

SLAA HOW Format

Step and Sponsorship Guide

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More resources: <https://augustinerecovery.org/sponsorship/>

AN INTRODUCTION FOR THE NEWCOMER

Welcome! This is the beginning of your journey in SLAA recovery. What is laid out in this guide is everything you need to work a programme with a sponsor and to become a sponsor yourself, once you are ready. This guide will take you through all of the twelve steps and includes guides and sets of questions for each of the steps. Starting out in recovery can be overwhelming. Those of us who have worked the twelve steps in SLAA using this approach have found that a structured approach is what has helped us to keep our recovery in the moment and work the programme one day at a time.

We strongly suggest that you work through this guide one question at a time, allowing your answers to be as current as possible.

How it Works

It is suggested that you attend at least six meetings to decide if this programme is for you. If you are wondering if the HOW approach is for you, it is a good idea to attend meetings that are run using a HOW format. At these meetings, the requirements and tools of the approach are read out and people with more than 14 days of continuous sobriety share first. This is a great opportunity for the newcomer to listen to others' experiences and recovery and to find a sponsor. It is also a good idea to attend other types of meetings to decide which approach best suits you.

The suggested requirements of working the twelve steps of SLAA using the HOW approach are this:

- a. We attend at least three meetings per week.
- b. We make three outreach calls per day, plus our calls to our sponsor.
- c. We work the steps with a sponsor.
- d. We maintain our bottom-line sobriety.

Finding a Sponsor

To start working the steps you will need to find a sponsor who has already finished at least Step Three of the programme. The best way to do this is to as many meetings as possible. This may be meetings that use a HOW approach or not. There are many meetings available online and via Skype or Zoom, if you are not able to attend face to face meetings. It is suggested that you use this workbook with a Sponsor who has worked through it themselves and understand how it works and can share their experiences of it with you.

The best piece of advice is to keep asking until you find one. You are worth it – so work it, and ask.

Within the HOW approach, different sponsors work the programme in different ways, so it is important to talk to them about what their expectations are before you start working together to see that they are a good fit for you. This can be from basic issues such as time availability, to other issues. For example, some sponsors suggest set bottom lines in addition to ones set by the Sponsee, others let the Sponsee set their own bottom lines. Ultimately your sponsor is there to listen, guide and encourage you and to share their experience, strength and hope with you. They will also need to challenge you sometimes. It may be better in the early stages to find a good sponsor that you can work with rather than wait for the perfect sponsor. A sponsor can only sponsor up to the level they have completed in their own program and must have at least 30 days of back-to-back sobriety.

An Overview of the Steps – What to Expect

Setting Bottom Lines

Working with a sponsor, sponsees answer one question per day for 7 days and read it to their sponsor. Sponsor and sponsee then agree bottom line behaviours and the first day of sobriety is set from this day.

Steps 1-3

- To start working the steps with a sponsor, you will need a copy of the **SLAA Basic Text**, the **AA Big Book** and the **AA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions**.
- As with bottom lines, the sponsee answers a question per day and reads it to their sponsor.
- At the end of the 30 days, the sponsor takes the sponsee through a stepping up ceremony and the sponsee is stepped up at a meeting to celebrate this milestone.
- If the sponsee breaks a bottom-line behaviour during this time, they will answer ‘slip’ questions — Further Thoughts on Sobriety — for the same number of days that they have been working the steps. That is, if a sponsee is on day 21 of the 30 questions they will answer 21 further thoughts on sobriety questions and read their answers to their sponsor each day. This is to support the sponsee in becoming sober again before continuing their step work.
- On completion of Step Three, sponsees can now start sponsoring fellow Sex and Love addicts to Step 3 if they feel ready to do so. This level of sponsorship is also called an **ID Sponsor**.

Step 4

- Some people choose to speak to their sponsors less frequently at this stage while others continue to speak each day.
- Sponsor and sponsee will usually review bottom lines at this stage.
- From this step onwards, any relapse or breaking of bottom lines is followed by 30 daily sobriety questions.
- During Step Four, the sponsee continues to answer questions and also completes the Step Four Inventory.
- It is suggested this step is completed within one to two months, but this can be decided between sponsor and sponsee.

Step 5

- Step Five is when the sponsee reads the sponsor their Step 4 Inventory.
- This can be done after the whole inventory has been completed or bit by bit as it is being written.
- On completing Step 5, the sponsor can step up the sponsee at a meeting.
- On completion, the sponsee can now sponsor up to Step 5, or an **Inventory Sponsor**.

Steps 6 and 7

- Sponsees continue to answer step questions and read them to their sponsor.
- On completion, a sponsee can sponsor to Step 7.

Step 8

- Sponsee continues to work through questions with their Sponsor.
- The sponsee makes an amends list.
- On completion, a sponsee can sponsor to Step 8.

Step 9

- Sponsee continues to work through questions with their sponsor.
- Sponsee starts to make amends to those on their list.
- On completion, a sponsee can sponsor to Step 9.

Step 10

- Sponsee continues to answer questions and reads them to their sponsor.
- Sponsee starts completing a daily Step 10 inventory.
- Completing a daily inventory for 30 days is recommended.
- On completion, a sponsee can sponsor to Step 10.

Step 11

- Sponsee continues to answer questions and reads them to their sponsor.
- Developing a pattern of daily meditation or prayer that helps you.
- Spending around a month in this step is recommended.
- On completion of each step, sponsee can sponsor to Step 11.

Step 12

- Sponsee continues to answer questions and reads them to their sponsor.
- Beginning to be more involved in service and outreach to other members.
- Spending around a month in this step is recommended.
- On completion of each step, sponsee becomes a Step 12 Sponsor (or **Step Sponsor**).

SPONSORING

INTRODUCTION

A sponsor is someone who provides support and guidance in working through the Twelve Step programme with another member of the Fellowship. A SLAA HOW sponsor is someone who has worked or is working the SLAA HOW approach and who can guide fellow sex and love addicts through that programme.

TYPES OF SLAA HOW SPONSOR & REQUIREMENTS

IDENTIFICATION (STEP THREE) SPONSOR

An ID (Step Three) sponsor is someone who can sponsor others through the first 30 days SLAA HOW questions: i.e.. Steps 1, 2 and 3. To qualify as a Step Three sponsor you must have worked the HOW program with a SLAA HOW sponsor and have completed Step Three, answered the 30 questions, have at least 30 days of back-to-back sobriety and have gone through the Step Three ceremony.

INVENTORY (STEP FIVE) SPONSOR

An Inventory (Step Five) sponsor is someone who can sponsor others through Steps 4 and 5 of the SLAA HOW program. To qualify as an Inventory/(Step 5) sponsor in SLAA HOW you must already be a Step Three sponsor, have completed steps 4 and 5 of the SLAA HOW programme and have at least 30 days of back-to-back sobriety.

STEP SPONSOR

A Step sponsor is someone who can sponsor others through Steps 6 to 12 in SLAA HOW To qualify as a Step sponsor in HOW, you must already be a Step Three programme and Inventory (Step Five) sponsor, have completed or be working through Steps 6 through 12 in SLAA HOW and have at least 30 days of back-to-back sobriety. A sponsor can only sponsor up to the level they have completed in their own program. So, if you have completed Step 8 and are working on step 9, you can only sponsor up to and including Step 8.

MAINTENANCE SPONSOR

A Maintenance sponsor is someone who can sponsor those who have completed the 12 steps in SLAA HOW To qualify as a HOW Maintenance sponsor, you must be a Step sponsor, have completed all twelve steps in SLAA HOW and the seventy HOW Maintenance Questions and have ninety days of back-to-back HOW sobriety. Those members who reach their goal and finish their questions at the same time may qualify for a Step and/or Maintenance sponsor simultaneously.

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR SPONSORS

Before deciding whether you are ready for sponsorship, it is recommended that you read the pamphlet entitled 'Sponsorship, a Return from Isolation.' This is primarily a guide for those seeking sponsors but will help you too. You should also consult with your own sponsor and seek guidance from your Higher Power.

Remember, as a sponsor:

- **You are not a parent, a therapist, an instructor or a confessor.** A sponsor is an advisor that recommends.
- **Share your experience, strength and hope.** Share what has worked for you. Try not to say things like "What we do in SLAA is..." or "What you should do..", rather try to say things like "What I did was... ..and this worked for me." You don't have to convince the sponsee of anything. Whether they know it yet or not they have their Higher Power guiding them. The program and their Higher Power will take care of them in their own timescale. You don't need to worry about them, merely keep them and their struggles in mind.
- **Share your program.** As much as possible outreach calls should focus around the program, your experience of the program and program literature.
- **Share your struggle.** Avoid traps of ego, or dependence and/or reliance. Ensure your sponsee and yourself know you are only an instrument of your Higher Power.
- **Share your compassion without judgment or criticism.** When the sponsee says they are struggling, or feeling the pain withdrawal, or says that they have slipped express your compassion. Try to say things like "That sounds painful..." or "I remember how it felt when I was in withdrawal..." Try not to judge what the sponsee says or does by commenting "That's good" or "That's bad." Rather acknowledge what they have shared with you. Let them know you have heard them.
- **Share your attitude.** Convey the importance of service and giving to others. Share the concept of 'Just for Today' as a means of survival.
- **Avoid being drawn into philosophical arguments, discussion, or gossip.** If you feel you are going beyond your remit as a SLAA sponsor – try to stop yourself. Use gentle phrases such as "I don't know about that..." or "If it were me, I would consult my Higher Power" etc.
- **Share your honesty.** If you should slip or act out tell your sponsee — they have a right to know. Don't shame or isolate yourself from your sponsee. Pick yourself up and carry on. Show them how it's done and that you are not 'super-human'.
- **Share your discipline.** Your discipline is all the newcomer may experience as discipline. The discipline of the SLAA HOW program is not however about being harsh or lacking compassion.

GUIDANCE FOR STEP THREE SPONSORS

The first part of the SLAA HOW approach is split into the initial seven day “identification” period followed by 30 days during which the sponsee works through daily questions designed to work through Steps one, two and three. In 2019, an alternative, slower, more structured approach was finally approved – the Step Workbook. This is available for download to complement or replace the 30-question approach provided below.

A sponsee needs to have clearly defined their bottom-lines in the seven-day identification period, to have learnt how to set and keep within healthy boundaries and to understand what ‘slips’ and ‘acting out’ are.

Set up a time for your sponsee to telephone each day and keep to that time as far as possible. Explain the requirements for the first 37 days. That is:

- Three SLAA meetings a week
- Sobriety from defined bottom-line behaviours
- Three outreach calls a day and a call to the sponsor
- Written answers to questions

Let your sponsee know that if you are unavailable for some reason and that they can share their writing in an outreach call with another fellow.

Let your sponsee know that if they consistently fail to meet these boundaries without good reason, for example not calling you at the agreed time for three consecutive days without good reason, you may decide to no longer to sponsor them.

If you cannot be available for a daily call, it is your responsibility to arrange a suitable time or to arrange for the newcomer to call another sponsor when you are out of town or not available.

A sponsee who has a slip during their first 30 days will stop the first thirty questions, answer a slip question a day for each day of their sobriety, then go back to the question previously answered before the slip. For example, if a sponsee has a slip on the 20th question then a slip question a day will be given until 30 days of sobriety is reached. Thereafter, the sponsee will resume with the 21st question.

Sponsors should encourage sponsees to share at meetings after 14 days of sobriety. Sponsors that have a slip must notify their sponsor and all sponsees, answer questions as assigned by their sponsor for thirty days and help the sponsees find another sponsor if the sponsee wishes to change. During this time, the sponsor should not stand up as a sponsor or accept new sponsees until 30 days of sobriety is achieved. Sponsors that have a slip may share after 7 days of sobriety. All of the above is designed to heal.

STEPPING UP SPONSEE AT MEETINGS

After the stepping up ceremony a sponsee is stepped up at a SLAA HOW meeting on completion of Step 3, 5 and 12. The purpose of the ceremony is so the group can join with sponsor and sponsee to celebrate another example of the miracles that abound in SLAA. The sponsor is asked to introduce a newcomer who has 30 days of continuous back-to-back abstinence, has taken the first three steps and is ready to become a sponsor. Sponsor and sponsee share for two minutes each.

SEVEN DAY IDENTIFICATION

DEFINING YOUR BOTTOM LINES

- 01 What is sex and love addiction? Read the twelve characteristics of sex and love addiction. Underline any words or concepts you are unfamiliar with and discuss them with your sponsor. Underline in another colour passages that you identify with or that remind you of your own behaviour. Discuss these on your daily outreach calls and also with your sponsor.
- 02 Read Step 1 from the SLAA Basic Text (pp.68-70). Do you identify as a sex addict, a love addict, an anorexic or all of these? Referring to examples from your life, discuss how you have acted out (or in) in these areas in the past.
- 03 Read the '40 Questions for Self-Diagnosis.' Tick the behaviours you most identify with. Choose the 10 most relevant and write a few sentences on each using specific examples from your past.
- 04 Read the SLAA literature on *Anorexia* as it relates to SLAA (sexual, social and emotional anorexia). Do you relate to any of these behaviours? Discuss.
- 05 Read 'The Withdrawal Experience' in the SLAA Basic Text and also the 'Withdrawal' pamphlet. Have you ever experienced withdrawal in relation to sex and love/relationships? (e.g. when a relationship has ended or was terminated).
- 06 Read what you can on the topic 'Is it Love or is it Addiction?' (The free SLAA brochure "Addicted to Sex? Addicted to Love?" or the John Bradshaw's article is a good beginning.) Note anything that is meaningful to you. Discuss and reflect on what you have learnt. Read 'What is Acting Out?' and 'What are Slips?' from the 'Questions Beginners Ask' pamphlet. Have you tried to control your compulsive behaviour in the past? How have you 'slipped' and 'acted out' after decisions to behave differently?
- 07 Read the pamphlets 'Setting Bottom Lines' and 'Setting Top Lines.' Write a list of the obvious behaviours that you would consider necessary to bottom-line or top-line. Write a list of more subtle behaviours that you suspect may cause you trouble. Discuss these with your sponsor to arrive at bottom-line and/or top line behaviours for the 30-day Step 1, 2 and 3 period. Absolute honesty is necessary to combat Sex and Love Addiction.

STEPS 1-3

FIRST THIRTY QUESTIONS FOR NEWCOMERS

This is a guide. No sheet of paper or list of ideas is the 'be all and end all' for everyone's recovery. These questions have been designed to guide sponsees through the first three Steps. There are no right or wrong answers.

- 01 Read the "Doctor's Opinion" in the AA 'Big Book.' Write a history of your sex and love addiction beginning with the first time you can remember related events. Discuss how many partners you have had, what medical/psychological attention you have sought for the problem and your attempts at controlling your behaviour.
- 02 Read Step 1 in the SLAA Basic Text. Discuss and reflect upon the effect sex and love addiction has had upon you over the years. Do you truly see yourself as a sex and love addict?
- 03 Reread Step 1 in the SLAA Basic Text. Discuss and reflect upon the following ideas found in Step 1:
 - a. Critical nature of our disease.
 - b. Progressive nature of our disease.
 - c. The need not to push someone until they are ready.
- 04 Discuss and reflect upon the fatal nature of our disease as seen on page 24 paragraph 2 in the AA 12 & 12. In this discussion, reflect on how at the very least the disease has diminished (reduced) your life.
- 05 Read Chapter 2 in the AA *Big Book* ("There is a Solution"). Discuss and reflect upon the ideas that your discipline or lack of it has played an important part in your life.
- 06 Read Chapter 3 in the AA *Big Book* ("More About Alcoholism"). Discuss and reflect on this chapter.
- 07 Discuss the following ideas:
 - a. The deception of others is nearly always rooted in the deception of ourselves.
 - b. How does this relate to your sexual/relationship history?
 - c. What have we done in the past due to sex and love addiction that reaffirms this idea?
- 08 Reread Step 1. Discuss and reflect upon what the knowledge of Step 1 can do for you. During your reading underline and note words and passages that are meaningful to you. Why are they important?
- 09 Read Step 2 in the AA 12 & 12. How is taking of Step 1 a necessity before taking Step 2?
- 10 Discuss and reflect upon the effectiveness of HOW from your personal experience and from what you have observed in others. Could what you have experienced have come solely from you? If so, why had it not happened before?
- 11 Read Chapter 4 in the AA *Big Book*. Discuss and reflect upon the concepts of Honesty, Open-mindedness, and Willingness. How are these tools of growth in the program?
- 12 Discuss and reflect upon the concept of insanity as it applies to us in SLAA.
- 13 Discuss and reflect upon how we use the substitution method of accepting the presence of a Higher Power. How have you looked for substitutes all of your life? Are you still looking?
- 14 Discuss and reflect upon the following concepts available in Step 2:
 - a. Belief means reliance, not defiance.
 - b. Defiance is an outstanding characteristic of every sex and love addict. Refer to page 31 in the AA 12 & 12.

- 15 Reread Step 2. Discuss and reflect upon your childhood exposure to any religious concept. On a two columned balance sheet list on one side your negative feelings and on the other side your positive feelings as they relate to early religious experiences. What conclusion do you reach when you reflect on the balance sheet?
- 16 Read Step 3. 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.
- 17 Reread Step 3. Discuss and reflect from the following quote: “Faith alone can avail us nothing.”
- 18 Read Chapter 5 in the AA *Big Book* (“How It Works”). Write on dependence as you understand it in HOW. How can dependence lead to greater independence?
- 19 Are you a “grateful sex and love addict”? Why are you grateful?
- 20 Reread Step 3. “I am responsible for only one person’s actions.” Whose and why?
- 21 Discuss and reflect upon the idea that “bottom-line sobriety is the most important thing in my life without exception”.
- 22 Do not allow yourself to get Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired. Discuss the idea of calling a HALT when your life gets unmanageable.
- 23 Read “A Vision For You” in the AA *Big Book*. Discuss and reflect upon the idea “the more you give the more you shall receive”.
- 24 HOW teaches us a sense of dignity. How have I utilised my new-found dignity in relationship to myself, my family, and my friends?
- 25 What is the importance of giving service in HOW? What is the importance of meetings? How are they both part of my road to recovery? – read *HOW concept and tools*
- 26 What is the importance of the telephone in HOW? What is the importance of anonymity? How are they both intertwined?
- 27 Discuss and reflect on reading and writing as a tool of the program. Why is it essential to my recovery?
- 28 Read pages 569-570 (Appendices II in abridged *small Big Book*) in the AA *Big Book* (“Spiritual Experience”). Discuss and reflect upon the following:
 - a. Spiritual growth is a daily commitment.
 - b. How can I grow daily?
- 29 Reread Step 3. Write on the idea that having taken Steps 1 and 2 the degree of our success in the whole program depends on how far we take Step 3.
- 30 Reread Step 1 in the morning. Review your two balance sheets from 15 and 16. Make a sincere commitment to your Higher Power to turn your will and your life over to Their care. Then write on the idea that submission is not the same as surrender. Discuss the difference. Discuss and reflect on your own personal surrender.

See separate document for Step 3 Ceremony.

The Slip Questions

- 01 Using a dictionary write down the definitions for each of the following words: life, spirit, spiritual, God, breathe, breathing, meditation, universe, peace, serenity, posture, discipline, prayer, love, hate, anger, sex, pride, resentment, jealousy, read, write, conscious mind, subconscious mind, hearing, speaking, cure, recover.
- 02 Why is it important that I think of myself first?
- 03 Write about the Serenity Prayer. What does it mean to you and how can it help you in your life?
- 04 Discuss the following slogans used in Fellowships: 'Live and Let Live', 'Easy Does it', 'But for the Grace of God Go I', 'Let Go and Let God', 'One Step at a Time'.
- 05 Write on the concept of 'Just for Today'.
- 06 Discuss the amount of time you spend or have spent each day compulsively thinking about sex and relationships. What could you do better with this time?
- 07 List the things you want out of life. How many of these things are really important? Why?
- 08 What about your life would you like to change? How would you change it?
- 09 Count your blessings.
- 10 What would you lose by giving up the SLAA fellowship?
- 11 What do you fear? How many of these things are beyond your control?
- 12 Because you have a failure, you are not a failure. Write about this.
- 13 Discuss and reflect on the meaning of love.
- 14 Reverse a negative thought and write on it.
- 15 Discuss and reflect upon the importance of growing up.
- 16 By acting out to punish another, how am I only hurting myself?
- 17 Why don't I want to get well?
- 18 Read the AA 'Twelve and Twelve' from page 102-104. Discuss and reflect upon the need for meditation.
- 19 Has the striving or drive for perfection been a realistic goal in my life? How has this helped or hindered me?
- 20 Discuss the dangers of your obsession as you see them mental, physical and spiritual.
- 21 Can I afford to have my pre-programme insanity back?
- 22 In what ways do I look for joy in my life?
- 23 Do I really listen when people talk to me? In what ways?
- 24 "HALTS" stands for hungry, angry, lonely, tired, stressed. Why is it important to call a halt when we are hungry, angry, lonely, tired or stressed?
- 25 Discuss and reflect upon the need for self-worth. List your good points.
- 26 What were my expectations yesterday? Am I realistic about them today?
- 27 How do others in the SLAA fellowship act as your mirror?
- 28 Choose a person to whom you should make amends. How did this amends make you feel?

- 29 Open the SLAA Basic Text at random. What does it say? How does it relate to your life today?
- 30 Think of a friend or a fellow you haven't seen in a while. Find their phone number and give them a call. Reflect and write on reaching out.
- 31 We can't love others until we love ourselves. How does this relate to our feelings today? Yesterday?
- 32 Boredom is a bar against learning. Discuss and reflect upon the idea that boredom is part of our disease.
- 33 What does self-awareness bring? Why would you want to remain ignorant?
- 34 How has depriving yourself played a part in your addiction?
- 35 Action is called a magic word. Why is this word important to you today?
- 36 Discuss and reflect upon the idea that we must keep things simple.
- 37 How many people do you fail when you fail yourself?
- 38 By keeping busy how do you avoid yourself? When did you last do this?
- 39 Read Step 6 in the 'Twelve and Twelve.' Read page 68 particularly. How does the whole Step make you feel?
- 40 Write on what the advantages are when you have bottom-line sobriety.
- 41 Write on procrastination and the self-sabotage behaviours that may result from procrastination. Give some examples.
- 42 Re-Read Step 3 SLAA Basic Text and/or the 'Twelve and Twelve' and write on your feelings.
- 43 Write on what your spiritual rock-bottom was.
- 44 Write on what your physical rock-bottom was.
- 45 Write about what you think your Higher Power's concept of you is?
- 46 What does sex and love mean to you today? How does it affect you now?
- 47 How is compulsivity and your sex and love addiction connected?
- 48 Write on 'giving in' and why you do.
- 49 Write about how fear-based thinking has played a part in your acting in/out. Give some examples.
- 50 Write on your concept of a Higher Power.
- 51 Write on what the SLAA Fellowship means to you.
- 52 With whom are you sharing the load of your recovery?
- 53 When and how did I allow self-pity to rule my life?
- 54 How have I allowed false pride to defeat me?
- 55 Do you allow yourself to be vulnerable? Why/why not? Can you give some examples?
- 56 Read Step Seven In the 'Twelve and Twelve.' Write on humility.
- 57 Write on how defiance was a strong part of your life? Have you changed?
- 58 Have you allowed arrogance to play a large part in your life?
- 59 How is your need for control getting in the way of your recovery?
- 60 What changes did you see in yourself before you slipped?
- 61 Read pages 268 from "with trepidation" to 269 "so I stayed in SLAA" and then page 121 in the SLAA Basic Text. Do meetings play an important part in your life?

- 62 Read Step 4 in the SLAA Basic Text. Have you allowed resentment to take over?
- 63 In our addiction jealousy and envy played a large part in our lives. In what way can you find some sense of inner contentment through the programme?
- 64 Make an inventory of the good things in your life.
- 65 What are the good things that you would like sobriety to bring? How well are you handling your problems today?
- 66 Are you trying too hard to work the programme perfectly?
- 67 Read Chapter 2 of the AA 'Big Book': 'There is a Solution' What does being well look like to you?
- 68 Write on 'have I used sex and relationships to face life?'
- 69 Write on 'thy will not mine be done.'
- 70 Write a self-care "to do" list for the day ahead and ask God to help you stick to it. Put at least six things on your list.
- 71 What are your feelings today concerning God, sex and love ?
- 72 What is your concept of happiness?
- 73 'The person who never makes a mistake is the person who never does anything.' Discuss and reflect.
- 74 What will your life be like in 10 years' time if you don't work the SLAA Program of recovery?
- 75 'Success is never final.' Discuss and reflect
- 76 'A friend is to be taken with their faults.' Discuss and reflect.
- 77 Are you afraid of a healthier sex and love life? Discuss and reflect.
- 78 'Evil conduct is the root of misery.' Discuss and reflect.
- 79 'Patience is the companion of wisdom.' Discuss and reflect.
- 80 The SLAA 'Basic Text' describes how our Higher Power brings us "many a painful growth-fostering situation." Has this been your experience? Discuss and reflect using examples from your life.
- 81 'Am I the master of my emotions?' Discuss and reflect.
- 82 'Take the world as it is not as I would have it.' Discuss and reflect.
- 83 The AA 'Big Book' uses the word "we" 1,102 times in the first 154 pages. Why is it important we see SLAA as a "we" programme? And what does the word "we" mean to you in this context?
- 84 'The one who is not ready today, will be less so tomorrow.' Discuss and reflect.
- 85 'People cannot change truth, but truth can change people.' Discuss and reflect.
- 86 In the last 30 days what have you learnt about yourself in the context of your SLAA recovery?
- 87 'Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well.' Discuss and reflect.
- 88 Love and friendship is what binds the HOW fellowship together. Discuss and reflect.
- 89 In recovery moderation is a way of life. Discuss and reflect.
- 90 'Temper is what gets most of us into trouble. Pride is what keeps us there.' Discuss and reflect.
- 91 'Lord, when we are wrong, make us willing to change and when we are right, make us easy to live with.' Discuss and reflect.
- 92 'Men do not stumble over mountains, only over molehills.' Discuss and reflect.

- 93 'The person I harmed was myself.' Discuss and reflect.
- 94 'Anger can be a constructive force.' Discuss and reflect.
- 95 What one thing would you change in the days preceding your slip?
- 96 'Self-pity is harmful.' Discuss and reflect.
- 97 Why are we so afraid of ourselves? Discuss and reflect.
- 98 Tolerance and intolerance - what do these two words evoke for you?
- 99 Have I truly surrendered to the program?
- 100 How have slip questions helped support me in regaining my sobriety?

STEPS 4-5

GUIDANCE FOR SPONSORS ON STEP 4

Once a Sponsee has completed the first three Steps in the program, it is time to start on Step 4. This can often seem a daunting undertaking and it is one of the Steps in the program where many of us falter, prevaricate and occasionally slip. The sponsor's experience, love, support and encouragement are all the more important.

Before embarking on Step 4, it may be appropriate for sponsee and sponsor to discuss and review the boundaries around their relationship at this stage. For example, it may be that daily phone calls are no longer needed. However, it is important that the discipline of regular meetings, phone calls to the sponsor and outreach calls is maintained. It keeps the sponsee connected to the power of recovery and helps to avoid slips and relapses.

It may also be appropriate to reconsider the sponsee's "bottom (or top) lines." The experience of those who have worked the program suggests that it is rarely appropriate to remove bottom lines at this stage. However that is not to say it isn't; every person and situation is different. Discussion between sponsor and sponsee and connection with your Higher Power will guide you. More often, it may be appropriate to discuss adding or changing the behaviours in their bottom lines as the sponsee changes their addictive patterns.

It is also possible that it might be appropriate or helpful for there to be "top lines" for the sponsee to work on. Top lines are positive, affirming behaviours and actions. They might include such things as doing something for fun, such as listening to music, taking exercise, or taking part in a regular spiritual practice. Let your Higher Power be your guide on this.

Step 4 should be worked following the Step 4 Guidelines contained in this booklet. The sponsee should be asked to read the following before commencing their inventory:

- Pages 64 to 71 in the AA 'Big Book' (4th Edition)
- Step 4 in the 'Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions'
- Step 4 in the SLAA 'Basic Text'
- SLAA HOW Guidance for Sponsees on Step 4 below in this document.

Before starting work, sponsor and sponsee should meet (if possible) or speak so that the sponsor can explain the guidelines and how to complete the inventory and deal with any questions.

The inventory should be written and completed as suggested in chapter 5 of the AA 'Big Book.' The sponsee should use the same or a similar format to the tables provided below. The separate tables should be used for resentments, fears, sexual conduct and harms.

It is suggested that a date be set for the fifth Step before starting the fourth Step so that there is a deadline in place, even if that deadline is subsequently moved. Whatever is agreed, the sponsor should guide and support the sponsee as they are working through the inventory.

Regular check-ins are suggested to review progress and to check that the sponsee is completing the inventory as suggested. Above all, it is important that forward progress is made on this step and that it is completed as quickly as is possible. The experience of those who have worked the program is that it is easy to get stuck, let things slip (or to have a slip!) at this time.

FOURTH STEP INVENTORY GUIDANCE FOR SPONSEES

Buy paper and pen and start writing. The AA 'Big Book' says on eight different occasions that we write out Step Four. It is the writing it down that helps trigger the release. (Typing it out is also acceptable – the power comes in the brain formulating the words and seeing them take shape on the page).

It has been our experience that when we stop acting out the problems that were actually caused by the sex and love addiction will disappear. Which leaves us with the problems that caused us to act out. And these, as you are may be beginning to find out are the ones that stay painfully with us unless we do something about it. In the past they were so painful that we needed something to relieve the pain, and we do not have to guess what the pain reliever was.

We seemed to always be able to stop acting out for a time, we just couldn't stay stopped and then our lives would again become unmanageable. In taking Steps 4 through 9, we will be doing certain things which we find will bring us to a point of greater contentment and comfort so that we no longer need to act out to relieve the pain because the pain has lessened. It has been our experience that it really does not matter what your intention or attitude is when you take Step Four, or what your ideas are as to what it will do for you and how. What matters is that you take the steps honestly and to the best of your ability. Stop rationalising that you'll take the Step better if you take it later or after you've been in program a little longer or any of the other excuses that all of us who have gone before you have tried!

As Sex and Love Addicts, we all want to excel really excel at some activity or other. A thorough 4th and 5th Step may well bring you great relief and comfort. It can lead to a real joy in living something that you may not have experienced for a long time, if ever, something that you have been searching for but couldn't find.

Step 2 does not say, "Came to believe *in* a Power greater than ourselves," but "Came to believe *that* a Power greater than ourselves" could help us become sane, happy people. For instance, the group is greater than we are as individuals which makes it a Higher Power.

Whatever you look to as a Higher Power, you must remember that in Step 3 you turn not just your sex and love addiction, but your will and your life over to the Higher Power. So that whatever is uncovered in the process of taking Steps 4 and 5 whatever your difficulty remember that you have turned it over. It's not yours to worry or fret about anymore. Just keep writing.

Let us stress you are not being graded on spelling, punctuation or grammar. This 4th Step is for your eyes only. You're going to tell it to someone, but this document is for you. If you feel the urge to erase something try not to — it might be one of the keys that would unlock some part of your personality that is now hidden from you. And remember, you can't make a perfect inventory, but you can do your best. The AA 'Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions' state: "Creation gave us instincts for a purpose. Without them we wouldn't be complete human beings. If men and women didn't exert themselves to be secure in their persons, made no effort to harvest food or construct shelter, there would be no survival. If they didn't reproduce, the earth couldn't be populated. If there were no social instinct, if [people] cared nothing for the society of one another, there would be no society. So these desires for the sex relation, for material and emotional security, and for companionship are perfectly necessary and right, and surely God-given." ('AA Twelve and Twelve', page 46)'.

It is when these instincts are warped and bent out of shape that we get into trouble, for this distortion brings pain. Acting out helped to obliterate such pain. And this is what your inventory is about helping you to recognise those instincts that are warped and out of control, and to develop awareness of yourself and your reactions.

Try not to tear up any part of your inventory. If you feel the statement you made is wrong, make a note as to why it is wrong. Promise yourself to be honest and fearless.

Trust us when we tell you that your rewards will be great. Some people have been discouraged in taking an inventory, because they don't feel they have become honest enough, or can't remember everything that happened to them. Just do your honest best.

Do the same about memory. No-one is capable of remembering every incident of their lives, so write down what you can remember. Now.

“We went back through our lives. Nothing counted but thoroughness and honesty.” (AA ‘Big Book’ page 65). Many have found that it helps to carry around a pocket notebook so that they could jot down anything that pops into their head. Just get it down. Arrange to have a safe place to put your 4th Step Inventory. Nothing should be left out because “someone might see it who isn’t supposed to.” Remember, in Step 4 we put down all the things that we wince at just remembering them, we screw our eyes closed and think “Oh no not that.” Just write it down. It is not hurting anyone but you.

Read what the AA ‘Big Book’ has to say about the 4th Step (pages 64-71) and the ‘AA Twelve and Twelve’ (pages 43-45), and also the SLAA handbook (pages 79-81).

The AA ‘Big Book’ refers to “wreckage of your past.” From this we are tempted to deal only with the problems left in the wake of our sex and love addiction. The problems outside of us. The problems that were created as the result of our sex and love addiction. But Steps 4 and 5 deal with how the past has affected our world within. How our negative feelings about ourselves and others have affected us spiritually, mentally and physically. The AA ‘Big Book’ instructs us to write about our fears, resentments and our harms done due to sexual misbehaviour and other damaging behaviours.

Our inventory is therefore split into these four parts: Review of Resentments; Review of Fears; Review of My Own Sex Conduct; and Review of Harms Other Than Sexual. As you answer the questions for each part, write the appropriate data in the first two columns of the relevant review. For instance, if I have a resentment against my neighbour for playing loud music, write “neighbour” in column 1 of Review of Resentments, and “plays loud music” in column two.

Do not move on to the final three columns until you have completed your entire inventory. The questions are merely a mechanism for triggering the relevant information. They are not exhaustive.

Thoroughness is the watchword when taking inventory. In this connection, we write it out to get clear thinking and an honest appraisal. It is our first tangible evidence of our complete willingness to move forward.

A FINAL WORD ON STEP 4

Please try to stop telling yourself that you need to get in the right mood to take this Step. You are in the right mood to take this Step when you are ready to stop hurting and you want to get well. All of our lives, we have tried to “think our way into right action.” This time, we must “act our way into right thinking.” We who have taken this Step can tell you that it works.

We did not know how it worked before we took it and we cannot tell you how it works after we took it, so stop worrying about that.

What you are seeking is not mere “relief”(you will get that, don’t worry). What will come will be a real joy in living.

Believe us, you can get it, and a giant step toward getting it is to dump the accumulated garbage that you are now carrying around. So, get your pen and paper and begin!

If you honestly do not know the answer to a question, then just indicate that you do not know. But, try and answer each question the best way that you can. And remember, if any question suggests an area of discomfort or trouble, then write it out get it down on paper get rid of it!

There are also online forms available to work through the fourth-step inventory, if you prefer to work that way. These are available on the website listed in the footer.

THE HOW 4TH STEP INVENTORY

PROMPTS FOR RESENTMENTS

- 01 If your parents fought/fight, did/do you resent it?
- 01 List all the feelings of resentment you had/have toward your parents.
- 02 Did/do you resent your status in the family? (i.e.. only child, youngest child, oldest child, twin etc.)
- 03 Try to remember each successive grade/year in school and as you do, write out the resentments you felt towards teachers, pupils, anyone. Any fights, slights, hurts, embarrassments.
- 04 Did/do you resent your church, relatives, friends of parents, parents? If so list them. No resentment is too small to mention.
- 05 Did you resent leaders, either physical or mental leaders? Did you resent not being the most handsome or beautiful person at school?
- 06 Did you resent not being a part of a crowd? Or not being a leader? Or not being “in”?
- 07 Did/do your parents compare you to other family members or friends? Did/do you resent them for wanting you to be like someone else?
- 08 Do you resent the responsibilities of marriage and family?
- 09 Do you feel that the world owes you a living?
- 10 If revenge were possible right now, who would be the top people on your list? Why?
- 11 In business relationships, write out your resentments toward bosses and co-workers. Do you feel jealous of them? List all the negative feelings you have about the people involved in your work life.
- 12 If you are divorced or getting divorced, write out any resentments about the situation and the people involved, fears and guilt concerning your relationship with your spouse and your children.
- 13 What resentments or hates do you still have?
- 14 Do you feel resentment towards another HOW member?
- 15 Do you argue with people? Is it important for you to be “right”? Do you become angry when people don’t see things the way you do?
- 16 Do you resent others who don’t seem to have problems finding happiness?
- 17 Do you resent people who can act around sex and love in ways that you can’t?
- 18 Are you hostile because you don’t like the hand life has dealt you?

PROMPTS FOR FEARS

- 01 Were you threatened by the bogeyman or the devil, etc? If so, what are your fears in this regard?
- 02 Were you afraid of the dark?
- 03 How do you react to conflict?
- 04 If your parents fought/fight, did/does it scare you?
- 05 Were you afraid of storms?

- 06 List all the feelings of fear you had toward each person in your life as a child. If any of these fears remain, add them to your list.
- 07 Do you fear any particular type of person?
- 08 What is your greatest fear?
- 09 Are you afraid of being sexually rejected?
- 10 If you are divorced or getting divorced, write out any fears about the situation and the people involved.
- 11 Are you afraid of getting too close to another person for fear of being rejected?
- 12 Are you a tightwad? What are your fears concerning money? Do you spend with no 'thought of tomorrow'?
- 13 What kind of things do you waste most time worrying about: the future or the past?
- 14 What are your present fears? List them.
- 15 Did fear and inferiority about fitness for your job destroy your confidence and fill you with conflict?

PROMPTS FOR OWN SEX CONDUCT

- 01 If you got someone pregnant or became pregnant yourself, what did you do and how did you feel about your actions? List any harms done to others.
- 02 When, how and in just what instances did my selfish pursuit of sex relations damage other people and me? What people were hurt and how badly? Did I spoil my marriage and injure my children? Did I jeopardise my standing in the community? Did I insist that I was the pursued and not the pursuer, and thus absolve myself?
- 03 How have I reacted to frustration in sexual matters? When denied, did I become vengeful or depressed? Did I take it out on other people?
- 04 If there was rejection or coldness at home, did I use this as a reason for promiscuity?
- 05 Do you use sex as a punishment or reward? Are you careless of your partners feelings?
- 06 Write on all sexual experiences not previously discussed, especially those which made you feel uncomfortable.
- 07 Do you engage in sex in order to build your own ego by a feeling of conquest?
- 08 Are you involved in a love affair that could bring yourself or others harm?

PROMPTS FOR HARMS OTHER THAN SEXUAL

- 01 List the first time you ever stole anything. Inventory all your thefts.
- 02 Were you a troublemaker? If so, in what way? Did you destroy property?
- 03 What kind of lies did you tell? If people were hurt as a result, list them on your review of harms other than sexual.
- 04 Were you undependable as a friend: breaking off relationships without any explanation when something or someone who seemed better came along?
- 05 Did you pit one member of your family against another?

- 06 If you have married a cold, unloving person, ask yourself why you chose that one to be your mate? Did you use it as an excuse to find new romances? Was your mother or father cold and unloving and is this your chance to get even with them through your spouse?
- 07 Do you write bad cheques (or make transfers without sufficient funds)?
- 08 Do you gossip about others?
- 09 Do you use people to get what you want? Do you gossip or perform “character assassination” on another in order to “make it” in the social or business world? Or do you do this in an effort to feel superior to the one gossiped about?
- 10 If you are a thief, what have you stolen? Don’t forget to include employers’ time and harmonious relationships that you had and that you destroyed.
- 11 Do you have a pattern of getting sick? Be honest. Do you use illness as an excuse to avoid responsibilities or get attention or sympathy or to get out of a jam?
- 12 If you are divorced or getting divorced, write out any guilts about the situation and the people involved. What harm have you caused?
- 13 Do you pad your expense account or use food allowances to buy things just for yourself?
- 14 What kind of things do you lie about the most?
- 15 Do you find yourself punishing your children for the wrong reasons? List the harms you have done to your children.
- 16 Are you cold and indifferent to your family, friends, work, your own needs?
- 17 Do you threaten others by saying that you can’t maintain bottom-line sobriety if you don’t get your family back, your own way, etc?
- 18 Do you pass along gossip or make up things about other people’s behaviour?
- 19 Did I have such unprincipled ambition that I double-crossed and undercut my associates?
- 20 Was I extravagant? Did I recklessly borrow money, caring little whether it was repaid or not? Was I a penny-pincher, refusing to support my family properly?

The most common symptoms of emotional insecurity are worry, anger, self-pity and depression. These stem from causes which sometimes seem to be within us, and at other times come from without. To take inventory in this respect, we ought to consider carefully all personal relationships which bring continuous and recurring trouble. It should be remembered that this kind of insecurity may arise in any area where instincts are threatened. Questions directed to this kind of insecurity in order to find answers for your inventory might run like this:

- Looking at both past and present, what sex situations have caused me anxiety, bitterness, frustration, anger, or depression?
- Appraising each situation fairly, can I see where I have been at fault?
- Did these perplexities beset me because of selfishness or unreasonable demands?
- Or, if my disturbance was seemingly caused by the behaviour of others, why do I lack the ability to accept conditions I cannot change?

These are the sort of fundamental inquiries that can disclose the source of my discomfort and indicate whether I may be able to alter my own conduct and so adjust myself serenely to self-discipline.

Suppose that financial insecurity constantly arouses these same feelings. I can ask myself to what extent have my own mistakes fed my gnawing anxieties, and if the actions of others are part of the cause, what can I do about that? If I am unable to change the present state of affairs, am I willing to take the measures necessary to shape my life to conditions as they are?

I Resent	Because	This affects my

My part

Column 1: Resentment

List all people, places, things, institutions, ideas or principles with whom I am angry, resent, feel hurt or threatened by. *(Include your addiction and yourself.)*

Strength & Duration

Indicate in column one both the Strength (S 1-10) and Duration (D 1-10) of the Resentment.
 S: Does it burn with heat of a thousand suns (10)? Or would it just tickle your ear (1)?
 D: Does it say good night to you and greet you in the morning (10)? Or does it just pop into your mind now and then (1)?

Column 2: Because

What happened? Be specific as to why I was wounded or angry.

Column 3: Affects my...

How did it make me feel? Specifically, how did it affect the seven parts of self?
 P - Pride
 SE - Self-esteem
 PR - Personal relations
 SR - Sexual relations
 A - Ambitions
 S - Security
 F - Finances

Column 4: My Part

What did I do, if anything, to set in motion trains of circumstances, which in turn caused people or institutions to hurt me and eventually led to my resentment of them for doing so? What's the truth here? Where was my responsibility in this relationship? What might I have done instead? Where was I at fault?
 S - Selfishness
 D - Dishonesty
 SSF - Self-seeking / Frightened
 I - Inconsiderate

Include other character defects.

I Resent

I list people, myself, institutions, addictions, ideas or principles with whom I am angry, resent, feel hurt or threatened by. Complete one page per resentment. Write on back if needed.

Because

What happened? Be specific as to why I was wounded or angry.

Strength (scale of 1 - 10)?

Does it burn with heat of a thousand suns (10)?
Or would it just tickle your ear (1)?

Duration? (scale of 1 - 10)?

Does it say good night and greet you in the morning (10)?
Or does it just pop into your mind now and then (1)?

This affects my

How did it make me feel? Specifically, how did it affect the seven parts of self?

P - Pride

SE - Self-esteem

A - Ambitions

PR - Personal relations

SR - Sexual relations

S - Security

F - Finances

My part - what did I do?

Putting out of mind the wrongs others have done, I resolutely look for my own mistakes. What did I do, if anything, to set in motion trains of circumstances, which in turn caused people or institutions to hurt me and eventually led to my resentment of them for doing so?

My part - where was I to blame?

What's the truth here? Where was my responsibility in this relationship? What might I have done instead? Where was I at fault?

S - Selfish

D - Dishonest

SSF - Self-seeking /
Frightened

I - Inconsiderate

Character Defects

List or describe the character defects involved. Refer to the common defects table.

I Fear	Because	This affects my

My part

Column 1: Fear

List all people, places, things, institutions, ideas or principles that I fear. Include relapse.

Strength & Duration

Indicate in column one both the Strength (S 1-10) and Duration (D 1-10) of the Resentment.

S: Does it burn with heat of a thousand suns (10)? Or would it just tickle your ear (1)?

D: Does it say good night to you and greet you in the morning (10)? Or does it just pop into your mind now and then (1)?

Column 2: Because

What are they going to do to me? Will I be hurt? Am I going to lose my job, a relationship, money? Am I going to prison? Will I lose face?

Column 3: Affects my...

On my fears list, I set opposite each name the part of self that is affected or threatened.

- P - Pride
- SE - Self-esteem
- PR - Personal relations
- SR - Sexual relations
- A - Ambitions
- S - Security
- F - Finances

Column 4: My Part

Putting out of mind the wrongs others have done, I resolutely look for my own mistakes. What did I do (if anything) to set the ball rolling, and set in motion trains of circumstances which have led to my being in the position to have the fear? Which character defects caused me to do what I did, or cause me to want to hold on to the old fear, even though I may have done nothing to cause it?

- S - Selfishness
- D - Dishonesty
- SSF - Self-seeking / Frightened
- I - Inconsiderate

Add your own character defects to this list...

I Fear _____ List all people, places, things, institutions, ideas or principles that I fear or are threatened by. Complete one page per fear. Write on back if needed.

Because _____ What are they going to do to me? Will I be hurt? Am I going to lose my job, a relationship, money? Am I going to prison? Will I lose face?

Strength (scale of 1 - 10)?
Does it burn with heat of a thousand suns (10)?
Or would it just tickle your ear (1)?

Duration? (scale of 1 - 10)?
Does it say good night and greet you in the morning (10)?
Or does it just pop into your mind now and then (1)?

This affects my _____ How did it make me feel? Specifically, how did it affect the seven parts of self?

P - Pride

SE - Self-esteem

A - Ambitions

PR - Personal relations

SR - Sexual relations

S - Security

F - Finances

My part - what did I do? _____ Putting out of mind the wrongs others have done, I resolutely look for my own mistakes. What did I do (if anything) to set the ball rolling, and set in motion trains of circumstances which have led to my being in the position to have the fear?

My part - where was I to blame? _____ Which character defects caused me to do what I did, or cause me to want to hold on to the old fear, even though I may have done nothing to cause it?

S - Selfish

D - Dishonest

SSF - Self-seeking /
Frightened

I - Inconsiderate

Character Defects _____ List or describe the character defects involved. Refer to the common defects table.

Complete this online & more resources at - <https://augustinerrecovery.org/sponsorship>

Find more resources at - <https://recoveryresources.wixsite.com/slaa/>

I Hurt	Description	This affects my

My part	What should I have done?

Column 1: Harms/Hurts

List by name the people or group of people that I harmed by my acting out. Include yourself. Indicate if this is a:
 S - Sexual Harm
 O - Other Harm

Column 2: Description

What did I do to cause harm?

Column 3: Affects my...

Which part of self caused me to do what I did? Was it caused by the social instinct, the security instinct, or the sex instinct? Write about each instinct separately.

Column 4: My Part - what did I do? Where was I to blame?

What feelings did I create in others? Did I arouse jealousy, suspicion, or bitterness, anger, desire to retaliate, fear, etc.?

- J - Jealousy
- S - Suspicion
- B - Bitterness
- A - Anger
- R - Desire to Retaliate

Column 5: What should I have done instead?

Which Character Defect caused me to do what I did, and what would it have been better to do?

- S - Selfishness
 - D - Dishonesty
 - SSF - Self-seeking / Frightened
 - I - Inconsiderate
- Add your own character defects to this list..

I Hurt

List by name the people or group of people that I harmed by my acting out. Complete one page per harm. Include yourself. Write on back if needed.

Nature of the harm

Sexual

Other kind of harm

Description

What did I do to cause harm?

This affects my

Which part of self caused me to do what I did? Was it caused by the social instinct, the security instinct, or the sex instinct?

Social instinct –

Security instinct –

Sex instinct –

My part - what did I do?

What feelings did I create in others? Did I arouse jealousy, suspicion, or bitterness, anger, desire to retaliate, fear, etc.?

My part - what should I have done instead?

My part - where was I to blame?

Which character defects caused me to behave the way I did?

S - Selfish

D - Dishonest

SSF - Self-seeking /
Frightened

I - Inconsiderate

Character Defects

List or describe the character defects involved. Refer to the common defects table.

Complete this online & more resources at - <https://augustinerecovery.org/sponsorship>

GUIDANCE FOR SPONSORS ON STEP 5

Before commencing this Step, the sponsee should be asked to read the following:

- Pages 72 to 75 in the AA Big Book (4th Edition), chapter 6 (*Into Action*)
- Step 5 in the SLAA Basic Text (*and Step 5 in SLAA 12&12 if available*)
- Step 5 in the 'Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions'

It is up to the sponsee to decide with whom they wish to take this Step. It is common to do it with a sponsor, but this is not a requirement. The sponsee may choose a therapist, a member of the clergy or a close friend. As sponsor, you can help your sponsee make this choice, referring to the literature and seeking guidance from your Higher Power. Whatever your sponsee's choice, this should be respected. They are choosing someone with whom they feel safe to make themselves vulnerable and to share some of their innermost secrets, perhaps things that they have not felt able to share with anyone else. They are placing great trust and confidence in that person.

If that person is you, it is crucial that you respect that confidence. Sponsors who hear a Step 5 must ensure that the information they obtain is kept confidential between them and their sponsee and is not revealed to anyone, ever, unless the sponsee agrees.

Step 5 can be an uplifting and healing process. It can also be a tiring and emotional experience for both parties. Many SLAA members have found it helpful to take this Step in a few separate sessions rather than trying to do it all at once. However, the choice of how to do it lies between sponsor and sponsee and it is important to complete this Step without undue delay. A sponsor therefore needs to be available as much as reasonably possible to go through and hear this Step with the sponsee.

The sponsor's role when hearing a Step 5 is mainly to listen. Remember, you are not a parent, therapist or confessor. However, you might, at appropriate times, share your own experience strength and hope. For example, telling the sponsee "I've done that too", or "That's exactly the way I felt" if it might help them in revealing things they find embarrassing. However, you should avoid trading "war stories" or embarking on your own Step 5. This is the sponsee's inventory and they need to be given the time and space to share it.

Occasionally, during a Step 5, it might become clear that the sponsee has not completed their Step 4 inventory or has completed it, or part of it, incorrectly. If that happens then you should suggest that they go back to Step 4 and complete the inventory, or the relevant part, before carrying on with Step 5.

Once the sponsee has completed reading out their inventory — often after many hours — they should read page 75 in the Big Book. As recommended there, they should find somewhere where they can be quiet for an hour and reflect on the Steps they have taken so far. Your sponsee has just taken a significant Step in their recovery.

You might feel it appropriate to share how you felt after taking the step and let them know that it can affect different people in different ways. Let them know that it may take a few days, or longer, for them fully to process the effects of Step 5. There is a suggested ritual on this website: augustinerecovery.org

After completing Step 5, take some time for solitary prayer and meditation.

- 01 What did it feel like to say out loud your inventory?
- 02 Was there a particular part of your body where this feeling was the strongest?
- 03 When you noted the character defects or defences as part of your Step 4, were there particular items that recurred more than others? Compiling these into a 'word map' might aid your work in Step 6 and 7.
- 04 Is there anything that you were too ashamed to share?
If yes, how could holding something back eventually result in leading a compartmentalised life again?

STEPS SIX TO TWELVE

These questions are designed to assist those working the program with their step work from Steps 6 to 12. Sponsees must have completed their fifth Step with their sponsor before embarking on the following steps. These questions will help the member become more familiar with the Steps that are the keys to our recovery.

Many of us have found that it is essential to continue using our tools of reading and writing in order to stay within the programme.

These questions are only suggestions and are an optional way to work the programme, they are not a requirement.

Before answering each set of questions, read the appropriate Step chapter in the AA 'AA Twelve and Twelve' .

It is suggested that the sponsee meet the sponsor to read out their questions after completing Step 6 and 7; again after Step 8 and 9 and in this meeting to agree on the list of amends; and finally after completion of Steps 10, 11 and 12.

STEP SIX

- 05 Read pages 75-76, Chapter 6 in the AA 'Big Book.' Make a list of the character defects that you are ready to have God remove.
- 06 Do you truly believe that your own willpower will not work with sex and love addiction?
- 07 Has your obsession with sex and love/relationships vanished? If not what steps can you take? If yes, why? What can you do to bring about the permanent removal of the obsession?
- 08 Read from 'The AA 'Twelve and Twelve', the first paragraph of page 66 and all of page 67. Pick a defect of character that seems to be troubling you such as a resentment or jealousy of a person, place, or thing, or perhaps pride or procrastination. Ask yourself if you are entirely ready to give it up. If you are, then it is time to take Step seven. If you are not ready, make a list of the reasons why you would like to give it up. Then make a list of the reasons why you still want to keep that defect. What are the pay-offs for giving the defect up? What are the pay-offs for keeping it? Now, ask God to help you to be willing to give this character defect up.
- 09 What does the concept of "patient improvement" page 65 in the AA 'AA Twelve and Twelve' mean to you as stated in Step Six?
- 10 Make a list of your "No, I can't give this up yet" items. Refer to the seven deadly sins page 48 in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve.' Why is it necessary to make a beginning and keep trying?
- 11 Explain the following concept as it relates to you: "Delay is dangerous, and rebellion may be fatal."
- 12 List the character defects you really enjoy that "masquerade" as something other than they are. Now make a list of your positive character assets. Check and see if any "positives" are really "masquerading" negatives. Write on what this question has meant to you.

STEP SEVEN

Please note, a separate document (HOW Sponsorship Readings) contains all the additional recommended readings.

Readings for these 30 Step 1-3 questions and the 99 slip questions and questions for Steps 4-6 are all drawn from the SLAA Basic Text, the AA Big Book and the AA 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. All sponsees should have a copy of these recommended readings. Readings from these resources are not included in the Reading guide. Books are available from meetings or online. The best place to buy the SLAA basic text is at a meeting, since Intergroup buys these in bulk and offers a subsidy to keep the price at A\$20 (in 2020).

» https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/read-the-big-book-and-twelve-steps-and-twelve-traditions

Buy the Amazon Kindle edition here:

» <https://www.amazon.com.au/Sex-Love-Addicts-Augustine-Fellowship-book/dp/BookFzSIWA>

The eBook may also be available on other platforms such as Apple Books, Kobo, Google Play, etc.

The AA book “As Bill Sees It” is available as an Amazon kindle edition:

» <https://www.amazon.com.au/Bill-Sees-World-Services-Inc-ebook/dp/BooQKLHNzQ>

The AA book “Came to Believe” is available as an Amazon kindle edition:

» <https://www.amazon.com.au/Came-Believe-Alcoholics-World-Service-book/dp/BookUFP6IQ>

- 01 Read “As Bill Sees It” pages 22, 61, 75. How has working the Twelve Steps helped me work through fear?
- 02 Do you truly understand humility? Read Step 7 in the AA ‘Twelve and Twelve.’ Discuss and reflect on how humility has affected your life.
- 03 Read from “As Bill Sees It” Page 139 ‘Basis of all Humility’, and page 212, “Faith and Action.” Discuss and reflect on the act of:
 - (a) humbly asking God to remove defects;
 - (b) having faith that is vital, accompanied by self-sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action.
- 04 The mental hygiene and spiritual housecleaning we have started in our inventories and continued in Step Five reach their climax in Step Seven. Read pages 48, 103, 136, 196, 281, 327 in “As Bill Sees It.” Are you ready to fully subject your will to God? Do you wish to surrender to God all your moral imperfections?
- 05 What has there “never been enough of” for you?
- 06 How do you make, or how can you make honesty, tolerance and true love of man and God the daily basis of living?
- 07 Do you still place self-reliance first and are you still rebellious?
- 08 How can humility give us serenity?
- 09 How does the taking of the 7th Step aid in the reduction of ego?
- 10 Make a gratitude list of what God has done for you that you could not do for yourself.
- 11 What unreasonable demands have you made upon others, yourself and God? How did self-centred fear play a part?
- 12 What proof have you had that other problems besides “the deadly obsession of sex and love addiction” can be banished?

STEP EIGHT

- 01 Read, “No Man is an Island”, page 118 in the AA publication “Came To Believe.” Why is it necessary to “make a list of all persons you have harmed and become willing to make amends” before you can start relating harmoniously to God and to other people?
- 02 What emotional harm have you done to yourself?
- 03 What kinds of harm have you done to others? What personality traits have injured you and disturbed others?
- 04 Construct a long list of people who have been affected by your behaviour this can be in a positive as well as in a negative way. This will form the basis of your amends list for step 9.
- 05 Why is forgiveness of the utmost importance in working Step Eight?
- 06 Why is the taking of this Step “the beginning of the end of isolation” from our fellows and God?

STEP NINE

Guidance for Step Nine

This guidance is intended to be read before you start the questions for Step 9.

Step 9 (with some overlap with step 8)

Once the sponsee has taken the first 8 steps they are ready to embark on building better relationships with others by taking responsibility for their behaviour in Step 9. This guide is a resource to help you in assisting your sponsee to identify what is a harm, and what constitutes an amend (or not) and how the amend could be made. These suggestions are taken from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, the SLAA Basic Text and other seasoned members who have worked the HOW approach to SLAA’s experience of strength and hope. Step 8 and 9 should be a joint effort of the sponsor and sponsee.

It is suggested both sponsor and sponsee read the following:

Step 9 in the AA Big Book (4th edition) pages 76-84 (ending at step 10); Step 9 in the SLAA Handbook pages (92-96).

The Nature of Harms

Harms are when we inflict physical and emotional suffering, cause a loss of money or time to others, or damage property. In addition, interfering with another’s spiritual growth and path such as preventing a crisis, doing something someone should do for themselves, stopping someone from taking the consequences of their actions can also be considered a harm.

When Not to Make an Amend

“If the amend would actually make it harder for us to be of maximum service to God and the people around us, we need to be careful, and consult with others and God “ (AA Big Book page 80 paragraph 1). For example:

- If a person is not aware that you harmed them then do not make an amends as drawing the matter to their attention might be a harm in itself.
- Other examples could include causing ourselves to be unemployable or costing taxpayers money through court cases, etc., or placing those dependent on us financially in a worse financial position.

Making the list

After the definition of a harm is defined the harm can be placed into sections relating to each person and forming a list as follows:

- 1) The name
- 2) The action taken
- 3) What should have been done instead
- 4) Who suffered as a result and how (the how is outlined in the definition of the harm above)

Reviewing the list

A sponsor and sponsee can then review the list of people with a view to identifying what actions needs to be taken and who suffered. From reviewing the list the nature of the proposed nature and form of the amend can be defined.

Types of Amends

Direct Amends

These can be made if the person consents to be contacted and no further harm will be incurred through direct contact.

Living amends

These can be made to those people that are in our lives so that from the point of the amend on we can change how we relate to them. Where a person cannot be contacted a sponsee can change the type of the behaviour for which the amend relates around everyone from that time forward.

Sometimes a direct amends is appropriate, and then a living amends.

There is no need to continue to make amends for the same wrongdoing, but to live the amends in interaction with those harmed.

Indirect amends

If the sponsee has harmed someone but cannot make direct amends because that person is dead, unable to be reached, their identity is not known or remembered, or that the nature of the suffering makes it inappropriate then a donation to charity may be an appropriate amends, or writing a letter, changing behaviour around all from that time on, or similar may be a way to deal with the amends in question.

Making the Amend

The sponsor provides support during the amend process. Timelines may be discussed to help combat complacency. Direct amends can be made by attempting to make an appointment either by calling the person, writing to them etc. The process of making an amend has the following components :

- 1) Description of sponsees recovery (where appropriate)
- 2) Admitting fault—this is the harm and the nature of the suffering
- 3) Expressing regret
- 4) Asking forgiveness
- 5) Asking if there is anything they would like to say, and if there is anything else that I did not mention and it still affects them,
- 6) Asking how the sponsee can make it right.

Supporting your sponsee with the amends

It may be appropriate to require your sponsee to check in before and after each amend. This check in can comprise reviewing the purpose of the amend and agreed on the approach: what will be said and what not. Discussing how to word things may also be helpful, and a reminder to the sponsee that forgiveness may not be forthcoming and indeed the amends may be met with hostility.

Finally after the amend it may be appropriate to ensure your sponsee checks back in to review the process and/or to share the blessings and relief that come from an amends well made. And a final few words from the AA Big Book “Do not generally reveal new information... Do not involve other people “ (Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, page 81).

Questions

- 01 Read in the AA ‘Big Book’ “Freedom from Bondage” pages 544-553. Write about a resentment you have. How are you using the program to be free of it?
- 02 Do you deeply and honestly search all your motives and actions in your past and present relationships when completing your list of any amends you may need to make? Think carefully of past relationships and any resentment you may have and check your own part in creating these disturbances. Write on at least one of these relationships.
- 03 Read in “As Bill Sees It” pages 39, 58, 153. How have righteous indignation and resentment wreaked havoc in your life? How do you handle anger today?
- 04 Read in “As Bill Sees It”, pages 179 and 286. Discuss and reflect on the idea that nothing pays off like restraint of tongue and pen. How have you used this to avoid conflict?
- 05 Read page 13 in the AA “Big Book.” Discuss and reflect on your willingness to approach those individuals that you have harmed. Also, discuss and think about what attitude you should have in making an amends.
- 06 Make an amends list to discuss with your sponsor and meet you sponsor in accordance with the guidance for Step 9. Are you ready to work on making amends? How will you make direct amends on a daily basis?
- 07 Read the 3rd and 4th paragraphs page 76 of chapter six of the AA ‘Big Book.’ Describe the lengths to which you would go for victory over sex and love addiction.
- 08 Besides your sex and love addiction what other defects have you had to live with?
- 09 Have you experienced any of your most severe critics meeting you more than halfway when making admissions and amends? How do you stay in balance when this happens or does quite the opposite happen?
- 10 Are you delaying making amends because you are afraid? If so, how can you move into the “spirit” of Step Nine as mentioned in the last paragraph of this Step in the AA ‘AA Twelve and Twelve’ .
- 11 Write on the scariest amend you have to make and how you will move into action to make it.

STEP TEN

Guidance for Step Ten

This guidance is intended to be read before you start the questions for Step 10.

As step 10 of the SLAA handbook states (page 96) “if we were to continue the life-time process of reconciliation and intimacy with ourselves and others, we would need to process life as it was happening, day by day”

In taking your sponsee through Step 10 ask them, at the end of the day, to try to carry out a 5 – 10-minute review of the period since the last review. They should start with remembering and realising that a loving God is present with them. Then ask God to show the truth. It is important they do not beat themselves up for what they find. They should review the day against the following questions which are set out in the AA Big Book (pages 88-89).

- Were we resentful, selfish, dishonest, or afraid? If there is, consider right action for the next day, in consultation with others if needed
- Do we owe an apology? Make an apology or amends the next day if applicable.
- Have we kept something to ourselves which should be discussed with another person at once? If so take the action to discuss it with them as soon as possible.
- Were we kind and loving toward all? What could we have done better?
- Were we thinking of ourselves most of the time? Or were we thinking of what we could do for others, of what we could pack into the stream of life?
- Be careful not to drift into worry, remorse, or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others.
- Ask God’s forgiveness (and know that it will be totally given).
- Inquire (of God) what corrective measures should be taken. Keep it simple. Check them out with someone with more experience in the program if you are new to this or unsure.

Once the review is completed and actions noted (where needed) the sponsee should leave the review with their God, take the action on the morrow, and cease worrying about the day passed, as the work of reviewing and corrective action has been completed.

Further pages 88-89 of the AA Big Book direct us, at the beginning of the day to:

- We ask God to direct our thinking.
- We ask God especially that our thinking be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.
- We consider our plans for the day. If we have none, we ask God to show us how to be useful and draw up plans.
- We consider how the corrective measures from the night before can be applied.
- We ask that God show us the way of patience, tolerance, kindness, and love (83:2).
- We ask God to show us how we can help anyone who is suffering from sex and love addiction (164:2).
- If we face indecision: we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought, or decision. We relax and take it easy. We don’t struggle.
- We pray some set prayers that emphasise the principles of AA.
- We read some spiritual literature and ask God to show us how we can apply it to our day.
- Finally, we pray that we be shown all through the day what our next step is to be, that we be given whatever we need to take care of such problems. We ask especially for freedom from self-will and are careful to make no request for ourselves only. We may ask for ourselves, however, if others will be helped.

If agitated or doubtful:

- We ask God for the right thought or action.
- We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show.
- We say to ourselves many times each day “Your will be done.”

Questions

- 01 Re-read page 91 in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve.' Write on the concept of progress rather than perfection as it applies to your life today.
- 02 Have we begun to practice justice and courtesy to those we dislike? Write about how you can start practicing this principle.
- 03 Read page 233 in "As Bill Sees It." Draw up a two-column balance sheet for the day. On one side write the things you've done right for example, good intentions, good thoughts and good acts. On the other write the things you feel you could have improved upon.
- 04 Read Step Ten in the SLAA Basic Text and note down any passages that particularly resonate. Discuss and reflect on these passages.
- 05 Read Step in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve.' Discuss and reflect upon the following concept: "Every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us."
- 06 Read from "the portion of SLAA meetings on page 98 of the SLAA Basic Text to the end of the paragraph." Discuss and reflect on the importance of getting current in your friendships and relationships.
- 07 Read pages 90-92 in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve.' Discuss and reflect on the idea that justified anger ought to be left to those better qualified to handle it. How have you dissipated some anger in a healthy way today?
- 08 Read pages 92-95 in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve.' Write about the idea that "pain is the touchstone of spiritual progress." Write about some pain you have been in lately. How did it help you grow?
- 09 Read pages 84-85, Chapter Six in the AA 'Big Book.' The purpose of Step Ten is to continue our daily inventory and check our daily progress. Name some things you need to guard against if you are to continue your progress.
- 10 Have you stopped trying to make unreasonable demands on the ones you love? Write on the last unreasonable demand and the results of that demand. How do you tell what is reasonable and what is unreasonable?
- 11 Most feelings or defects of character will come under one of six categories: fear, jealousy, anger, resentment, pride and sex. One way to take personal inventory when something disturbs us as described in page 96 of the SLAA Basic Text (penultimate paragraph) is to fold a sheet of paper into three sections. In the first section write, 'WHAT IS IT'? In the second section write, 'HOW DOES IT AFFECT ME'? In the third section write, 'WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT'? For this question identify a current problem for example, fear of failure and write as much as you can about it "How does it affect me? Now ask God, "What can I do about it?" For extra reading, read from "As Bill Sees It" pages 39, 65 and 89.
- 12 Are you able to maintain bottom-line sobriety "keeping emotional balance and living to good purpose under all conditions?" What are some of the ways that you work on keeping emotional balance?
- 13 List your assets and liabilities. How can you convert "the pains of failures into assets?" Think of a specific example where you have done this.
- 14 What can you do to stop having emotional hangovers? Write about the last one you had and the state you were in when it was caused.
- 15 How can you acquire the habit of accurate self-appraisal through Step Ten?
- 16 How does the axiom "every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us" relate to you?
- 17 Step Ten talks of "dangerous exceptions" for our recovery. What are your dangerous exceptions?

- 18 How are you developing tolerance?
- 19 The Tenth Step says to “spot, admit and correct flaws is the essence of character building and good living.” In the spirit of this character building, develop a gratitude list now for your “blessings received.”

STEP ELEVEN

- 01 Read Step Eleven in the SLAA Basic Text. Discuss and reflect on the idea on page 99 of the Basic Text of having “a conscious adult partnership.”
- 02 Read “As Bill Sees It” pages 93, 108, 127, 189, and 243. Discuss and reflect on how taking time daily to set myself apart with God improves my conscious contact with God and changes my life.
- 03 Read the AA “Big Book” pages 85-89. How has prayer and meditation helped you to be free of self-will run riot?
- 04 Read “As Bill Sees It” pages 33, 117, 101, and 331. Step Eleven is for mental efficiency, for spiritual strength and for physical endurance. What does this mean to you?
- 05 Read the AA “Big Book” page 164. Discuss and reflect on how to “see to it that your relationship with God is right” and the importance of it for you today.
- 06 Read “As Bill Sees It” pages 270 and 172. How do you apply the principle that your recovery depends upon God?
- 07 Read “As Bill Sees It” pages 202 and 250. Discuss the importance of spending daily quiet time alone with your Higher Power. How do you do this in your life on a daily basis?
- 08 Read “As Bill Sees It” page 264. Discuss and reflect on the idea that we shall locate our trouble in our misunderstanding or neglect of Step Eleven, prayer, meditation and the guidance of God.

STEP TWELVE

- 01 Read Step Twelve in the SLAA Basic Text. Read the paragraph on page 102 beginning “We discovered...” and write on your personal experience on how “our experiences, in addiction had been transformed into lessons for living of profound depth and durability.”
- 02 Read Chapter Seven, “Working with Others” in the AA “Big Book.” Did you have a spiritual awakening? Was it vital to your recovery? When did it take place? Can you define it?
- 03 Read “As Bill Sees It” pages 196 and 263. Reflect on and discuss the idea that the basic antidote for fear is a spiritual awakening.
- 04 Read the AA “Big Book” pages 449-451. Discuss and reflect on how “acceptance is the answer to all of our problems.”
- 05 Read the SLAA Basic Text, page 103, first paragraph. How have your views of intimacy, and sexuality changed through working the Steps.
- 06 Read “As Bill Sees It” pages 3, 5 and 163. Write on how working the program has brought joy to your life.
- 07 Read the AA “Came to Believe” pages 46, 47 and 48, “The Belief will Come”; and “As Bill Sees It” page 331. Discuss what needs to be done to be most effective in helping those who still suffer.

THE MAINTENANCE QUESTIONS

Those wishing to continue to use a structured approach to maintaining their sobriety can work the Maintenance questions in conjunction with a sponsor who has completed the Maintenance questions themselves. The sponsee should only answer these questions on completion of Steps 1-12 How the questions are used and how shared is a matter for you to agree with your Sponsor. The questions relate to and cover the 12 Steps.

As an alternative and depending on the circumstances you may choose instead to re-work the Steps as already set out in this guide. The choice lies with you, your Higher Power and your Sponsor.

- 01 “Today is the first day of the rest of your life.” Re-read Step 1. List the areas of your life that you have surrendered to your Higher Power.
- 02 Re-read Step 1. How is admission of powerlessness the first step in liberation for you? Do you believe the program can liberate you?
- 03 Read Chapter 2 in The AA ‘Big Book.’ Write on your feelings regarding the statements made in the italicised paragraph on page 24.
- 04 Read page 43 in The AA ‘Big Book.’ Discuss the idea that “at certain times (the sex and love addict) has no effective mental defence against the first act out.”
- 05 Read Chapter 6 in The AA ‘Big Book.’ Discuss how reaching out and helping someone else can be part of our willingness to have all our defects removed.
- 06 Take time out today and plan a ‘special set of moments’ during your day. Time alone, time with a friend, time meditating. Discuss and reflect on the idea, “we know how to feel bad and we are learning how to feel good.”
- 07 Read Step 2. Discuss and reflect on the idea, “this is the rallying point to sanity.”
- 08 Read Chapter 1 in The AA ‘Big Book’ (‘Bill’s Story’). “Nothing more was required of me to make my beginning.” Discuss and reflect on the idea that making a new beginning each day is testimony to our belief in a Higher Power.
- 09 “Service leads to sanity.” Discuss and reflect on how service has kept sanity in your life.
- 10 Read in The AA ‘Big Book’, pages 268-76, ‘Keys To The Kingdom.’ Take a ‘Recommitment Inventory.’ Discuss what you were like, what happened and what is happening in your life now.
- 11 Read Step 3. “Willingness is the key.” Discuss and reflect on what affirmative action you have taken in the last two weeks within the context of the program.
- 12 Read in The AA ‘Big Book’, Chapter 4, ‘We Agnostics.’ Discuss and reflect on “the great reality (that) is deep down within us.”
- 13 Read in The AA ‘Big Book’, Appendix II, ‘Spiritual Experience.’ Discuss your awakening or reawakening spiritually.
- 14 ‘I listened but I didn’t hear.’ How have you learned to listen to yourself and others and stay quiet within?
- 15 Read in The AA ‘Big Book’, (4th Edition) pages 289-300, ‘Fear of Fear.’ Discuss and reflect on the idea that our greatest fear is often that we will become a different person.
- 16 Read Step 4 in the AA ‘Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions’ (12 & 12) book. Take a spot inventory that can update the inventory you gave away in Step 5. Discuss defects that have rearisen, emotions that won’t be placed on hold and physical cravings about these two other states.

- 17 Read the Serenity Prayer in Step 12. Read it four times. Write on what you accept that you cannot change. Then, the things that you have changed. How do you know the difference?
- 18 Read The AA 'Big Book,' Chapter 5, "people of faith have courage." Discuss and reflect on the courage your faith has given you.
- 19 Discuss how you use the tools of reading, writing and sharing to deal with your reality.
- 20 Read in The AA 'Big Book', the last paragraph on page 68-69, "Now about sex..." Discuss and reflect on what the knowledge of this part of your recovery has done for you.
- 21 Read in The AA 'Big Book', (3rd Edition) pages 400-421, 'Stars Don't Fall.' Discuss and reflect on "now came the black and endless dismal night..." as it was in your life.
- 22 Read Step 5, "this is the beginning of true kinship between man and God." Discuss and reflect on how this has continued to be true in your life.
- 23 Read in The AA 'Big Book', Chapter 6, 'Into Action' pages 72-75. Discuss and reflect on what you have learned about fearlessness, humility and honesty. How do you utilise these realities in your life today?
- 24 Review what happened to you when you wrote your inventory your feelings, your hopes, your defects. Discuss what happened when you finally took Step 5. How did you feel afterward? Is anything still hanging on?
- 25 Read in The AA 'Big Book', (3rd edition) pages 464-473, 'Promoted to Chronic.' Discuss how your disease has made you vulnerable to acting emotionally and compulsively.
- 26 Read Step 6. Discuss and reflect on the idea that our defects of character can be lifted if we are willing to turn over the burden.
- 27 Re-read Step 6. Discuss and reflect on the idea that, "half measures avail us nothing." How are these components of your life the emotional, physical and spiritual -coming together today.
- 28 Read in The AA 'Big Book', page 75, 3rd paragraph, "Returning home..." Meditate on this passage, and then answer all the questions posed on page 75, "if we have omitted...mortar without sand." Discuss and reflect on what your answers tell you about yourself.
- 29 Read in The AA 'Big Book', (4th edition) pages 301-8, 'Physician, Heal Thyself!' How is the SLAA program a testimonial that you do not have to do it alone?
- 30 Read in the table of contents in the "Twelve and Twelve" the synopsis of Step 7. Discuss and reflect on the idea that, "God has removed a great deal but there is still work to be done."
- 31 Read Step 7. Discuss and reflect how taking this Step indicates a change of attitude for you.
- 32 Read in The AA 'Big Book': 'A Vision For You.' Write on the concept: God's vision for you includes the concept that you cannot transmit something you haven't got. What must you do to maintain what you have?
- 33 Read in Step 7, page 75, the prayer, "Of myself I am nothing." Discuss and reflect on what is working in your life and what you must let go.
- 34 Take a Step 7 inventory. Discuss and reflect on programme accomplishments & setbacks.
- 35 Read Chapter 17 in The AA 'Big Book' (3rd edition) pages 439-456, 'Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict.' Discuss and reflect on the idea that, "if I focus on the answer, the answer increases."
- 36 Discuss and reflect on your ability to apologise. Write down the name of someone who needs an apology from you. Then create an action plan to make that apology.

- 37 Read Step 8 in the 'Twelve and Twelve.' Focus on page 78, "These obstacles...are very real." Discuss and reflect on your need (past and present) to control and manipulate others. Be specific.
- 38 Read chapter 8 in The AA 'Big Book', (3rd edition) pages 261 on 'From Farm to City.' Re-read top half of page 269, ending "...but I have laughed." Discuss and reflect on your need to make amends. Have you the willingness to do so?
- 39 Make a list of those persons you have harmed. Is this your first list? What is the difference between this list and prior lists? Are you willing to work this Step?
- 40 Discuss and reflect on how well you deal with "and became willing to make amends to them all." Who was not on your list? Is there anyone you are still emotionally battling with?
- 41 Read in the table of contents for the AA 'AA Twelve and Twelve' the synopsis of Step 9. Discuss and reflect on the idea "prudence means taking calculated chances." How does this translate into "courage to work my program" for you?
- 42 Read Step 9 in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve.' Write down a name of someone you owe an amends to. What you intend to say and how you intend to contact this individual. Then do it!
- 43 Read pages 76-84 in The AA 'Big Book', "Now we need more action..." Write on, "The spiritual life is not a theory, we have to live it." Reference page 83.
- 44 Someone may reject an amend. Has this happened to you? Please detail what you did and how it was or was not translated into rejection. If you have not experienced this, create a plan for dealing with a rejected amend.
- 45 Read page 87 in the 'Twelve and Twelve.' Discuss and reflect on, "Above all, we should try to be absolutely sure that we are not delaying because we are afraid".
- 46 Discuss and reflect on the idea that "(only) when your past is settled (can) present challenges be met".
- 47 Read Step 10. Discuss and reflect upon the idea that "self-centredness remains a dire threat."
- 48 Create a 'Relationship Inventory.' On one side put the name of the individual with whom you are involved (friend, lover, child, family) and, on the other side, discuss your relationship. Next, create another column in which you note whether the relationship works or needs work. What actions does this inventory call for?
- 49 Discuss and reflect on the idea that, "we safeguard our abstinence by frequent mental audits." Write a mental audit for today.
- 50 Re-read Step 10. Discuss and reflect on the idea that, "those who forget their past are condemned to repeat it".
- 51 Read page 105 in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve' from "The moment we catch... purely human affairs." Discuss and reflect on the idea that self-centredness continues to create problems in your life.
- 52 Read Step 11 in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve' — Discuss and reflect on how working Step 11 is the only way to conquer fear.
- 53 Read in The AA 'Big Book' pages 85-88 from the bottom of page 85. Discuss and reflect on how this 'Big Book' segment is an instruction in learning how to let go.
- 54 Read pages 99-101 in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve.' Discuss and reflect on how you can channel your Higher Power to lift you out of bondage and help others.
- 55 Read Chapter 11 in the AA 'Big Book', 'A Vision for You.' Discuss and reflect on the idea that "no amount of willpower could stop this acting out".

- 56 The 'joy of living' is the theme of Step 12. Discuss and reflect on what is joyous in your life. How have these things come about?
- 57 Read Step 12 in the 'Twelve and Twelve' Discuss and reflect upon the actions you have taken to carry the message.
- 58 Read Chapter 7 in The AA 'Big Book.' Discuss and reflect on how practicing self-forgetting is the result of not trying so hard. Be specific.
- 59 Read 'Dr Bob's Nightmare' in The AA 'Big Book' pages 171-181. Focus on pages 180-1, "spend...against a possible slip." How is service to others an insurance policy in your life?
- 60 Read The AA 'Big Book', pages 544-553, 'Freedom from Bondage.' Discuss and reflect on the idea that, "I will have peace of mind in exact proportion to the peace of mind I bring to the lives of others." Discuss and reflect on how this becomes "practicing these principles in all areas of our lives."

References

- SLAA Handbook
- AA Big Book
- AA Twelve and Twelve
- AA Came to Believe
- AA As Bill Sees It
- SLAA pamphlet - Sponsorship, A Return from Isolation
- SLAA pamphlet - Withdrawal
- SLAA pamphlet - 40 Questions for Self-Diagnosis
- SLAA pamphlet - Questions Beginners Ask
- SLAA pamphlet - Setting Bottom Lines

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STEP THREE CEREMONY

The texts needed to perform the ceremony are all included in this version. References to alcohol are changed to more generic [addiction]; language has also been changed to be more gender inclusive. For the optional sections of the ceremony you will need five candles. Ceremonies are part and parcel of all humanity and it is for this reason that we build an optional ceremony into the SLAA HOW program at the end of Step 3.

STEP ONE

(Sponsor reads): The disciplines of setting and maintaining bottom-line behaviour, phone calls, reporting to sponsors and attending meetings all help us grow. In recovery action is the magic word.

I wish to thank you for asking me to be your sponsor. I have and will continue to need you as much as you need me.

Let us join hands and pray: **(Sponsor and Sponsee together)**

God*, if it be your will, help us to commit ourselves to our recovery and to these Steps in accordance with your will.

*God is as we understand a higher power that helps us move beyond ourselves.

OPTIONAL | Sponsor: There are five candles in front of you. Each candle represents a step in our recovery. The first two represent **TRUTH** and **REALITY**. Without these two qualities, we would not be recovering sex and love addicts.

Sponsor: lights first candle. The candle of **TRUTH** is the guiding light of all who strive to recover from sex and love addiction. It is a force that brings peace. The sex and love addict must make truth their watchword. They must fearlessly face the truth to avoid the pitfall of self-deception.

Sponsor: lights second candle. This is the candle of **REALITY** and it is a new light. It opens the door to a new life. It holds promise of new understanding. It offers a chance for personal renewal. It goes beyond fantasy and holds the dream of a better tomorrow. Without the light of reality we are destined to remain in the sick, shadowy world of past mistakes and unrealistic dreams of false tomorrows.

Ask your Sponsee the following questions so that they may re-take the first Step.

- 01 You have spent a great deal of time getting in touch with your feelings. Can you recall how you felt on your first day of your recovery?
- 02 Do you want recovery and the SLAA program to become a way of life?
- 03 What do the words 'personal powerlessness' mean to you?
- 04 Step One asks that you learn to 'let go.' Do you feel you have learnt to let go?
- 05 What does letting go mean to you?
- 06 It is said that we have an obsession. Explain what that means to you.
- 07 Do you recognise the symptoms when your life is unmanageable?
- 08 What do you do when you feel things are getting unmanageable?
- 09 What does the word compulsion mean to you? Have you ever felt that you were compelled to do things?

- 10 Did you feel that obsession and compulsion were part of your life? How? How did you try to control these aspects of your life?
- 11 How long have you been seeking remedies for your obsession?
- 12 What did you do when you felt your behaviour was getting out of control?
- 13 What happened to the ideas you tried?
- 14 What did you do when you noticed you were different?
- 15 When did you realise you had an addiction to sex and love?
- 16 Did you ever try sheer willpower to overcome your addiction?
- 17 Are there other methods you would like to investigate to manage your compulsive behaviour?
- 18 Do you think there is a solution to your problem today?
- 19 In recovery we seek to practice humility and let go of ego and pride on a daily basis. Are you willing to do this?
- 20 Is working the SLAA program a life or death matter for you?

Sponsee: *Reads page 24 in the Twelve and Twelve:*

Under the lash of [addiction], we are driven to [recovery], and there we discover the fatal nature of our situation. Then, and only then, do we become as open-minded to conviction and as willing to listen as the dying can be. We stand ready to do anything which will lift the merciless obsession from us.

Sponsor: Are you totally powerless over sex and love, has it made your life unmanageable?

Sponsee: *Reads page 21 in the AA 'Twelve and Twelve.'*

WHO cares to admit complete defeat? Practically no one, of course. Every natural instinct cries out against the idea of personal powerlessness. It is truly awful to admit that, [addiction] in hand, we have warped our minds into such an obsession for destructive [thinking] that only an act of Providence can remove it from us.

No other kind of bankruptcy is like this one. [Addiction], now become the rapacious creditor, bleeds us of all self-sufficiency and all will to resist its demands. Once this stark fact is accepted, our bankruptcy as going human concerns is complete.

But upon entering [recovery] we soon take quite another view of this absolute humiliation. We perceive that only through utter defeat are we able to take our first steps toward liberation and strength. Our admissions of personal powerlessness finally turn out to be firm bedrock upon which happy and purposeful lives may be built.

We know that little good can come to any [addict] who joins [recovery] unless they have first accepted their devastating weakness and all its consequences. Until they so humble them self, their sobriety—if any—will be precarious. Of real happiness they will find none at all. Proved beyond doubt by an immense experience, this is one of the facts of [recovery] life. The principle that we shall find no enduring strength until we first admit complete defeat is the main taproot from which our whole Society has sprung and flowered.

Sponsor: You've accepted powerlessness. What must you do now?

(Sponsee should realise that recognition of these concepts is not enough. Action and willingness are next. This is the transition to Step Two.)

OPTIONAL

Sponsor: You have just taken the first Step. We now light the third candle — the candle of **SURRENDER**.

In recovery surrender is the first and most important act necessary to launch you into the other Steps. Without the surrender of your sex and love addiction, your ego and your will, all else is hopeless. When you surrender you let go of negative thoughts, disbelief and grandiosity and you open yourself up to the process of learning who you are and where you fit into the scheme of things.

STEP TWO

Ask your sponsee the following questions so that they may re-take Step Two:

Sponsor: Reads aloud the introduction to Step Two.

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

THE moment they read Step Two, most [recovery] newcomers are confronted with a dilemma, sometimes a serious one. How often have we heard them cry out, “Look what you people have done to us! You have convinced us that we are [addicts] and that our lives are unmanageable. Having reduced us to a state of absolute helplessness, you now declare that none but a Higher Power can remove our obsession. Some of us *won’t* believe in God, others can’t, and still others who do believe that God exists have no faith whatever [God] will perform this miracle. Yes, you’ve got us over the barrel, all right—but where do we go from here?”

21 What does this Step mean to you?

22 Do you believe that a Power outside yourself will restore you to sanity and help you?

Sponsee: Reads page 32-33 in the ‘AA Twelve and Twelve’

To clergymen, doctors, friends, and families, the [addict] who means well and tries hard is a heartbreaking riddle. To most [addicts] they are not. There are too many of us who have been just like them and have found the riddle’s answer. This answer has to do with the quality of faith rather than its quantity. This has been our blind spot. We supposed we had humility when really we hadn’t. We supposed we had been serious about religious practices when, upon honest appraisal, we found we had been only superficial. Or, going to the other extreme, we had wallowed in emotionalism and had mistaken it for true religious feeling. In both cases, we had been asking something for nothing. The fact was we really hadn’t cleaned house so that the grace of God could enter us and expel the obsession. In no deep or meaningful sense had we ever taken stock of ourselves, made amends to those we had harmed, or freely given to any other human being without any demand for reward. We had not even prayed rightly. We had always said, “Grant me my wishes” instead of “Thy will be done.” The love of God and [others] we understood not at all. Therefore we remained self-deceived, and so incapable of receiving enough grace to restore us to sanity.

Sponsor: In the SLAA fellowship belief in anything outside of ourselves, larger than ourselves is enough to take us to the next Step. The idea is not to take back your old ideas and rely on yourself.

23 SLAA does ask that you have an open mind. How open are you?

24 Have you always been willing to listen? If you are willing now how did this change?

25 Did indifference play an important part in your life? How?

26 What about disappointment? Did this reinforce your compulsiveness?

27 Step Two mentions fear. Can you discuss your fears?

Our fears and lack of power are self-centred and selfish in origin. But this selfishness and self-centredness can be replaced by a partnership with a Higher Power. Faith in your Higher Power replaces fear and allows the power of God to flow through you. You can then follow God’s will and exercise your will by asking “Thy

will not mine be done” A further explanation of this is on page 44-45 in the AA ‘Big Book’: ‘We Agnostics’ Will you read it please.

Sponsee: WE AGNOSTICS

If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when [acting out], you have little control over [your behaviour], you are probably [an addict]. If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer.

To one who feels they are an atheist or agnostic such an experience seems impossible, but to continue as they are means disaster, especially if they are an [addict] of the hopeless variety. To be doomed to an [addictive] death or to live on a spiritual basis are not always easy alternatives to face.

But it isn’t so difficult. About half our original fellowship were of exactly that type. At first some of us tried to avoid the issue, hoping against hope we were not true [addicts]. But after a while we had to face the fact that we must find a spiritual basis of life—or else. Perhaps it is going to be that way with you. But cheer up, something like half of us thought we were atheists or agnostics. Our experience shows that you need not be disconcerted.

If a mere code of morals or a better philosophy of life were sufficient to overcome [addiction], many of us would have recovered long ago. But we found that such codes and philosophies did not save us, no matter how much we tried. We could wish to be moral, we could wish to be philosophically comforted, in fact, we could will these things with all our might, but the needed power wasn’t there. Our human resources, as marshalled by the will, were not sufficient; they failed utterly.

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?

Sponsor: Defiance often comes between ourselves and a Higher Power.

28 Can you describe any defiance you have in relation to your Higher Power?

Most of the time our problems with a Higher Power come from debating the question of whether or not our Higher Power is there to help us. The AA ‘AA Twelve and Twelve’ discusses this idea. Let me read from pages 26-27:

At this juncture, their sponsor usually laughs. This, the newcomer thinks, is just about the last straw. This is the beginning of the end. And so it is: the beginning of the end of their old life, and the beginning of their emergence into a new one. Their sponsor probably says, “Take it easy. The hoop you have to jump through is a lot wider than you think. At least I’ve found it so. So did a friend of mine who was a one-time vice-president of the American Atheist Society, but he got through with room to spare.”

“Well,” says the newcomer, “I know you’re telling me the truth. It’s no doubt a fact that [SLAA] is full of people who once believed as I do. But just how, in these circumstances, does a fellow ‘take it easy’? That’s what I want to know.”

“That,” agrees the sponsor, “is a very good question indeed. I think I can tell you exactly how to relax. You won’t have to work at it very hard, either. Listen, if you will, to these three statements. First, [SLAA] does not demand that you believe anything. All of its Twelve Steps are but suggestions. Second, to get sober and to stay sober, you don’t have to swallow all of Step Two right now. Looking back, I find that I took it piecemeal myself. Third, all you really need is a truly open mind. Just resign from the debating society and quit bothering yourself with such deep questions as whether it was the hen or the egg that came first. Again I say, all you need is the open mind.”

The sponsor continues, “Take, for example, my own case. I had a scientific schooling. Naturally I respected, venerated, even worshiped science. As a matter of fact, I still do—all except the worship part. Time after time, my instructors held up to me the basic principle of all scientific progress: search and research, again and again, always with the open mind. When I first looked at [SLAA] my reaction was just like yours. This [SLAA] business,

I thought, is totally unscientific. This I can't swallow. I simply won't consider such nonsense.

"Then I woke up. I had to admit that [SLAA] showed results, prodigious results. I saw that my attitude regarding these had been anything but scientific. It wasn't [SLAA] that had the closed mind, it was me. The minute I stopped arguing, I could begin to see and feel. Right there, Step Two gently and very gradually began to infiltrate my life. I can't say upon what occasion or upon what day I came to believe in a Power greater than myself, but I certainly have that belief now. To acquire it, I had only to stop fighting and practice the rest of [SLAA's] program as enthusiastically as I could.

"This is only one man's opinion based on his own experience, of course. I must quickly assure you that [SLAA's] tread innumerable paths in their quest for faith. If you don't care for the one I've suggested, you'll be sure to discover one that suits if only you look and listen. Many a man like you has begun to solve the problem by the method of substitution. You can, if you wish, make [SLAA] itself your 'higher power.' Here's a very large group of people who have solved their [addiction] problem. In this respect they are certainly a power greater than you, who have not even come close to a solution. Surely you can have faith in them. Even this minimum of faith will be enough. You will find many members who have crossed the threshold just this way. All of them will tell you that, once across, their faith broadened and deepened. Relieved of the [addictive] obsession, their lives unaccountably transformed, they came to believe in a Higher Power, and most of them began to talk of God."

Now would you turn to page 12 in the AA 'Big Book'?

Sponsee: Despite the living example of my friend there remained in me the vestiges of my old prejudice. The word God still aroused a certain antipathy. When the thought was expressed that there might be a God personal to me this feeling was intensified. I didn't like the idea. I could go for such conceptions as Creative Intelligence, Universal Mind or Spirit of Nature but I resisted the thought of a Czar of the Heavens, however loving [God's] sway might be. I have since talked with scores of [people] who felt the same way.

My friend suggested what then seemed a novel idea. He said, "*Why don't you choose your own conception of God?*" That statement hit me hard. It melted the icy intellectual mountain in whose shadow I had lived and shivered many years. I stood in the sunlight at last.

It was only a matter of being willing to believe in a Power greater than myself. Nothing more was required of me to make my beginning. I saw that growth could start from that point. Upon a foundation of complete willingness I might build what I saw in my friend. Would I have it? Of course I would!

Thus was I convinced that God is concerned with us humans when we want [God] enough. At long last I saw, I felt, I believed. Scales of pride and prejudice fell from my eyes. A new world came into view.

Sponsor:

29 Are you willing to go to any lengths to get rid of your old ideas?

Step Two is a rallying point. It puts us on the right path. It shows us the insanity of our addiction. It puts right our relationship with our Higher Power. It shows us where we can end up if we lose our connection with our Higher Power.

30 Discuss your relationship to your Higher Power as it is today.

31 How do you relate to the word insanity?

32 Do you believe your Higher Power can restore you to sanity?

You have just taken the first two Steps.

OPTIONAL | *Light fourth candle.* We now light the candle of **ACCEPTANCE**.

Without acceptance you could not have progressed this far. Acceptance is seeing things as they really are. Acceptance is an understanding that we have spent our lives denouncing everything and now we must open up our hearts as well as our minds and accept. We must accept the will of our Higher Power and accept that only God can restore us to sanity.

STEP THREE

(Sponsor): Before we go further I would like to read something from page 569-570 In the AA 'Big Book': 'Spiritual Experience.'

The terms "spiritual experience" and "spiritual awakening" are used many times in this book which, upon careful reading, shows that the personality change sufficient to bring about recovery from [addiction] has manifested itself among us in many different forms.

Yet it is true that our first printing gave many readers the impression that these personality changes, or religious experiences, must be in the nature of sudden and spectacular upheavals. Happily for everyone, this conclusion is erroneous.

In the first few chapters a number of sudden revolutionary changes are described. Though it was not our intention to create such an impression, many [addicts] have nevertheless concluded that in order to recover they must acquire an immediate and overwhelming "God-consciousness" followed at once by a vast change in feeling and outlook.

Among our rapidly growing membership of thousands of [addicts] such transformations, though frequent, are by no means the rule. Most of our experiences are what the psychologist William James calls the "educational variety" because they develop slowly over a period of time. Quite often friends of the newcomer are aware of the difference long before they are them self. They finally realise that they have undergone a profound alteration in their reaction to life; that such a change could hardly have been brought about by them self alone. What often takes place in a few months could seldom have been accomplished by years of self-discipline. With few exceptions our members find that they have tapped an unsuspected inner resource which they presently identify with their own conception of a Power greater than themselves.

Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves is the essence of spiritual experience. Our more religious members call it "God-consciousness."

Most emphatically we wish to say that any [addict] capable of honestly facing their problems in the light of our experience can recover, provided they do not close their mind to all spiritual concepts. They can only be defeated by an attitude of intolerance or belligerent denial.

We find that no one need have difficulty with the spirituality of the program. ***Willingness, honesty and open mindedness are the essentials of recovery. But these are indispensable.***

Making a decision to turn your will and your life over to God* (as you understand God) is part of the process of Step Three. Your Higher Power is with you now. A spiritual awakening can be compared to planting a seed. Growth does not begin when you can see the flower breaking its way through the earth; it begins at the moment the seed is planted. Your spiritual awakening began at the moment of your surrender in Step One.

Sponsee: *Reads page 62-63 in the AA 'Big Book' ('Selfishness, self-centredness...')*

Selfishness—self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles. Driven by a hundred forms of fear, self-delusion, self-seeking, and self-pity, we step on the toes of our fellows and they retaliate. Sometimes they hurt us, seemingly without provocation, but we invariably find that at some time in the past we have made decisions based on self which later placed us in a position to be hurt.

So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the [addict] is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though we usually don't think so. Above everything, we [addicts] must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us! God* makes that possible. And there often seems no way of entirely getting rid of self without [God's] aid. Many of us had moral and philosophical convictions galore, but we could not live up to them even though we would have liked to. Neither could we reduce our self-centeredness much by wishing or trying on our own power. We had to have God's help.

Sponsor: I'd like to ask you a few questions: The AA 'AA Twelve and Twelve' says in relation to Step 3 that "practising Step Three is like the opening of a door which to all appearances is still closed and locked."

33 Was this your experience?

34 How was your vision of life like a locked door?

35 How shall you keep God in your life?

(Sponsor should tell sponsee what they have done to keep God ever present).

36 Do you feel that you are aware of the dangers of self-sufficiency?

Step Three calls for us to make a decision. We must decide to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God* .

37 Are you willing to make that decision?

We realise that faith does not automatically mean that you have let God* into your life. But our willingness is already demonstrated in the way we work at casting out our old ideas and turn ourselves over to the SLAA programme to relieve our sex and love obsession.

Let us spend some time now praying that God* will come into our lives and actively guide us. Will you read the prayer on page 63 in the AA 'Big Book' whilst I bow my head?

Sponsee:

God, I offer myself to You—to build with me and to do with me as You will. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Your will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Your power, Your love, and Your way of life. May I do Your will always!

Sponsor: Now I will read it to you while you pray to your Higher Power letting [God*] know of your decision to turn your will and life over to [God*].

You have just made a commitment to God* .

You have asked God* to relieve you of the bondage of self.

We have turned it over. We have made a decision: sex and love addiction will no longer be the focus of our lives. Now we must get out and help others.

SLAA has taught us to live for today and to work at loving God, ourselves and others. God loves us enough to remove our obsession. If God can love us, can't we love ourselves? If we learn to love ourselves then it will be easier to love and forgive others.

OPTIONAL reading from *1 Corinthians* 13:1-8a, 12-13. 'The Way of Love'

"Suppose I speak in the languages of human beings or of angels. If I don't have love, I am only a loud gong or a noisy cymbal. Suppose I have the gift of prophecy. Suppose I can understand all the secret things of God and know everything about him. And suppose I have enough faith to move mountains. If I don't have love, I am nothing at all. Suppose I give everything I have to poor people. And suppose I give myself over to a difficult life so I can brag. If I don't have love, I get nothing at all.

Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not want what belongs to others. It does not brag. It is not proud. It does not dishonour other people. It does not look out for its own interests. It does not easily become angry. It does not keep track of other people's wrongs. Love is not happy with evil. But it is full of joy when the truth is spoken. It always protects. It always trusts. It always hopes. It never gives up.

Love never fails. Now we see only a dim likeness of things. It is as if we were seeing them in a foggy mirror. But someday we will see clearly. We will see face to face. What I know now is not complete. But someday I will know completely, just as God knows me completely.

The three most important things to have are faith, hope and love. But the greatest of them is love."

[from *The Holy Bible. New International Readers Version.*]

You have just taken the first Three Steps.

OPTIONAL. *Light the fifth candle, then read:*

This is the candle of **KNOWLEDGE** and it opens the door wide.

We now know that God is on our side.

We can see and hear God's declarations in our lives.

We recognise what we may do and what only God can do.

We acknowledge the greatest gift God has given us — knowing ourselves.

<https://augustinerecovery.org/sponsorship/>