat je spendeert aan pornografie, video's, telefoonsex of prostituées je financiële stabiliteit aangetast?

19. Hebben mensen, dewelke bezorgd om je zijn, zich zorgen gemaakt over je seksuele activiteiten?

20. Lijkt het leven je zinloos en hopeloos zonder een romantische of seksuele relatie?

## DIT ZIJN DEKARAKTERISTIEKEN DEWELKE DE MEESTE VAN ONS GEMEEN HEBBEN

1. Als jongeren, gebruikten we fantasieën en obsessievolle masturbatie om gevoelens te vermijden. Deze gewoonte ging verder in ons volwassen leven met obsessievolle seksbeleving.

2. Obsessievolle seks werd een drug, dewelke we gebruikten om te vluchten voor gevoelens zoals ongerustheid, eenzaamheid, angst en zelf-haat, evenals blijdschap.

3. Wij hebben de neiging om geïsoleerd te geraken door romantische obsessies. We geraakten verslaafd in onze zucht naar seks en liefde; als resultaat verzuimden we te leven...

4. We zochten vergetelheid in fantasie en masturbatie, en verloren zo onszelf in obsessievolle seks. Seks werd een beloning, een straf, een afleiding en tijdsverslindend.



5. Door onze eigen lage zelfwaardering, gebruikten we seks om ons waardevol en compleet te voelen.

6. Wij trachtten intensiteit en opwinding in ons leven te brengen door seks, maar voelden in onszelf de leegte toenemen.

7. Seks werd een apart-iets, in plaats van het als een gezond element te integreren in ons leven.

8. We werden verslaafd aan mensen en waren niet in staat het onderscheid te maken tussen seks, liefde en affectie.

9. We zoeken in anderen naar zogenaamde 'magische' kwaliteiten om ons compleet te voelen. Anderen werden geïdealiseerd en begiftigd met een symbolisme, dewelke vaak verdween nadat we seks met hen hadden.

10. We werden aangetrokken tot mensen die niet beschikbaar waren voor ons, of dewelke ons zouden afwijzen of ons zouden misbruiken.

11. We hebben angst van relaties, maar bleven ze toch continue najagen. En in een relatie vreesden wij steeds verlaten te worden of te worden afgewezen, maar eens zover, voelden we ons leeg en onvoldaan.

12. Ondanks dat we steeds op zoek zijn naar intimiteit met een ander persoon, vonden we dat de wanhopige kwaliteit van onze verlangens, een echte intimiteit met eender wie onmogelijk maakt, en dat we zo vaak een ongezonde afhankelijke relatie ontwikkelden dewelke eventueel onuitstaanbaar werd.

13. Zelfs wanneer we de liefde van een ander persoon verkregen, leek het nooit genoeg en waren machteloos om onze lustgevoelens jegens anderen te stoppen.

14. Trachtend onze afhankelijkheid van onze verzuchtingen te verbergen, groeiden we verder weg van onszelf, van God en van vele mensen waar we zo intens naar verlangen.

## SLOTWOORD

(te lezen bij iedere vergadering)

De opinies die hier vandaag zijn uitgedrukt, behoren uitsluitend aan de individuen dewelke ze gaven.

De dingen die je gehoord hebt, zijn gegeven en uitgesproken in vertrouwen en dienen als zodanig vertrouwelijk behandeld te worden. Indien je tracht te absorberen wat je hier hebt gehoord, dien je u te beperken tot het verkrijgen van een beter begrip op de weg om met je problemen om te gaan.

In de geest van herstel van seksuele obsessies, suggereren we dat seks tussen leden niet lichtzinnig mag beschouwd worden. Seks tussen nieuwe leden van onze gemeenschap en andere leden wordt afgeraden.

Spreek met elkaar, zet de dingen op een rijtje met iemand anders, laat geen roddel of kritiek over anderen toe, maar alleen liefde, begrip en kameraadschap.

## SERENITEITSGEBED

God, geef mij de *KALMTE* om te aanvaarden wat ik niet kan veranderen, *MOED* om te veranderen wat ik kan veranderen en *WIJSHEID* om tussen deze twee onderscheid te maken.

Voor informatie over vergaderingen, bel of schrijf :

SCA-BELGIË

Postbus 44

B-3120 TREMELO BELGIE

Tel. 016/520925

SCA-New York

Old Chelsea Station P.O. Box 1585

New York, New York 10011 USA

Voor bijkomende folders schrijf naar :

SCA-BELGIË Postbus 44

B-3120 TREMELO BELGIE

\*\*\* draft \*\*\*

## Tradition Four

*Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or SCA as a whole.*

All Four One

Philip E (NY)

In the five years that I have been an active member of SCA, I have had the opportunity to do service with New York City Intergroup and as a NY delegate to our International Service Organization (ISO). In my experience, doing service is indeed, as stated in the Fourfold, "...a way of helping ourselves by helping others." In the course of Intergroup and ISO meetings in which I've participated, I've been able to experience the broad spectrum of emotions that only a business meeting populated by recovering addicts (and of course I include myself in that description) can evoke. From the sublime to the ridiculous - and I don't use that phrase facetiously. Actually, it would be more to the point to say from the ridiculous to the sublime.

Initially I would suffer through these meetings, my stomach in knots, my blood boiling, telling myself that if only these people would behave the way I felt they should, see things my way, act as I did (or at least imagined myself to), everything would go so much smoother. We could quickly solve all manner of problems. It was at times so disturbing that I was beginning to consider dropping out of my service commitments altogether; I'm glad today that I didn't follow that impulse.

As time went by, I gradually began to awaken to the fact that there was real value in these experiences. I realized that I needed to stay not only because of the work that was so often accomplished, but more because of the spiritual message being offered. Yes, we recovering addicts could get out of control and self-righteous, and many times there were people who I wanted to throttle (many of whom probably wanted to return the favor). But time and again, just when it looked as though nothing would ever get accomplished, or worse yet, some insanely inappropriate motion was about to be passed, miracles could happen. Someone would suddenly speak out (sometimes it was someone that I would least expect). In the clearest and most sober voice he/she would bring us all back to our senses, reminding us to place principles before personalities, and helping me personally to remember that our primary purpose is to stay sexually sober and to help others to achieve sexual sobriety. Not to win an argument or make others see it my way. In spite of our character defects, in spite of our control issues and neurosis and bad manners, we as addicts -- when push came to shove -- are often able to rise above our short-comings and, with God's help, act out of humility and compassion, to let go of our desire to have things our way, to let go of our fear of losing something we perceive to be ours, and do the sane, sober thing. Often, this means trusting the program and trusting that others are able to rise above their short-comings as well. Which brings me to Tradition Four.



I've heard it said that the Steps protect us from our addiction, and the Traditions protect us from each other. This speaks eloquently to the temptation those in service positions may sometimes feel in response to something that may be happening within an individual meeting. I can think of several occasions at New York Intergroup when someone would bring up a concern about how things were handled at a particular meeting: cross-talk, not following the prescribed format set up by a meeting, sudden use of graphic language, etc. The response from someone might be "Let's tell the meetings that they have to do X Y or Z". Tell the meetings they can't allow cross-talk, or graphic language. Tell the meetings that they have to read the preamble. Tell the meeting they have to say this isn't group therapy, tell the meetings people should only talk about recovery. Usually this sort of response would, I think, come out of a place of fear; fear that if we didn't somehow "take control", the meeting would become unsafe, or inappropriate, or ineffective. The desire to protect our own recovery, which in many cases is vital to our own survival, lead some of us to be tempted to try to mandate what we consider to be the "right" way to run an individual meeting. But such action is not in keeping with the words of Tradition Four, or in the spirit of individual responsibility fostered by recovery. Fortunately, inevitably someone would remind the group that each meeting is autonomous, and we have no business butting in if the issue in question didn't effect the rest of the program. What the fourth Tradition tells us is that the only way for our fellowship to remain safe and effective is if we trust each meeting to take care of itself. As it says in the commentary on this Tradition in the AA Twelve and Twelve, "Every group has the right to be wrong". By having each group stand on its own we allow ourselves to take responsibility for our own recovery. Unless what happens at a meeting is directly effecting another meeting, or the fellowship as a whole, we must stand back and let those attending a meeting determine what works for them and respond to whatever problems arise. These are the real lessons of this tradition: letting go of control, getting out of the way of the recovery of other addicts, and trusting in the process of the program.

In my four years on New York Intergroup and three years on ISO, we have never once come across a meeting that was engaging in some action that affected another meeting or SCA as a whole. Whatever problems meetings have had, they have been quite capable of handling on their own. The Twelve & Twelve says we must have "the courage to declare each group an individual entity, strictly reliant on its own conscience as a guide to action". This is a fundamental principal of how the 12 Steps work. They and the Traditions are models for us, to help us relearn how to live a sober and spiritual life.

Essentially, this is what the fourth tradition says to me: Let go. Stop trying to control what doesn't concern you. Trust that the grace of God, or HP, or humanity, or however you want to say it, is in all of us. All will be well.



### Tradition Five

*Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the sexual compulsive who still suffers.*

#### Recovery Is Not A Picnic

David A-S (NY)

Whenever I think of Tradition Five I am always reminded of the story of a teenage girl who was discovered and subsequently rescued by a social worker from the cellar of her father's house, where she was kept for many years as the father's sexual object. She had not been taught to speak or read or write. Each day he would visit her to sexually abuse her and leave her food. Otherwise, she was entirely on her own. When she was rescued by a social worker, she was very disorientated and confused and did not understand the kindness and love that was shown her and resisted it. As soon as she was able to communicate her needs she began to ask to be returned to the cellar and her abusive father. She did not even know that this was a backward step. The old way was something she felt comfortable with and seemed to be less taxing than the new 'loving' ways.

I often feel like that girl. Rather than talk about the steps I have taken to recover my sanity (and so practice the fifth Tradition in its most basic application), I would rather just go back to some of the places and behaviors that once ruled my life because that seems so much easier. At meetings, I often hear other people sharing the same thing. It is so much easier to go back to abusive situations than to keep going along the path to recovery. It's very painful at times to hear myself and others thinking and speaking about these desires. It reminds me, however, that Tradition Five is something I can use to help not only others who are still suffering but also myself when I am suffering and imagine that I can end my suffering by going backwards.

The first four Traditions give us a sense of place and belonging in the world and within our fellowship. Tradition Five asks tells us that our hard won inter-dependence and sense of our selves can only continue to be ours if we share our well being with those within and beyond the Fellowship. What is our primary purpose as suggested by Tradition Five? What is our message? Our purpose as suggested by Tradition Three is to help one another to give up sexually compulsive behavior. Once we have dismantled the compartmentalization that governed our lives when we were sexually compulsive, we are compelled to let others know of our new found freedom. This maintains our sobriety and helps others to find the same freedom.

By listening to one another in meetings (which can sometimes be difficult), by sharing our own struggles with recovery at meetings and beyond (which can also be difficult at times), by welcoming newcomers at meetings, we are practicing the fifth Tradition. Continuing to tell our story, continuing to remind ourselves where we have been and how far we have come keeps us recovering and helps others to take similar steps.

I've always found it difficult to share at meetings when I am in the middle of something. I always prefer to talk about it after it's all over, when I can toss back my head, and laugh about how silly or desperate or crazy I was *then*. In part this has been due to my fear of



looking at my own primary purpose. I have often done whatever seemed "easiest rather than gone for what was most beneficial". Since I have been in program and have been working the Steps and Traditions, I have found it easier to take the more difficult road because it has got me to where I really wanted to go and not some make-believe place instead, as acting out used to do. I have recognized that living my primary purpose forces me to share it with others and so gives them the opportunity to see into me (into me see = intimacy). Ultimately this is the hidden agenda of the fifth Tradition. By sharing our message of recovery we share our intimacy and make it safe for others to reach out for what we have gained from recovery.

### Tradition Six

*An S.C.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the S.C.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.*

**United Yet Separate** Peter C. (LA)

Tradition Six suggests we avoid outside entanglements because it will distract us from our primary purpose—to carry the message to the sex addict who still suffers. Over the years many well meaning members have vigorously proposed association with outside organizations, all in the name of "carrying the message" to a wider audience of potential sufferers. However, in each situation the controversy created by these efforts shifted our focus from helping the newcomer, to control and conflict with each other. Here are some of the things that we proposed.

Wouldn't it be great if all the "S" programs coordinated their efforts to carry the message? We thought of the duplication of effort, with each program "reinventing the wheel" by writing the same literature, establishing the same telephone information lines, providing panels to the same hospitals, sending letters to the same courts, and publishing competing meeting lists. We thought of SA, SAA, SCA, SLAA, COSA, S-ANON and even RCA spreading our meager financial resources into the same projects when we could combine our efforts.

Calls were made to other Intergroups, meeting set up to discuss the idea and even weekend retreats scheduled to get acquainted. What happened? Members who had found a solution to their own sexual compulsion became very protective of their program's approach to sexual recovery. Even though we all work the same Twelve Steps and practice the same Twelve Traditions, each program had evolved its own definition of sexual sobriety, application of a sexual recovery plan, interpretation of the Steps and adaptation of the tools for recovery.

If all the meetings for every fellowship were to be published on a joint meeting list, would it confuse the newcomer? They might hear one definition of sobriety at one meeting and a different version at the next. How would the judiciary know to which meetings to send court referrals? Some meetings are for sexual predators to stop their

behavior while others are for the victims of sexual abuse. Some meetings are for recovering prostitutes while others focus on recovery from paying for sex. Some are open to anyone while others have attendance requirements or require an introductory telephone call.

Which fellowship would donate how much money? Intergroups and ISO publish literature, pay for a central office, postage and telephones with proceeds from the Seventh Tradition forwarded from individual meetings. Some fellowships are smaller than others and cannot afford an equal share of these expenses. Should they have less voice in writing the literature, and shaping the message to the addict that still suffers?

What about sexuality? Some fellowships see homosexual behavior as acting out while others are predominantly gay as a matter of choice. If you list a group as "Gay & Lesbian," what about the straight members that attend? Some programs let each member define addictive behavior while others impose a standardized definition. One fellowship sees masturbation and sex outside of a certified marriage as acting out while another argues for moderation in masturbation and many of their members can't legally marry.

Another point of contention was affiliation with hospitals, professional therapists, and popular writers. Over the years, S.C.A. conventions have invited authors in the sexual recovery field to appear as key note speakers, Intergroups have scheduled workshops with professional therapists and hospitals have sponsored seminars in their Sexual Dependency Units. In many cases the name of the sponsoring hospital or the speakers' credentials were included in the information to members. This disclosure became an acknowledgment of their expertise or implicit endorsement of their treatment for sexual addiction.

First, there are no experts in S.C.A. When a sober member shares "how it was," the newcomer identifies with their pain and suffering and become convinced that this is someone who honestly knows how they feel. When the sober member shares "what happened," the newcomer becomes curious to investigate the program of action that worked for them. When the sober member shares "what it is like now," the newcomer gains hope and becomes willing to take the actions outlined in the Twelve Steps.

The Big Book of A.A. advises, "That the man who is making the approach has had the same difficulty, that he obviously knows what he is talking about, that his whole deportment shouts at the new prospect that he is a man with a real answer, that he has no attitude of Holier Than Thou. Nothing whatever except the sincere desire to be helpful; that there are no fees to pay, no axes to grind, no people to please, no lectures to be endured—these are the conditions we have found most effective."

Second, many institutions represent complimentary approaches to recovery from sexual addiction that are different from the Steps. It is only natural for a person to speak about their own realm of experience. When professionals spoke at S.C.A. functions they have suggested group and individual therapy, prescription medication, positive affirmations, fire drills, journaling, rebirthing, anger work, feelings work, reclaiming your power,



reforming family systems, healing your inner child, incest work, survivors work, codependency, counter-dependency and every other modality of modern psychology.

Just what message does this carry to the newcomer? Is S.C.A. a program of education about sexual addiction, a support group for survivors of addictive families and sexual abuse, a therapeutic approach to dealing with your sexual feelings or a spiritual program of action to find God and a Higher Power?

The Big Book of A.A. makes this distinction abundantly clear when it says: "Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a *power greater than ourselves*. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this power? Well, that's exactly what this book is about. Its main object is to enable you to find a power greater than yourself which will solve your problem." Although the Big Book advises us to cooperate with doctors and psychologists, it differentiates the "human based" therapeutic solution from a "spiritual based" solution in God and a Higher Power.

When we affiliate with related facilities we mix our message of recovery with theirs. This creates conflict and dissension among the membership that distracts time and energy away from helping the newcomer and carrying the spiritual solution to other sexual compulsives. As addicts in sobriety, we share a unique ability to carry a special message of hope to the person who still suffers: "(a) That we were sex addicts and could not manage our own lives. (b) That no human power could have relieved our sex addiction. (c) That God could and would if He were sought."

### Tradition Seven

*Each group ought to be fully self-supporting declining outside contributions*

**Shared Responsibility** David W (NY)

Tradition Seven is about responsibility. Part of addiction is an unwillingness to accept responsibility for one's actions, to accept that there is a cause and effect relationship between sexually acting out and a multitude of consequences, physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual. It is as if, as active addicts we wanted to live in a fantasy world one in which the 'reality principle' has no effect. It also seems that even in recovery, (which is a slow process both for the individual and the group), a degree of denial concerning real needs sometimes remains. As part of taking responsibility for our action Tradition Seven asks us, as individuals and as groups, Intergroups and at the ISO level, to explore our relationship to money. This involves the practical need of paying the rent for the group, supporting the activities of the local Intergroup (such as maintaining a local phone line, paying for conferences, purchasing literature and printing meeting lists). At ISO it involves such things as printing literature, maintaining a national phone line, holding an international conference. Here we realize that the spirituality talked about in the program is not a fantasy world in which we merely wish for a desired outcome but that it may actually involve planning, determined action and, sometimes, actual sacrifice on our part.

The simplest interpretation of this tradition is that groups cannot rely on any entity or individuals outside of the groups for monetary support. When members of groups are forced to take monetary responsibility for their own groups' survival they learn that recovery is SCA is an active, not a passive process. Supporting a group involves taking such action.

Self-support for the group also refers to a group's collective acceptance of the responsibility of filling service positions. If no one is willing to be chair or treasurer of a group, then that group sometimes can not survive. It may also be dangerous for Groups, Intergroups and ISO to become dependent on a small number of individuals who take service positions over and over again. This is not self-supporting for the group as a whole. It is dependence on a small group of individuals.

Finally there may be individuals who, because of personal circumstance, can not make monetary contributions and/or can not take service positions. The responsibility required in this tradition is primarily that of the group as a whole and is not meant to make individual members feel guilty. No one can be turned away from SCA because he or she can not give money or do service. Tradition Three is clear about this. Also, no member of SCA should be made to feel inferior because of his or her inability to contribute in these ways as well. We are all equal in our voice and in our value in SCA regardless of how much money we give, or how much service we do. But individuals who can not support a meeting's monetary needs or by doing service can nevertheless, support the group's ability to carry the message through their verbal shares in the meeting. Those who can not, or do not share, can do service by listening to others when others share – since being heard is part of the way in which we are healed of our sexual compulsion. If no one were in the rooms to listen to us when we shared in a meeting, it is unlikely that we would be able to recover. Sharing is a way which supports the recovery process, not only of ourselves but of others as well, and listening in a way that supports not only our own recovery but that of others, are also ways in which everyone can contribute to the self-supporting nature of a group.

### Tradition Eight

*SCA should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.*

**No One Paid Me to Write This** Eric H. (NJ)

I was going to call this essay "I'm Not Qualified to Write This", but after reading about the Eighth Tradition in the *Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions* of AA, I realized that this first title was both untrue and beside the point. I *am* qualified to write this, simply because I belong to the SCA fellowship. And the fact that I need no *other* credential in order to write it is exactly the point.

When I first heard the Eighth Tradition, it sounded like an admonition: "Don't even think about going professional on us!" That didn't make any sense to me. Why would I want



to become a professional Sexual Compulsive? I had enough trouble recovering as a regular, garden-variety Sexual Compulsive. But then I saw that the *Twelve & Twelve* places the Eighth Tradition firmly in a position of service to the Twelfth Step. It talks about the fact that money and spirituality don't mix, and it makes the bold claim that an addict will not listen to a paid Twelfth-Stepper. That did make sense, because it reminded me immediately of how the message of recovery was carried to me.

I was Twelfth-Stepped in a tearoom. Well, all right, technically it was in a coffee shop upstairs from the tearoom, but mentally setting the event in the acting-out place itself is a dramatic, yet gentle, way to remind myself that help is available--and surprisingly interpretable--when I least expect it. I can't imagine a paid addiction counselor going undercover (as it were) in a tearoom to bring the message of sexual recovery to active addicts. And I know I would never have heard the message if it had come from anyone other than someone who was in that tearoom for exactly the same reason as I was. (My Twelfth-Stepper and I didn't have sex, by the way. There was an ineffable recognition between us that quite simply led us out of our trances and toward a place where we could talk. He spoke first. Through the grace of my Higher Power, I knew it was safe to listen and respond.)

That SCA should remain forever nonprofessional means precisely that: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". In other words, it *ought* to remain nonprofessional. It would be a disaster if it didn't, because its nonprofessional status is the very reason why it works. As the *Twelve & Twelve* reminds us, if SCA were to accept fees for Twelfth-Step work, its single purpose would be entirely defeated. In my own particular case, I know that if the first SCA room I entered had been stocked with people who got paid to be there, I would have run screaming from it, and I would never have gone back. Perhaps more to the point, had I known before entering the room that some or all of those inside were paid workers, I probably would never have gone in. In a very real sense, a "professional SCA" could not have helped me. Why? Well, here's where that tricky spirituality stuff comes in.

My spirituality is very democratic. It flourishes in an environment of fellowship--literally a place where fellows, i.e., individuals who are equals, gather to share experience, strength, and hope. My spiritual growth falters, however, in the presence of authority, and it doesn't matter whether someone else is claiming that authority or I am. We live in a society where an individual who receives wages or fees for a service is bestowed, justifiably or not, a certain authority concerning that service. If we members of 12-Step recovery groups were to become professionals, I believe that our investment in authority, either monetary or emotional, would hinder us from being entirely open to the spiritual process. Regarding the Twelfth Step in particular, I believe our ability to "practice these principles in all our affairs" is contingent upon our motives, and both money and authority tend to draw the spirituality out of our motives.

As I understand it, the Eighth Tradition also exists partly to guard against the possibility of members' making money using the Program. I've never known or heard of anyone who has gained financially from SCA. Personally, the concept has never even occurred to me. The *Twelve & Twelve* talks about instances of recovering addicts taking jobs in

which they can draw upon their "expertise", and it doesn't criticize them for doing so as long as anonymity is maintained. I can think of only one time when my "expertise" as a recovering person could have informed the work I did at my job, and then only peripherally. I offered a colleague in educational publishing a part of my "story" (anonymously) for use in some teacher resource materials about tough issues facing secondary school kids. In the end, the content relating to recovery was suppressed--it was deemed too controversial by the company's marketing "authorities".

A consistently astonishing and gratifying part of my 12-Step experience has been the numerous occasions when I have had to work very hard to overcome the shame I was feeling just to speak in a meeting. Almost without fail, I have received positive feedback after the meeting from someone who identified with my share. So, I suspect it was shame, my longtime nemesis, that influenced, in part at least, my first choice of title for this essay. I often suffer from the feeling that I'm not qualified, that I'm not going to do it "right" or do it "good enough". But the blessing of the Eighth Tradition is the reminder that I don't have to be an authority or a "recovery professional". I'm grateful that I wasn't paid to write this. Like anything I share in a meeting, it's offered freely, from an equal to equals. Take what you like, leave the rest. And like anything I hear in a meeting, including the words that come out of my own mouth, it has helped me to learn. Writing it has been part of my very nonprofessional spiritual awakening.

### Tradition Nine

*SCA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*

#### Relationships Based on Service not Control John F

In learning about the Traditions, we found that the context of Tradition Nine, much like the context of Step Nine, is about right relationships. The Second Tradition tells us that ultimate authority within SCA rests with a loving God whose will we try, imperfectly, to follow, using the Group Conscience as our guide.

Our all-too-human tendency was to arrogate power; in the self-centeredness of our compulsion, we tried to play the big shot. Many of us gravitated to relationships where we felt safe by trying to control others, and this tendency carried over to our relationship with SCA.

For many of us, our first experience along these lines took place in a business meeting, perhaps one where trusted servants were being chosen, or the group was trying to form a Group Conscience on a matter of importance. Did we try to dominate the discussion? If it was our first time leading a meeting, did we try to impose our will in place of the group's? Were we able to "Let Go and Let God"?

We listened as those with more experience in the Program told us that business meetings inject a dose of reality into what sometimes seems to be the cocoon of a regular meeting.



Tempers sometimes flared; arguments arose; decisions were made. Frightening things, indeed, for someone newly recovering from sexual compulsion.

Some of us moved beyond service at the group level, finding our sexual sobriety strengthened when we did service at the local intergroup. And as the intergroup tended to attract just those individuals with a history of efforts to dominate, so the intergroup itself sometimes veered in the direction of trying to dominate the groups.

At one such intergroup meeting, the discussion turned to groups that did not seem to be adhering to the Third Tradition. The very name of the group seemed to suggest that only certain kinds of sexual compulsives were to be welcomed; others need not apply. What was the Intergroup to do?

Using the Fourth Tradition as a guide, the intergroup decided that this group's actions did indeed affect other groups or the fellowship as a whole. And the discussion turned to the best way to penalize the group.

The intergroup had a powerful weapon at its disposal: control of the local meeting list. Excluding the group from the meeting list would surely reduce its membership, forcing it to toe the line and adhere to the Third Tradition.

But then the discussion took another turn. Was this a loving, supportive action? And what is the proper role of Intergroup, anyway? Doesn't Tradition Nine say that Intergroup is responsible to those it serves in other words, the sexual compulsives and their meetings in the area? Would excluding the group from the meeting list help or hurt those sexual compulsives? What kind of message would Intergroup be carrying?

Instead of removing the errant group from the list, Intergroup voted to send a message to that group, asking if it agreed that it might be violating the Third Tradition and if it was willing to change its name. By its next meeting, Intergroup had its answer: the group did vote to change its name, to indicate that it is open to anyone with a desire to stop having compulsive sex. The Ninth Tradition worked.

And so it goes. Some of us with a particularly strong need to do service became involved in the International Service Organization. What an ego trip! There we have the opportunity to be the No. 1 sexual compulsive in the world!

We found that the reality was different, although the desire to control was still there. We learned that SCA as a whole is not organized. There is no one individual who 'calls the shots'. Instead, we found that ISO is a service board that considers questions affecting the fellowship as a whole. What was the proper way for an intergroup to do outreach to people who might not be hearing the message? How should meetings be told to develop literature for consideration by ISO for publication?

Through trial and error, we continually were led back to Tradition Nine, and the role of ISO as a servant, not a master, for intergroups and meetings around the world. We decided it was not the role of ISO to tell intergroups how to do anything. We learned we

could share our experience and make suggestions. The Fourth Tradition told us that the intergroups and meetings were autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or the fellowship as a whole. We again heard the Slogan, "Let Go and Let God."

We finally learned to end our efforts to dominate when we learned to step down gracefully from our service positions. We learned that SCA goes on, even without the efforts of any particular individual. SCA is not a cult; it is based on principles, not personalities. When we stepped down, we made every effort to provide a safe bridge for the person replacing us. And it gave us great satisfaction when that person not only learned to serve as we did, but grew into an entirely new role, providing even greater service to the sexual compulsive who still suffers. In this way, we helped carry the message even further.

### Tradition Ten

*SCA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SCA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*

#### Oprah, Sally, Recovery & Me by Jeff Z (NY)

I don't know about you, but I have to admit that TV talk shows are pretty high on my list of guilty pleasures (you know, those things we really enjoy, like "Hostess" cupcakes, but don't readily admit to anyone). I'm not so much into the wild (staged) brawls of the Jerry Springer show, but on a sick-day from work or on a rainy, do-nothing afternoon, I can be endlessly distracted from my life by the crazy situations that people get themselves into. Trashy baby-swap dramas, sperm-donor mix-ups, and my particular favorite, the paternity test expose, all add up to a great way for me to escape from my life (admittedly, not the best of places for me to go to as an addict). Controversy, especially someone else's, seems to have a way of providing that escape, at least for me.

So when I read Tradition 10 – Our fellowship has no opinion on outside issues; hence our name ought never to be drawn into public controversy – I first thought to myself, "Well, now that's why no one from SCA has ever been on a "My Sex-Crazed Teen" episode of Sally Jesse." And then I got really discouraged, realizing that I may never get to live out my fantasy of being the SCA expert on "Oprah", appearing in shadow, voice disguised to sound like something out of a sci-fi epic, commenting on some future Presidential peccadillo. I had once thought of this as the ultimate service role, helping the millions in my TV family know what a sex addict is and where to get help. Once again, in the course of this adventure called recovery, I was being asked to "think different".

Then I thought about the Tradition a little more and began to see its simple wisdom. I'm embarrassed to admit how long it has taken me to appreciate that SCA is a spiritual program. It isn't group therapy, it isn't a dating service or a social club. For me, it's a safe haven where I can go and, with minimal distraction, share my feelings about my particular problem, connect with other people in spirit and, God willing, begin to build an identity outside of my addictive behavior. This "clearing away the wreckage of my past"



has taken a phenomenal amount of energy and focus along with levels of vulnerability and courage that I didn't even know I had. I'm grateful that someone thought ahead: I would never be able to even think about my recovery if I had to constantly weigh in as part of a group with my opinion on world issues, let alone share my thoughts about "trailer-trash trannies" or women bearing their own grandchildren. If I can't keep the focus on myself in these rooms, facing the problems of my life and letting God in, then I cannot heal. It's that simple.

I went to a spiritual class recently and the instructor asked us to list three blessings we were grateful for in our lives while he counted from one to ten. He asked "Ready?" and then he screamed at the top of his lungs and as fast as he could, "1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10!" After the initial paroxysm of terror dissipated, everyone began to laugh nervously when we realized that in the face of distraction, no one wrote down anything. (We were given a chance to write again while he counted in silence. We all came up with something.) I think I'll leave the controversy to Sally and Oprah and all of the folks who want to seek out some sort of whacked-out healing on a global stage. In the stillness of recovery, I know my blessings: Sobriety, Honesty, and Love. And I'm grateful.

#### Tradition Eleven

*Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, television, and films.*

#### Not That Kind of Attraction John S (NY)

As a sex addict, I am apt to misunderstand the suggestion to rely on "attraction" as a public relations tool. Does that mean we ought to seduce people into recovery? But that's not on my plan! I better leave the public relations work to someone else! But after some reflection I am able to remember that "attraction" does not have to mean sexually or physically attracting others; "attraction" does not even have to be an action I take. I think what is meant by attraction in Tradition Eleven is not an action someone takes but rather the effect that someone has when they are successfully working their recovery. I know that I was drawn---attracted---to my sponsor because I heard a confidence in his voice a saw a peacefulness in his eyes that I wanted so badly for myself. My sponsor wasn't looking for me as a sponsee. He drew me to ask for his help by virtue of the qualities that he possessed in sobriety. How different this kind of attraction is from the desperate measures I used to take to get some kind of attention and validation!

But why exactly are we advised to rely on "attraction" rather than "promotion" in public relations? Certainly promotional public relations campaigns can be effective, and beneficial. I remember the television commercials that asked me to Keep America Beautiful (the crying Indian Chief) and to Kick the Habit (ex-smokers leaping into the air); they had a lasting impact on me. Why shouldn't SCA launch an aggressive PR campaign, urging all active addicts to...what? Do you have a suggestion for a slogan? Of course you do! So do I! Dozens of them!! And when it comes time for us to decide on which on slogan we're going to use in our campaign, I'll do all I can to make sure that

my slogan (obviously the wittiest/catchiest/most 'with-it') is the winner! And if my slogan isn't the winner, then I'll just have to nurse a big resentment about it, and demean the whole PR campaign as mismanaged and misguided. I'll grouse about it in meetings, or maybe even stop going altogether. That'll show 'em!

It's not that promotional campaigns don't work. It's that I can't be the one to work them. AA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions says this about Tradition Eleven: "By temperament, nearly every one of us had been an irrepressible self-promoter, and the prospect of a society composed almost entirely of promoters was frightening. Considering this explosive factor, we had to exercise self-restraint".

I could not be involved in promotional work without my ego and self-will struggling to gain control of the situation. Former actor that I am, I would desperately want to "stage manage" the project. AA's Big Book expands on the theatrical metaphor on pages 60--62; my problems begin when I try to "run the whole show", and end when I "quit playing God". The temptation to play God in the context of promotional work would be too great for me, and would jeopardize my sobriety. My primary purpose as a recovering addict is to stay sexually sober, which I achieve by turning my will over to the God of my understanding. Unfortunately, I'm less practiced at "turning it over" than I am at "running the show". So, to avoid temptation, I'll leave the promotional work to a friendly non-addict, and spread the message of recovery in quieter ways.

The second half of Tradition Eleven emphasized the need to maintain anonymity when dealing with the media. Anonymity as the foundation of our traditions is the concern of Tradition Twelve; but as far as anonymity and the media goes. AA's Twelve and Twelve states that "People who symbolize causes and ideas fill a deep human need...but we do have to face the fact that being in the public eye is hazardous, especially for us." To be put in the position of "representing" SCA to the public would almost certainly trigger my character defects of grandiosity and neediness. I might confuse the importance of the message with my importance as the messenger. My sobriety would be jeopardized; it isn't worth it.

There is also the danger of the public confusing the message with the messenger, concentrating more on the personality than the principle involved. I think of whatever children's aid campaign that was (it's telling that I don't even remember its name) that hired a former sitcom actress as its spokesperson. Rather than being concerned for the children's welfare, I was preoccupied with thinking how the actress had really let herself go since the 70s, and how annoying her voice was to me now. I was diverted from the important theme of the commercial by my preoccupation with trivia.

There is also the matter of the risk involved in associating the program as a whole with one individual. Addicts sometimes have slips, and it has been clearly demonstrated lately that imperfection in public figures attracts a lot of negative attention by the media.

Finally, I think there is a fundamental inaccuracy involved in having any individual represent our program of recovery. SCA, like all twelve-step programs, is grounded in the



concept that we are unable to recover alone. Our ability to recover is contingent on our willingness to ask for help. For help, we go to meetings, (wherever two or more addicts come together to share their experience, strength, and hope), or we meet with our sponsors, or make phone calls. Ultimately, of course, we develop a relationship with God as we understand God. Personally, I feel that my connection with the God of my understanding is strongest when I am in contact with another person in recovery. No single person can embody the meaning of recovery, because recovery happens between and among us, between us and our Higher Powers.

My Higher Power is mysterious, indefinable, and doesn't do public appearances. So I choose to stay off camera, and when the opportunity arises to tell someone who looks like they could benefit from it about recovery, I will say, "Come to a meeting!"

### Tradition Twelve

*Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*

The Whole is Greater Than the Parts Karen (NY)

In a general sense, anonymity means that the whole is even greater than the parts. This is significant for us in SCA because it guarantees the survival of the groups and the Fellowship as an entity, no matter who its constituents are. As "terminally unique" addicts, we were driven by a Don't-You-Know-Who-I-Am attitude; we soon found out in SCA that they did know who we were—sick and suffering just like them!

Anonymity also protects SCA from becoming a breeding ground for gossip and criticism. What is said by individual members at a particular meeting is "kept" at that meeting by an agreed upon confidentiality. If someone needs to refer to a share they heard at a previous meeting, they can refer to it anonymously without identifying the speaker.

This maintains the integrity and safety of intimate public self-disclosure. Tradition Twelve is the "spiritual foundation of all our traditions" perhaps because it, like other spiritual principles, takes practice to uphold. Our ego is sometimes selective about who and what it listens to and tends to judge the rest. However, following the Twelfth Tradition as the very foundation of our Fellowship's existence assures the continuation of that existence. The benefit reaped from this is a deepening sense of humility, inevitable when we truly view each others as equal in recovery.

Anonymity is the mechanism which maximizes our focus and minimizes issues of "money, property or prestige" and anything else which would endanger "our primary purpose." An articulate member doesn't have a greater message to offer than one who is not as articulate. Speakers sometimes ask the group to listen to the message rather than the messenger. Others ask that the group identify with the feelings rather than the facts, and that they "take what they need and leave the rest." These examples of anonymity help to foster an atmosphere of openness, mutual support and community. Members can

both share freely and resonate with what is shared. What results is an almost magical spirit that can be felt by everyone in the room.

Indeed, anonymity is a powerful vehicle of transformation that allows the members of a group to experience healing through a collective consciousness. Some of us have harbored intense rage, fear and sadness in our addiction, and the opportunity to finally express and release these feelings in a meeting is the relief of a lifetime. Through the anonymity offered at meetings we find a refuge where we are neither judged nor shamed.

It is said that the steps protect us from ourselves and the traditions protect our groups from each other! "Principles above personalities" allows two members (or more) to strongly disagree at a business meeting, then hug each other and laugh about it at a meeting three hours later. When the principles of the program are valued above all else, SCA thrives. On the other hand, if a principle like service is not followed, a group may lose the continuity of trusted servants and risks dying altogether. If the Twelfth Traditions is alive and well, newcomers will feel accepted by older member who greet them and make them welcome. Anonymity teaches us to reach out and invite others to join our circle of friends for fellowship sometimes. This gesture preserves, in return, "our common welfare" and helps the Fellowship to grow.

Considering that we addicts are people who "would not normally mix," the potential for divisiveness within our groups or our fellowship as a whole is kept in check by the Twelfth Tradition. Of course, this does not mean that we will always agree, do the right thing, or even like each other. That's simply not realistic. After all, "We are not saints. The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines." This wise quote takes into account that we are human beings who make mistakes and have fairly large egos that occasionally run amok. Hence, we need to be "ever reminded" to practice Tradition Twelve, since for many of us, it does not come naturally. This gentle but firm phrase acts as the emphasis and underscoring of our never ending journey towards humility. Thus anonymity stands, as it were, as the cornerstone of SCA, the inspirational writing over the arch through which pass daily. Ultimately, we aspire to Tradition Twelve, knowing that "progress not perfection" is wall that's required of us, and all we need ever strive for as members of a profound family of service, soul and spirit.





### Doing SCA Outreach Work

David D (Milwaukee)

*The focus of this outreach work is to spread the word about SCA. It's designed to get information to therapists, clergy, lawyers, elected officials, health professionals, anyone who might be in a position to refer people to the program or to work with us in spreading the word. It is not designed to carry the message directly to someone who is suffering from sexual compulsion or addiction. Also, we want to stress that these insights and suggestions are strictly from our own experiences and opinions.*

**1. Identify who we want to spread the word to.** We determine who we want to meet with based on that person's position. The important questions for us are: is this person someone who comes in contact with people who may benefit from SCA? Or is this person someone who can be instrumental in implementing policies or programs that could include referrals to SCA?

**2. Make the first contact.** We then call the person and tell them:

- (a) That we're a member of SCA.
- (b) That SCA stands for Sexual Compulsives Anonymous and that it's a 12-step group based on the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous that is designed to help people who are suffering due to their sexual or romantic behavior. We always ask if they're familiar with SCA or with other 12-step groups. Most often they are.
- (c) That we're calling to ask if we could send them some of our literature and to talk to them a little about the program. We explain why we're calling them in particular. For instance, we say something like, "Because of your job, you come in contact with people who may often be having anonymous sex or who wish to limit their sexual behavior but can't. We think it would be valuable for you to know a little bit about SCA, how it works, and what help is available."
- (d) That we would like to send them some literature and then follow up with a person-to-person meeting.

It's been our experience that people have been open to hearing what we have to offer. They have always agreed to a meeting. However, if someone simply wanted us to send the literature and not want to meet with us, we would agree to that.

**4. Send the literature.** We generally send a copy of Q&A, the Blue Book, and a Four-Fold. We also include a cover letter thanking the person for their time and consideration and confirming our meeting. Sometimes we don't set up that meeting until after the person has had a chance to read the literature.

**5. Go to the meeting.** Often we bring another SCA member to these meetings. We find that having another recovering addict at the meeting is valuable because they may be able to relate to the person we're talking to in ways only one person can't. They may be able to explain things that only one person can't. The burden is not entirely on one person's shoulders to represent SCA. Also, if the person we're going to talk to is a man, there is

of course some risk of being triggered, and we find that having another SCA person there greatly reduces that risk. Obviously every situation is different, so we need to consider each meeting with care. It helps if we contemplate our intentions carefully. We need to be clear that we are representing SCA and that our goal is to spread the word.

At the meeting the first thing we do is talk *briefly* about our own involvement with SCA. We tell the person we're meeting with how long we've been in the program, why we came into it, and what value we've gotten out of it. One very important consideration is that we are giving up our anonymity by coming to the meeting. We let the person know that it is an anonymous program and we ask them to respect our anonymity. Obviously this is a trust issue: we have no guarantee that the person will respect our wishes. It's a risk that has to be considered seriously before setting up any meeting.

We then ask the person if they had a chance to look over the literature and if they have any questions. We usually give the person a meeting list and explain a little bit about how meetings work. We "play it by ear," supplying the person with the information that they want and can use, tailored to their specific position or job. We explore possibilities with them about spreading the word, making referrals, getting in touch with other contacts. We try to make sure that they have a general sense of how the program works and what it offers.

In terms of clarifying who this program is designed for we usually offer this "test question." "Do I engage in sexual or romantic activities that I want to stop but find myself unable to do so?" We make it clear that SCA is not about stopping sexual and romantic activities, but about having sex and romance that are healthy and integrated into our lives.

**6. Process the meeting.** We let other SCA people know that we have a meeting set up. We tell at least one other recovering addict that we're going to the meeting and we talk to them afterwards to let them know how it went. We have to remember that this outreach work is not really about "me" or even "my" recovery, but that it's about the entire fellowship, and most of all about the addicts out there who are still suffering and for whom SCA could be a life-saving gift. And yet we also know that we receive enormous personal value from making outreach calls and meetings. It's a way of reminding ourselves what this program has to offer and why we're a part of it.





# SCA INFORMATION LINES

For information on SCA meetings, or to list a new meeting, write to:

SCA International Service Organizations  
PO Box 1585  
Old Chelsea Station  
New York NY 10011

National Hot Line (800) 977-HEAL  
In New York or International, call  
(212) 606-3778

Web: <http://www.sca-recovery.org/>  
E-mail: [info@sca-recovery.org](mailto:info@sca-recovery.org)

SCA Information Lines  
(recorded message and call-back)

New York	(212) 439-1123
Los Angeles	(310) 895-8659
Chicago	(312) 935-3573
Orange County CA	(714) 664-5105
San Diego CA	(619) 685-8540
San Francisco	(415)-255-7967
Midlands/Odessa TX	(915) 560-5240
Milwaukee MI	(414) 299-0755
St Louis	(314) 253-4085
Phoenix AZ	(602) 340-3081

Spanish:

Los Angeles	(213) 368-4814
New York	(212) 388-9124

SCA is not affiliated with SLAA or SAA, but maintains a list of meetings of these fellowships in cities and countries that have no SCA meetings. Contact ISO for this information at least 2 weeks in advance. The following information is provided in the spirit of fellowship. For information on SLAA and SAA meetings in the USA and overseas write to:

SLAA PO Box 650010 West Newton MA 02165-0010 (617) 332-1845  
SAA PO Box 70949 Houston TX 7727 (713) 869-4902

SCA Scanner Subscriptions  
PO Box 1585  
Old Chelsea Station New York NY 10011

For all other SCA Literature  
SCA/ISO  
PO Box 1089 Milwaukee WI 53201-1089