

Guide to Steps One to Three

Step One: “We admitted we were powerless over sex and love addiction — that our lives had become unmanageable.”

Step Two: “Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.”

Step Three: “Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.”

To start working the Steps with a sponsor, we need a copy of *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book, and A.A.'s *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. As with the seven-day identification questions to determine our bottom-line behaviors, we answer a question per day and read it to our sponsor. At the end of the thirty days, we are taken through a Step One to Three ceremony by our sponsor. We are then “stepped up” by our sponsor in a HOW meeting to celebrate the completion of Steps One to Three. Remembering the old-timer saying, “Service is sobering”, after the Step Three Ceremony we start sponsoring fellow members of S.L.A.A. up to Step Three, if we feel ready to do so.

If we are sponsoring someone through Steps One to Three and are unavailable on a particular day, it is our responsibility to let them know that they can share their writing in an outreach call with another experienced fellow member, arrange a different time, an email exchange, or read the answer in a voice message. If, for some reason, we are unavailable for a longer period of time, it is our responsibility to find another temporary sponsor for our sponsee. Sometimes this is our own sponsor.

We also let our sponsee know that if they consistently fall short of agreed commitments without good reason, we may decide to no longer sponsor them. An example might be failing to call us at the agreed time for three consecutive days without adequate explanation.

We encourage our sponsees to share in the prioritised share portion of S.L.A.A. HOW meetings after fourteen days of continuous bottom-line sobriety (or as the meeting allows, as some meetings have different policies). This is to ensure the meeting carries a message of recovery.

If we slip while we are sponsoring, we notify our own sponsor and all our sponsees, giving them the option to continue with us or not. We do not stand up as a sponsor or accept new sponsees until the time agreed upon with our sponsor. All of the above is designed to heal and to support us whilst we regain sobriety.

The First Thirty Questions

In working this guide with our sponsor, we find that no sheet of paper or list of ideas is the be-all and end-all for everyone’s recovery. We designed these questions to guide us through the first three Steps. There are no right or wrong answers. Many who have worked the HOW concept find that it is helpful to keep it in the present by focusing only on the question of the day and the Step being worked on, and by not skipping ahead to the next questions and Steps.

In order to answer these thirty questions, we need the following additional reading material: Bill W's, "This Matter of Honesty" article (see References section):

1. Read, "The Doctor's Opinion" in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book (pp. xxv-xxxii in the printed fourth edition). Write a history of your sex and love addiction, beginning with the first time you can remember such things being an issue. In your writing, discuss how many partners you have had (or not had in the case of anorexia), what medical or psychological attention you have sought for the problem, and what attempts you have made at controlling your behavior.
2. Read the section, "Step One" in *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text, chapter 4. In your written answer, discuss and reflect upon the effect sex and love addiction and anorexia have had on you over the years. Write on whether you truly see yourself as a sex and love addict.
3. Re-read the chapter, "Step One" in *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text. In your written answer, discuss and reflect upon the following ideas found in Step One: the progressive nature of our disease and the need for unconditional surrender.
4. In your written answer, discuss and reflect on the fatal nature of our disease as described in the final paragraph of the chapter, "Step One", in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, starting, "Under the lash of alcoholism, we are driven to A.A..." Focus on how the disease has diminished your life.
5. Read Chapter 2, "There is a Solution", in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book. In your written answer, discuss and reflect upon the idea that your discipline or lack of it has played an important part in your life.
6. Read Chapter 3, "More about Alcoholism", in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book. In your written answer, discuss and reflect on this chapter.
7. Read Bill W.'s, "This Matter of Honesty" article. In your written answer, discuss the idea that deception of others is nearly always rooted in deception of ourselves. Write about how this relates to your sexual relationship history and about what you have done in the past, due to sex and love addiction, that reaffirms this idea?
8. Re-read the "Step One" in Chapter 4 of *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text. Underline or take note of words and passages that are meaningful to you. In your written answer, discuss why they are important? Also, discuss and reflect on what a complete understanding of Step One can do for you.
9. Read "Step Two" from Chapter 4 in *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text. Write on why it is necessary to take Step One before taking Step Two?
10. In your written answer, discuss and reflect upon the effectiveness of the S.L.A.A. program in your personal experience and from what you have observed in others so far. Also discuss whether what you have experienced could have emanated solely from you? If so, why had it not happened before?

11. Read Chapter 4, “We Agnostics”, in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book. Discuss and reflect upon the concepts of honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness. How are these tools of growth in the S.L.A.A. HOW approach?
12. In your written answer, discuss and reflect upon the concept of insanity as it applies to you in S.L.A.A.
13. Read the chapter, “Step Two” in *A.A. Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. In your written answer, consider how you have substituted your addiction for your Higher Power in the past and whether you still do this.
14. In your written answer, discuss and reflect upon the following concepts in Step Two: belief means reliance, not defiance, and defiance is an outstanding characteristic of every sex and love addict. Refer to the chapter, “Step Two” in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, starting at paragraph 16 (“When we encountered A.A...”) (page 31 in the printed edition).
15. Re-read “Step Two” S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text, and the chapter, “Step Two” in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. In your written answer, discuss and reflect upon your childhood exposure to any religious concept. On a two-columned balance sheet, list your feelings as they relate to your early religious experiences. List on one side your negative feelings, and on the other side your positive feelings. Write on what conclusion you reach when you reflect on the balance sheet.
16. Read “Step Three” from Chapter 4 in *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text. Create another balance sheet. On one side list all the reasons you can for believing in God. On the other side list all the reasons for disbelieving. Write about the conclusions you reach when you reflect on the balance sheet.
17. Read the chapter, “Step Three” in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (pp. 34-41 in the printed edition). In your written answer, discuss and reflect upon the following quote, “Faith alone can avail us nothing.”
18. Read Chapter 5, “How it Works”, in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book. Write on dependence as you understand it. Answer the question, *How can dependence lead to greater independence?* Refer to paragraph 6 (“Let’s examine for a moment...”) of the chapter, “Step Three” in *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (page 36 in the printed edition).
19. Read Chapter 2, “There is a Solution”, in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book . Write on the following questions: *Are you a grateful sex and love addict? If so, why?*
20. Re-read “Step Three” in Chapter 4 of *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text. In your written answer, reflect upon the following idea: *I am responsible for only one person's actions.* Whose and why?
21. Read Chapter 3, “More about Alcoholism”, in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book (pp. 30-43 in the printed fourth edition). In your writing, discuss and reflect upon the idea that sobriety is the most important thing without exception.

22. In your writing, discuss and reflect on the idea of “calling a HALT” (hungry, angry, lonely or tired), pausing and taking stock when your life becomes unmanageable.
23. Read Chapter 11, “A Vision For You”, in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.’s Big Book . Discuss and reflect upon the idea that the more you give the more you shall receive.
24. Read Chapter 6, “Into Action”, in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book. S.L.A.A. teaches us a sense of dignity. Write about how you have used your new-found dignity in your relationship with yourself, your family, and your friends?
25. Read Chapter 7, “Working with Others”, in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book . Answer the questions, *What is the importance of giving service in S.L.A.A. ? Why are meetings important? How are they both part of your road to recovery?*
26. Answer the questions, *What is the importance of the telephone in S.L.A.A. ? Why is anonymity important? How are they linked?*
27. In your written answer, discuss and reflect on reading and writing as a tool of the program. Write on why it is essential to your recovery.
28. Read Appendix II, “Spiritual Experience”, in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, A.A.'s Big Book. In your answer, discuss and reflect upon the concept that spiritual growth is a daily commitment. How can you grow daily?
29. Re-read “Step Three”, in S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text. Write on the idea that, having taken Steps One and Two, the degree of your success in the whole program depends on how sincerely you surrender in accordance with Step Three.
30. In the morning, re-read “Step One”, in *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, S.L.A.A.'s Basic Text. Review your two balance sheets from questions 15 and 16. Write about whether the act of surrender in Step Three brings you peace. And, if not, do you think there is anything you are holding on to that you need to let go of in order to reach such acceptance? Do you think this is something you should do? Are you doing it willingly? After you have written answers to these questions, make a sincere commitment to turn your will and your life over to the care of your Higher Power. Finally, discuss and reflect on your own personal surrender in writing.