



## Gentle Currents



THE NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM SEX AND LOVE ADDICTION

TampaBaySLAA.org

JUNE 2020

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# The Sponsorship Issue

### Step 6:

"Another problem was that as addicts we had become accustomed to pain. More often than not, pain was a central characteristic of our romantic involvements and even many of our sexual pursuits. Some of us even equated pain with love, so that in the absence of love, we would at least be comforted by the presence of pain. But in sobriety, having gone through surrender, withdrawal, and an inventory, what did we still have of ourselves? Couldn't we at least be left with our pain? If we let go of all of our character defects (the source of our pain), what would be left of us? Did we have no choice about what we would be at all? Such was our diseased thinking."

*SLAA, The Augustine Fellowship, page 85*

**Step 6:** We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

**Tradition 6:** An SLAA group as a whole ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SLAA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

**Sign of Recovery 6:** We become willing to ask for help, allowing ourselves to be vulnerable and learning to trust and accept others.

### SOBRIETY TIP:

Study S.L.A.A. literature to understand the process of recovery. The process of recovery begins with you but you are not alone.

S.L.A.A. members have written literature to help you get and stay sober. A great place to begin is by reading the S.L.A.A. "Newcomer's Packet" at: (<http://store.slaafws.org/prod/NCP-001.html>)

Basic Text, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (<http://store.slaafws.org/prod/BO-004.html>), so that you can learn about the program of S.L.A.A. and how it works.



**JUNE 2020**

### **What is a sponsor?**

A sponsor is a person who gives us individual support and guidance in applying the S.L.A.A. Twelve Step Program of recovery to our lives. A sponsor is neither a parent, nor a therapist, nor a confessor. Accordingly, a sponsor is a person with whom we have no ulterior motive, whom we do not pay, and from whom we seek neither absolution nor judgment. Our sponsor is, in fact, a fellow addict. As such, a sponsor does not counsel from a pretense of higher moral ground.

Sponsors are not "perfect" people working "perfect" programs. Sponsors are human, too, with struggles and confusion, just as anyone else in the Fellowship. Indeed, seeing the imperfections in our sponsors helps relieve us of our own compulsion to be perfect.

Recovery rarely is accomplished in isolation. When we incorporate the experience of others into our lives, we begin to experience a broader view of life and recovery. With our S.L.A.A. sponsor, we learn to become honest and open, asking for love, support, and guidance in our lives. Through the patience and understanding of our sponsor, our fears of condemnation and shame slowly fade. Gradually we become more able to be vulnerable and open with our sponsor. This increase in trust allows us to more fully benefit from another's help. From the attention and acceptance we receive, we begin to fold that acceptance into our inner selves, which promotes our healing. With our sponsor, we begin to address recurring problems. Our sponsor helps guide us through the rough passages many of us experience as a result of letting go of our addiction. We explore options, which had previously not occurred to us. A sponsor shares his or her own experience and feelings from having been in situations similar to ours, taking care not to give advice. By listening, a sponsor supports the sponsee without trying to "fix", and offers understanding without judgment.

### **DIVERSITY PROJECTS:** Conference Diversity Committee

- **Catalogue of Diverse Meeting Formats** containing examples of Meeting Formats submitted by real S.L.A.A. Groups including LGBTQ, Women's, Anorexia meetings
- **Collect Diverse Audio Shares:** Record and compile a variety of long audio shares in different languages, from different backgrounds and addiction patterns, for use in a future phone app
- **Collect and compile diverse written shares** for inclusion in a special Diversity-themed Journal issue
- **Anyone who wishes to work with the CDC or contact the CDC for any reason may send a message through the CDC's page at the FWS web site, [slaafws.org/committee/cdc/](http://slaafws.org/committee/cdc/), or leave a message with the FWS office. Phone: 1-210-828-7900**



JUNE 2020

S.L.A.A. ANNUAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE/MEETING



**2020** VIRTUAL  
ZOOM  
JULY 31 | **EVENT**

Registration Now Open!

Visit [slaafws.org/abminfo](http://slaafws.org/abminfo) for full details

### How is a Sponsor Selected?

A sponsor ideally has solid abstinence from his/her addictive patterns and is willing to guide the sponsee through the Twelve Steps. We look for someone who has found sobriety, freedom, or joy through the Twelve Steps and who understands the process of S.L.A.A. recovery.

Perhaps his/her qualities or character assets seem to complement our current phase of spiritual growth. A prospective sponsor's time in the Program, i.e., months or years, is only one of the criteria that can be used to select a sponsor. We attend a variety of meetings in order to identify certain individuals in the Fellowship whom we come to know and respect.

### Criteria that some of us have used to select a sponsor include:

- Will this person be honest with me and point out my areas of denial?
- Can I trust him/her with my secrets?
- Am I comfortable with this person?
- Does he/she listen attentively to me?
- Can this person discuss his/her own experience rather than give advice?
- Is he/she willing to work with my "bottom line" issues?
- Does he/she also have a sponsor?
- Does this person's level of spirituality complement mine?
- How is this person working the Steps?
- How much time can he/she give me on the phone? In person?
- Do our schedules fit in well?



**JUNE 2020**

Ideally, the prospective sponsor has a sponsor of his/her own. As in much of the recovery process, identification with others is paramount. A sponsor who has been sponsored him/herself will be more likely to relate to us. We are reassured when the person we choose for guidance is seeking guidance as well.

A sponsor should be a person we are not in danger of acting out with, or are likely to find intrigue with.

Discretion, common sense, and our Higher Power can guide us in our selection process. Once we have obtained a sponsor, we commit ourselves to maintaining regular contact with that person. The frequency of contact is determined jointly by the sponsor and sponsee – as we each become familiar with our individual needs and boundaries. Sometimes a person we ask to be our sponsor declines. Although disappointed, we need to remember that this is not a personal rejection. Rather, this person may simply be unavailable to us at this time for any number of reasons. Our Higher Power is taking an active role in forming this relationship, and requires only that we

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***A potential sexual partner as a sponsor would interfere with the primary purpose of the sponsor relationship, which is recovery through the program of S.L.A.A. Sometimes this means that the sponsor and sponsee should be of the same sex: sometimes of the opposite sex.***  
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**DOES YOUR MEETING NEED ZOOM?**  
Intergroup has purchased a Zoom Account!

To get your Zoom Meeting started, please contact TampaBay SLAA Intergroup by Email: [Help@tampabayslaa.org](mailto:Help@tampabayslaa.org)

Download Zoom MOBILE APP from APP Store (<https://zoom.us/download>).

**ZOOM TIPS:**

- \* Install the Zoom App on your Computer or Phone (free)
- \* Click “Join a Meeting”
- \* Enter MEETING ID
- \* To JOIN by PHONE only, dial the Meeting Number. Enter Meeting ID# when prompted

Tradition 1 – Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon S.L.A.A. unity.

Tradition 4 – Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or S.L.A.A. as a whole.

Tradition 5 – Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the sex and love addict who still suffers.

Sign of Recovery #4 – We learn to avoid situations that put us at risk physically, morally, psychologically or spiritually.