

An Unofficial Glossary of SLAA Term & Jargon

Many newcomers and old-timers alike find themselves in SLAA meetings where they hear terminology, acronyms, or other program jargon that they are unfamiliar with. This can alienate the newcomer or overwhelm as they learn the language of recovery. This list is not comprehensive, not conference approved, nor does it represent the opinions of SLAA. It is offered as an unofficial resource to become more acquainted with the program.

12 Traditions

Intended to help SLAA groups function effectively, the twelve traditions provide guidelines for the relationships between groups, members, and the larger SLAA fellowship.

3-Second Rule

As recovering addicts, we cannot control the thoughts we have or the fact that we feel triggered. We can, however, control what we do with those thoughts and feelings. However, we need to turn away from the triggering individual, thought, etc. within three seconds and refocus. After recognising an addictive thought or fantasy, we give ourselves a maximum of three seconds to turn away from it and focus on something else.

3x3 / 4x4 / 5x5

Outreach format with a fellow similar to meeting structures. Each person shares for 3-minutes, 4-minutes, etc. Before or after sharing, fellows may request feedback. It is okay to simply listen. Don't offer feedback without first checking.

13th Stepping

Manipulating another person in recovery, especially a newcomer, into a sexual, emotional, or romantic relationship. Being inappropriate with fellows.

Accessory Behaviour(s)

Accessory behaviours are warning signs that you are in danger of acting out. Accessory behaviours are not destructive themselves, but they support your addiction. Accessory behaviours may seem innocent but in fact they set you up to act out; they include rituals, obsessions and triggers that may set you off. Accessory behaviours include strategies we use to get relationship or sex partners or materials for acting out. It is a good idea to consider your motives before doing anything that might be an accessory behaviour. Ask yourself what outcome you are hoping for. Sometimes referred to as "mid lines," or "middle lines."

Acting Out

To engage in addictive behaviour.

ALCOHOLICS

A Life Centred On Helping Others Live In Complete Serenity

Anorexia

The compulsive avoidance of giving or receiving social, sexual, or emotional nourishment.

Basic Text

The fundamental text of SLAA

Big Book

Alcoholics Anonymous, also known as the "Big Book," presents the A.A. program for recovery from alcoholism. Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous is a Twelve Step, Twelve Tradition oriented fellowship based on the model pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous. Many meetings and sponsors use the Big Book in recovery.

Big Book Meeting

A meeting that relies on and may include regular references to, study of, and/or reading from the AA Big Book.

Bill W. (Bill Wilson)

Bill Wilson, often referred to as Bill W. to honour the anonymous nature of AA, is a co-founder of AA and author of the Big Book.

Birthday/Sobriety Birthday

Also called "anniversary", the 12-step community considers a person's 'birthday' to be the first day they achieved continuous abstinence from drugs, alcohol, or the compulsion they are working to overcome. Each year on that day they celebrate their birthday, and their time in recovery accumulates. If a person relapses, their sobriety time starts over, and their birthday is changed to the next day they achieve continuous abstinence.

Bookend

Addicts can arrange to "bookend" potentially triggering events with phone calls to a supportive friend in recovery. During the "before" call, the

addict commits to sobriety and discusses plans to avoid relapse. The “after” call provides an opportunity to discuss what happened, what feelings came up, and what the addict might want or need to do differently next time.

Bottom Line

Generally, self-defined activities which we refrain from in order to experience our physical, mental, emotional, sexual, and spiritual wholeness. When we “act out” on bottom lines, we are engaging in our addiction.

Burning Desire

Often, if there is remaining time at the end of the meeting, the chair asks if anyone has a burning desire to act out. This is also an opportunity for anyone who hasn't had a chance to share, to share.

Chair

To chair a meeting is to be of service by reading the script/format of the meeting and help keep a meeting going. Some meetings have additional responsibilities for the chair. In addition, some may have sobriety requirements to chair a meeting. Sometimes used interchangeably with the meeting “host,” though not always.

Chips/Coins/Medallions/Tokens

Many 12 step groups use chips, also called tokens, medallions, or coins, to mark a person's sobriety ‘birthday’. Newcomers may get a medallion at the beginning of their participation in a twelve-step group as a way of saying ‘welcome’, and ‘keep coming back’. Medallions are then given at occasions when individuals have achieved a certain amount of sobriety, or time abstaining from their addiction or compulsion. Medallions are given out every three months, six months, yearly, or at other intervals depending on the particular group.

Conference Approved (Literature)

The term “Conference-approved” describes written or audio-visual material approved by the Conference for publication by GSO. This process assures that everything in such literature is in accord with SLAA principles. Conference-approved material always deals with the recovery program of SLAA or with information about the Fellowship. It does not imply Conference disapproval of other material about SLAA. A great deal of literature helpful to addicts is published by others, and SLAA does not try to tell any individual member what they may or may not read.

Conference approval assures us that a piece of literature represents solid SLAA experience.

Co-Sponsor

Co-sponsors are two people who have worked the steps in another program and who start co-sponsoring each other very early in their time in SLAA.

Cross Talk

Cross-talk is defined as speaking while another fellow is speaking, speaking directly to another fellow through a share, or commenting directly on someone else's share during the meeting whether verbal or in the chat. Some meetings allow cross talk, while most only permit commenting on the lead speaker's share.

Double Winner

Double winner is a term that's typical of the black humour of old-school recovery. It means that you may have several addictions that require membership in different/multiple 12 Step groups

DSR

Daily Sobriety Renewal. As a tool of recovery, many fellows find it useful to check in with another fellow on a daily basis (call, text, etc.) to stay current and accountable by answering questions that are shared between recovery partners at the beginning of the day.

ESH

Experience, Strength, & Hope.

Fantasy

A compulsive reliance on imagined narratives or storylines as a way to escape, numb, or distract the addict from feeling negative emotions, most often centred around experienced or perceived trauma, abuse, pain, fear, abandonment or rejection. The imagined scenarios are often improbable or impossible, but the fantasies are a substitute for a reality that is unacceptable to the addict. Fantasy can include obsessing about the past (e.g. replaying scenarios with variations) or future tripping. Many SLAs find themselves in fantasy about partners/relationships.

FEAR

False Evidence Appearing Real. Self-generated fear or anxiety that arises purely from our own thoughts, not external reality.

- Face Everything and Recover.

- Fuck Everything and Run.
- Find Excuses and Reasons.
- Frantic Effort to Avoid Reality.
- For Everything A Reason.

Feedback (Meeting)

Meetings that permit fellows sharing to respond to other fellows' shares with respectful intent. See also "outreach with feedback."

Format

Sometimes referred to as the meeting "script." May also refer to the type of SLAA meeting (e.g. literature, speaker, etc.)

Gentle Path

A method of sponsorship/working SLAA that utilizes "A Gentle Path through the Twelve Steps: The Classic Guide for All People in the Process of Recovery"

Getting Current

Being accountable in a meeting or with a fellow by sharing thoughts, feelings, and recent situations that have contributed to feeling like one may act out, has acted out, or has triggered one's addiction.

GOD

Good Orderly Direction
Group Of Drunks

HALTS

Hungry Angry Lonely Tired Stressed. These are all things we need to be aware of because it can throw a wrench in our day, or program of recovery.

HOPE

Hang On, Pain Ends

Home Meeting/Group

The meeting that a fellow attends most regularly and/or feels most connected to

HOW

Honest, Open-Minded, and Willing to Listen. A method of sponsorship/working the program inspired by the Overeaters Anonymous (OA) HOW approach. The SLAA HOW concept was created to offer the sex and love addict a disciplined and structured approach to working the Twelve Steps.

HP / Higher Power

In the 5th major resource of SLAA, we draw on Spirituality. Our developing a relationship with a Power greater than ourselves which can guide and

sustain us in recovery. The key is that whatever you choose should be special and mean something personal to you, though it should not be another human being. SLAA is not affiliated with any religion, sect, or denomination, though the program is spiritual in nature. Through developing a relationship with a Higher Power *of our choosing*, we learn to stop using addictive behaviours as a substitute for intimacy. Many non-religious members choose the collective support of the group or a concept of the universe as their Higher Power. Your Higher Power is personal to you, and you are not required to believe in God(s) to attend meetings.

HUMAN

Humbly Understanding Mistakes Are Necessary

Intrigue

Our attempts to arouse the interest of a prospective sexual or emotional partner by secret or underhanded schemes like, dress, looks, or gifts. Flirting is an example of intrigue that appears in the form of flirtatious, suggestive phone, text, or email.

IUD

Intensity, Urgency, Drama

LAVA

Love Attention Validation Approval

Lead (share)

To "lead" means to share for an extended period of time in a meeting, sometimes on a particular topic or area of focus the meeting is dedicated to (e.g. fantasy, anorexia, etc.). The typical, though not required, format is to share a) what it was like, b) what happened, and c) what it's like now and to share experience, strength, and hope. The fellow giving the lead share traditionally has a certain level of sobriety as required by the particular meeting. Most meetings allow fellows to respond, relate, and/or comment on the lead during their personal share. See also "qualify" and "speaker meeting."

Literature Meeting

A meeting that uses conference, and sometimes non-conference, approved literature as a part of the structure. For example, the meeting may regularly read from the SLAA Basic Text, AA Big Book, or other program literature for a set amount of time.

Meditation Meeting

A meeting format that utilizes guided or independent meditation for a set amount of time as a part of the meeting

Mid Lines

An action that falls short of a bottom-line behaviour but is not a top-line behaviour; an action that feels close to acting out or acting in but does not cross the line; an action that is at the edge. See also/Sometimes referred to as “accessory behaviours.”

No Contact

With the No Contact Rule, you decide to no longer see, meet with, text, call, email, message or otherwise contact/remain involved with a qualifier, in any way possible after the relationship has ended. It is a self-care strategy of detaching yourself 100% from an unhealthy attachment... at all costs.

NUTS

Not Using the Steps

Open Sharing

A portion of a meeting that allows for fellows to share, typically for 2-3 minutes. Fellows may be encouraged to reflect on the speaker's lead share, the literature read, or a particular theme/area of recovery and/or get current.

Outreach

Making contact with another fellow to get current, bookend, or otherwise stay engaged in recovery. Making outreach calls to fellow members in the program helps us break our isolation, relieve our feelings of loneliness, and helps us create or maintain a solid foundation of sobriety. Some experienced members in recovery recommend that all members, especially newcomers, make two to three outreach calls a day. Outreach calls to fellow sobriety members are important for both the caller and the person receiving the call. Outreach calls are also different from calls to a sponsor. While a sponsor is a spiritual guide who helps a member work through the Steps, an outreach fellow member can be anyone who is working the SLAA program, whether they are a newcomer or someone who has been working the Steps for a while.

Outreach with Feedback (FB)

To engage in an outreach call with another fellow, inviting To direct or indirect responses to what has been shared. For example, to offer someone ESH to their problems or to address someone directly during their share.

Parking Lot

Informal time after a meeting where fellows may conduct “overflow sharing” for folks who were unable to share during the meeting, ask questions about the fellowship, or simply commune.

PAUSE

Postpone Action Until Spirit Enters

P & M

Porn & Masturbation. In order to refrain from graphic descriptions of acting out or triggering other's addictions, many fellows use this acronym to share bottom lines. A variant is PMO - Porn, Masturbation, Orgasm.

Primetime

A method of sponsorship/working the steps borrowed from the Primetime AA method. The purpose of Primetime is to talk about the reason to come to SLAA; to expose addiction not just as a word, but as a living mind-powered disease; how the disease appears and functions in our lives today in order to deepen our awareness of what we are up against.

Qualifier

A person or other object of obsession that helps us realize we qualify for membership in this program. It is not a requirement to have a qualifier or qualifiers to be a member of SLAA; however, many of us identify additional qualifiers (including ourselves) as we work the steps.

Qualification

To “qualify” at a meeting is to be of service by having the lead share on how/why you qualify for SLAA. Format often includes what it was like, what happened, and what it is like now. See also “lead share” and “speaker meeting.”

Recovery Partner

A recovery partner is someone with whom you check in on a regular basis. Being accountable to someone can be very beneficial to your recovery. It is suggested that you make an agreement with someone in the program to check in often, even daily if possible. It should be someone that you

feel comfortable being honest with, that you can share the areas of your recovery that are important to you. Your recovery partner may be a member of SLAA, or another friend in recovery. This tool can be a valuable addition to sponsorship or a great help while you are looking for a sponsor.

Service

Being “of service” means to aid the fellowship in meetings, online, etc. There are no dues to be in SLAA, therefore the fellowship relies on fellows to keep the program going. There are many ways to be of service in different stages of recovery, including the newcomer. Examples include reading in a meeting; keeping time in a meeting; taking a longer term service commitment (e.g. meeting secretary); and, moderating an online SLAA space

SG

Signal Group – see WAG

Sober Dating

After a period of abstinence in recovery, fellows may begin dating again after their sponsor has cleared them to do so or when they personally feel in a place to do so. This process includes developing a “dating plan” to better define and avoid addictive patterns, determine appropriateness of potential partners, establish relationship must-haves, and define timelines for intimacy, among other things.

SHAME

Should Have Already Mastered Everything
Self Hate And Mental Exhaustion

Slip

A ‘slip’ usually refers to a time when a person engages in an addictive behaviour, but only to a small degree. It means that the person realized it right away and avoided a full relapse. Each group views slips differently.

SLIP

Sobriety Losing Its Priority

Speaker Meeting

A meeting format that consists of a speaker, typically with a certain level of sobriety (e.g. minimum step requirement, minimum time sober, etc.) to “lead” by sharing their experience, strength, and hope in working SLAA. In a speaker meeting, shares may respond to the speaker, and this is not considered crosstalk.

Sponsor

Sponsorship is among the most important tools for continued recovery in SLAA, along with regular attendance at meetings and working the Twelve Steps. Sponsorship offers us a powerful tool for gaining clarity about our addiction. We find support and guidance in dealing with our addictive patterns and begin to realize new options for living in recovery. A sponsor is a person who has found sobriety from their addictive behaviours and who gives us individual support and guidance in applying the SLAA Twelve Step Program of recovery to our lives. A sponsor is neither a parent, a therapist, nor a confessor. A sponsor is a person with whom we have no ulterior motive, whom we do not pay, and from whom we seek neither absolution nor judgment. A prospective sponsor should be sober, have clear bottom lines, have gone through withdrawal, be working the steps, be available, and ideally have their own sponsor. See also “*Temporary Sponsor*”

Stag

A traditional 12-step term referring to a meeting closed to fellows of a specific gender. For example, a “women’s stag” meeting is only open to women.

Step Study Meeting

A meeting that uses the 12 steps of SLAA as the main focus, often focusing on one step for a set amount of time (e.g. each week, month, etc.)

Temporary Sponsor

A temporary or interim sponsor works within the limits of their personal experience and knowledge, to help a newcomer or fellow for 30 days or another agreed upon length of time. The main goal is for the sponsee to be introduced to some of the tools we use to get sober and stay sober. It is very helpful during this period to have a person who can answer questions, give guidance and help develop the beginning of a recovery plan (e.g. set initial bottom lines). Among other things, a temporary sponsor may: Encourage the newcomer to attend a variety of meetings and help them find meetings; Introduce the newcomer to other members, including potential sponsors, when possible; and, Introduce the newcomer to SLAA literature. When you find someone who more fully meets your needs, you can thank the temporary sponsor for their service and move on.

Terminal Uniqueness

The false belief that the situation an addict is facing is unlike anything other addicts have ever before been able to relate to. In other words, people with this condition believe that no one else has ever encountered what they are facing and therefore, no one can understand what they're going through. Terminal uniqueness has its roots in addictive thinking, that voice that keeps us acting out or using; sure that no one understands us. It's a voice that protects the addiction, part of denial – a voice that never leads anywhere good.

Top Lines

Top Lines are healthy behaviours and activities we do in place of our unhealthy, addictive behaviours. By taking these contrary actions, we prove to ourselves we ARE capable of making healthy choices. We can't get sober and simply stop our destructive behaviour in a vacuum. We can take creative actions, and prove we are capable of making healthy choices. It can start with small additions to our daily routine.

Torchbearer

Love addicts who obsess for years are called Torchbearers. This used to be called unrequited love. This kind of love addiction, more than any other, feeds on fantasies and delusions. Torchbearers often believe that their infatuation is reciprocated (returned) when it is not (erotomania). Someone who is still in love with their high school sweetheart is a torchbearer. Torchbearers cannot fall out of love after withdrawal. They must wait to fall in love with someone new and transfer the limerence.

Two-Way Prayer

The basis of two-way prayer is a daily practice of sitting with a notebook or diary, getting very quiet and having a written conversation with a Higher Power of your choosing. You write to HP and ask questions, and then you listen quietly (or using active imagination) write back to yourself from HP.

WAG

WhatsApp Group – see SC

Withdrawal

This is the first stage of SLAA recovery. It is a necessary part of recovery. Just as with chemical addictions (alcohol, narcotics, etc.), there is a period of withdrawal that will occur once you stop your addictive behaviour. The physical, mental, emotional, and often spiritual upheaval which generally accompanies the release of our addictive pattern is called "withdrawal". This feeling may reoccur as we separate from (addictive) relationships throughout our ongoing recovery.

Whether our craving is for sex, romance, or relationships, whether this craving is constant or periodic, not satisfying such a craving often comes as a shock to our system. Times of withdrawal can be uncomfortable for many of us. Our bodies go through unexpected physical changes; our emotions hit highs and lows we never imagined possible. We feel, perhaps for the first time ever, the void which we had previously sought to fill with our addiction(s).

"We" Version

The "we" version of the Serenity Prayer replaces first-person pronouns (e.g. grant *me* things *I* cannot change, etc.) with third-person pronoun words "we, us." (e.g. grant *us* things *we* cannot change, etc.)

White-Knuckling

White-knuckling sobriety means you are going it alone, and you have no solution for your addiction. White-knuckling your sobriety means you are trying to manage your addiction without help. You are using your willpower or trying to fix yourself with your mind.

YETs

You're Eligible To's. As we recover and work the steps with a Sponsor, we reach milestones. For example, someone who is single may be "cleared" by their sponsor (i.e. become eligible) to begin sober dating.

For more info and resources, visit: <https://slaafws.org/slaaterms/> and <https://slaavirtual.org/language/>