



Gentle Currents



THE NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM SEX AND LOVE ADDICTION

JANUARY 2023

TampaBaySLAA.org

Submissions: TBINLEditor@gmail.com

SLAA Helpline (727) 896-SLAA

Tampa Bay Intergroup

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THE JOURNAL



on the slaafws.org website

Step 1: We admitted we were powerless over sex and love addiction - that our lives had become unmanageable.

Tradition 1: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SLAA unity.

Sign of Recovery 1: We seek to develop a daily relationship with a Higher Power, knowing that we are not alone in our efforts to heal ourselves from our addiction.

Concept 1: Ultimate responsibility and authority for S.L.A.A. world services always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

*Thank you, God, for
what you've given me*

*—for what you've taken
away*

*—And what you've
left behind.*

SLAA, Basic Text pg 195

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As I was working the Steps with my sponsor, I shared my lack of faith that Steps Two and Three would work. I explained that I had worked those Steps in another program years before but I said, "Look where I'm at today," implying that they hadn't worked then, in spite of continuous sobriety in the other program. She simply said, "Well, maybe you haven't hurt enough." That was the punch in the gut I needed because I realized that I may end up having more pain if I didn't work those Steps and that was enough to move me forward. — Chris D.

The Journal, Issue #196

Nothing less than going through the death of all that I had been in the world up to that time and of experiencing the dissolution of my former self – seemed required... I could have no guarantees for the specific results. I would have to let it take me where it would.

SLAA, Basic Text, pg. 23.

Early in SLAA, we coined an expression, "*in order to maintain sobriety, we have the right to be a jerk.*" Self-disclosure shattered, romantic, and sexual illusions, was as well, a continuing affirmation of our new life direction. In spite of embarrassment and self-consciousness, this affirmation resulted in more positive feelings for ourselves.

SLAA, Basic Text, pg 116

A graphic for a new SLAA meeting. The background is light blue with white snowflakes. The word "NEW" is written in a blue, slanted font at the top left. Below it, "SLAA MEETING" is written in large, bold, blue capital letters. At the bottom, there is a white box containing the address: "HERNANDO COUNTY A CLUB 18922 TITUS RD, HUDSON, FL 34667". Below the box, the meeting time is listed as "THURSDAYS 5 PM" and the phone number is "A CLUB Phone: 727-861-7608". At the very bottom, it says "IN-PERSON MEETING AT BACK ROOM OF THE A CLUB".

NEW
SLAA
MEETING

HERNANDO COUNTY A CLUB
18922 TITUS RD, HUDSON, FL 34667

THURSDAYS 5 PM A CLUB Phone:
727-861-7608

IN-PERSON MEETING AT
BACK ROOM OF THE A CLUB

We will do our best to keep this List updated to reflect changes in SLAA In-Person locations or Online meetings. Please contact our Helpline to notify us of any Meeting Changes.

CLICK HERE FOR OUR CURRENT MEETING LIST: (it's updating regularly)

<https://tampabayslaa.org/find-a-meeting/>

IN NEED OF A PHONE MEETING? CLICK HERE: <https://slaafws.org/telephonemeetings>

EMAIL: Help@tampabayslaa.org

PHONE: (727) 896-7522 (Helpline)



JANUARY 2023

Withdrawal

Another defense against these unnerving onslaughts, was sustaining awareness by starting, and keeping a list of very short observations of exactly how we were feeling in withdrawal. Many of us didn't wait until being tested to start keeping a list like this: it could have been too late by then in our list, we did not edit out any negative sentiments. Despite the pains of withdrawal, the positive results of early sobriety were very evident to those of us, who had truly encountered terror well, in the active phase of the illness. Even the difficult feelings of early withdrawal, were better than the alternative. So, we "listed" away! There was no such thing as a feeling or an observation that was not germane.

Here is a small sample of some of the observations we came up with. Perhaps some of them may apply to you too:

"I'm feeling the acute pain of withdrawal and loss today, but I am not feeling self-disgusted."

"... anxiety and neediness, clawing at my guts..."

"Sex and love addiction: I don't have it; I am it."

"Seeing a squirrel, eating a nut, so systematically devouring it layer by layer, the way I felt devoured by X."

"Three hours today without thinking of X. Can I believe it?"

"Chance encounter, that hunger calling me back. How I crave it."

"Maybe X is healthy and I am the sick one. Regardless, in combination we are sick."

In addition to daily prayer and SLAA related activities, maintaining such a list was a major bulwark against acting out on the addiction. Whenever particularly disconcerting possibilities presented themselves, every item was a feeling we had had about our sex and love, addiction, and withdrawal, and in writing them down, we crystallized them – made them stand still.

SLAA Basic Text, pg 111-112

The most pertinent thing my sponsor shared with me when we began working together was something to the effect of "try it and see how it goes." It had a similar sentiment as "maybe you need to suffer more, and that's fine. That's where you are." Indeed, I've "tried it" on many occasions since then, taking full responsibility that any residual pain, any sacrifice or compromise of my fullest facilities, any handicap, would be mine to own and mine to learn from. He didn't judge me. He assessed the current circumstances, and for that I am grateful for his grounded-ness and handling of my crisis... —

Anonymous The Journal, Issue #196

January 3

IDENTIFICATION

I spent much time comparing rather than identifying. But then I began to get in touch with my emotions and feelings. Listening to others, share their experiences brought up many feelings and memories. I could no longer avoid them through acting out... I found a tremendous amount of support in the fellowship, from people who were going through the same pain, and from those who had gone through the same feelings. SLAA, Basic Text, pg. 175

A member of SLAA regularly advises me to get out of judgment, and to identify with peoples shares it can be transporting and transformative. Identifying with people's shares has brought me into contact with my deepest inner self. Often, the people I would judge, or wouldn't relate to ended up giving me the skills. I needed to look at the parts of myself that I've been avoiding. Once I heard an SLAA member share that he wished he could tell his grown children he was sorry for not being present. I've waited my whole life for my dad to say these very words to me. It felt like it was my dad talking directly to me and a shiver ran down my spine. It was so healing. I have heard many times from other members that they have had similar experiences. When I concentrate on the feelings being shared, I usually realize that I felt that way before. I look for the similarities and forget about the differences. I find intimacy in the rooms when I do this. We are all fighting a battle together.

I identify with others today, knowing that I battle this disease with the support of others.

A State of Grace, Daily Meditations, pg. 3

From the standpoint of "anything goes, who cares?" loss of control didn't seem so bad. In fact, the addiction itself often held us spellbound, convinced that it was what we wanted. Many of us were so numbed that only a blast of physical and emotional intensity from a sexual or romantic "hit" could penetrate and animate our progressively deadened, dissipated beings. Like a cattle prod jabbed into someone who is exhausted, and dazed, an addictive hit, jolted us into a temporary illusion that we were alive, and really living. It was as though we had a voice in our heads, which said, "if you get more, then everything will fall into place"

If our addiction took the form of dependency on one person, again, loss of control, did not always seem so bad. We could tell ourselves that our bondage was really the sign of a "match made in heaven," that, since we would sacrifice anything for this love, we would surely be rewarded for unselfishness. Alone, life was drab and empty; if we could only become more, a part of our lover, become ONE, everything will be all right.

Yet a vague, but persistent nagging within our deepest self continued to bear witness, that all was not well. Despite all the cultural and rational camouflage, behind which our addiction could hide, it was impossible, short of suicide, to kill that innermost voice that whispered to us of life's opportunities for growth and wholeness, that we were helplessly letting slip by. The guilt of prior deeds and passions, or missed opportunities, gave way to the deepest, most pervasive guilt of all: that of having left life unlived, of having turned our backs on the possibility of fulfilling a meaningful destiny.

SLAA, Basic Text, pg 69-70