

## **The Serenity Prayer**

*All at will:*

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the  
difference.

## How It Works

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it - then you are ready to take certain steps.

At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember that we deal with sexual addiction - cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power - that One is God. May you find God now!

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked God's protection and care with complete abandon.

Many of us exclaimed, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- a) That we were sexually addicted and could not manage our lives.
- b) That probably no human power could have relieved our addiction.
- c) That God could and would if God were sought.

## The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over addictive sexual behaviour - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts and to practise these principles in our lives.

## The Twelve Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon S.A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as may be expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership in S.A.A. is a desire to stop addictive sexual behaviour.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or S.A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the addict who still suffers.
6. Our fellowship ought never to endorse, finance, or lend its name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Each group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Sex Addicts Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centres may employ special workers.
9. S.A.A. as such, ought never be organised; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Sex Addicts Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the S.A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



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<http://saa-store.org/7thTradition>

<http://saauk.info/donate>

<http://saatalk.info/donate>

## The Promises

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development we will be amazed before we are half way through.

We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.

We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.

We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.

No matter how far down the scale we have gone we will see how our experiences can benefit others.

That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.

We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.

Self-seeking will slip away.

Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.

Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.

We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.

We will suddenly realise that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises?

***All at will: We think not.***

They are being fulfilled among us: sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialise if we work for them.

## **The Serenity Prayer**

*All at will:* God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.

*All at will:* Keep coming back, it works if you work it - so work it, you're worth it!



## A Letter To Newcomers

Dear [name(s)],

Welcome to S.A.A.. When we came to our first meeting many of us were having a variety of feelings. We were relieved to have found a place where our pain and despair might be understood. We were angry that we had to get help and couldn't manage this part of our lives. We felt lonely and were ashamed of our sexual history. We had secrets that we were reluctant to share. We were distrustful, guarded and frightened. We had been abused and we had abused others. We were sex addicts and needed help.

The programme of S.A.A. is patterned after the Twelve Step Programme of Alcoholics Anonymous. Here we learn a new way of living. We learn, at our own pace, to experience intimacy and sharing with others in a healthy way. We learn to trust; to express our feelings; to ask for our needs to be met; to say no when no is appropriate; and to stay around when all we want to do is run. Here no one shames us for what we have done or are still doing. Here we have a safe harbour within which to heal, and for that we are grateful.

The only requirement for membership in S.A.A. is a desire to stop compulsive sexual behaviours. It is a programme of progress, not perfection. If you are willing to be honest and have a desire to have and maintain healthy relationships, then you are in the right place.

It is suggested that you attend at least six meetings before you decide whether the programme is for you. At your first meeting we encourage you to talk to others and exchange telephone numbers with those you relate to. We also suggest that you select a temporary sponsor to assist you in learning the basics. The selection process is easy: all you do is ask someone you relate to (to whom you are not sexually attracted) if they would be willing to be your temporary sponsor until you learn your way around. At a later date, after you have got to know us better, we suggest you choose a permanent sponsor or co-sponsor.

Although anonymity is a core tradition on which the programme depends, you should be aware that some people may decide after careful thought to report certain disclosures to the authorities.

If you find yourself feeling triggered by something someone shares, or has said during a meeting, please do not interrupt the meeting or the person speaking. Instead, please try to deal with it by trying the following: mute the line for a few minutes, say silently to yourself something like: "I am feeling triggered". Speak about it after the meeting in Fellowship, speak to your sponsor or another member of the group... but again, please do not interrupt the meeting or the person speaking.

In addition to attending meetings and talking with others we suggest you read our primary text [Sex Addicts Anonymous](#) and the [S.A.A. pamphlets](#) available via Intergroup. We also recommend *Hope and Recovery, Out of the Shadows* by Patrick Carnes, *Women, Sex and Addiction* by Charlotte Kasl, the pamphlet [A Special Welcome to the Woman Newcomer](#) from other women members of SAA, and [Alcoholics Anonymous \(The Big Book\)](#).

We are happy that you are here, for it is the newcomer that keeps S.A.A. alive and well. We encourage you to take it ONE DAY AT A TIME, BE GENTLE WITH YOURSELF, and KEEP COMING BACK.

## Tools of the Programme

- Anonymity and Confidentiality
- Abstinence
- Sponsorship
- Literature
- Contracts
- Gratitude
- Journaling
- Humour
- Exercise
- Honesty
- The Twelve Steps
- Slogans
- Meditation
- Prayer
- Service
- Traditions
- Phone Lists
- Meetings
- Affirmations
- Boundaries
- Boundaries around sex between group members