Introducing Sex Addicts Anonymous to the Professional Community

Conference Approved
October 2023
PI/CPC Series

© 2021 International Service Organization of SAA, Inc. (SAA)

Do you have patients or clients who cannot control their problematic sexual behavior despite negative consequences? The fellowship of Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) is here to help.

Members of SAA share their experience, strength, and hope with each other so that they may find freedom from addictive sexual behavior and help others recover from sexual addiction. SAA was founded in 1977 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Today, SAA is an international society with meetings in many countries.

SAA is a resource for you

Sex Addicts Anonymous is dedicated to cooperation with the professional community to achieve our common goal of assisting people suffering from compulsive or addictive sexual behaviors. SAA provides free resources to you and your clients. Our goal is to improve our connection with you and to cooperate more effectively together in helping people who are struggling to regain their lives. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

SAA believes that sex addiction is a threefold disease: physical, mental, and spiritual. Like alcoholism and substance abuse, in our experience the addiction is not cured, but recovery is possible. The SAA program is a resource that can enhance your client's recovery. We can offer our personal experience, strength, and hope with recovery from sex addiction and serve as an ongoing support system for recovering sex addicts.

Examples of problematic sexual behavior

In our experience, no single behavior defines sex addiction. One common characteristic is that when we tried to stop or moderate our problematic sexual behaviors, we found we could not. Sex addiction can include any number of chronic or compulsive behaviors, such as:

- Sexual or romantic obsession
- Pornography addiction, cybersex, or cyberstalking
- Destructive or serial relationships
- Sexual avoidance/anorexia
- Infidelity/affairs
- Risky, anonymous, or illegal sexual activity
- Voyeurism or exhibitionism

Consequences of sex addiction

Left untreated, sex addiction often leads to painful consequences such as:

- Divorce/family breakups
- Financial stress/ruin
- Job/career loss
- Loss of freedom/incarceration
- Risk to life or health (Suicide, STIs, Homicide)

The mental anguish of sex addiction can be just as severe and can include:

- Depression, despair, loneliness
- Guilt, shame, remorse
- Fear, anxiety, hopelessness

SAA has developed a list of questions your clients could use to help them decide if they might benefit from the SAA program. Those questions can be found at: https://saa-recovery.org/am-i-a-sex-addict/self-assessment/

Common client questions

How does SAA work?

The basic premise of SAA is that addicts can help each other recover from sexual addiction. The core of the SAA program is the Twelve Steps, a set of guidelines that can help addicts achieve recovery. By following these guidelines and working closely with other addicts, those seeking recovery learn to face life in a sexually sober manner. The steps can also help addicts recover from the damaging beliefs and attitudes underlying their sex addiction.

Why is SAA anonymous?

Anonymity is one of the guiding principles of the SAA program. Anonymity allows addicts to attend meetings without fear of their identity being disclosed. Confidence that their anonymity will be respected can help an addict feel safe attending meetings.

Can anyone be an SAA member?

Membership is open to anyone with a desire to stop their addictive sexual behavior. There is no other requirement. Our fellowship is open to all genders, regardless of race, religion, ethnic background, marital status, or occupation. We welcome members of any sexual identity or orientation.

What are SAA meetings?

Meetings are the heart of the SAA fellowship, where our primary approach to recovery—addicts helping addicts—takes place.

Most SAA meetings are held at the same time and place each week, in a public facility or online, and are led by the members. A list of SAA meetings can be found at: https://saa-recovery.org/meetings/

Is SAA a religious organization?

Sex Addicts Anonymous is not aligned with any sect, denomination, or dogma. The Twelve-Step program of recovery is considered spiritual in nature because the program leads to inner change and involves surrender to a power greater than ourselves. Our program includes religious and non-religious members. Everyone is welcome.

What SAA offers to its members

- **Acceptance and support:** Members receive acceptance and understanding of their problems from people who have experienced the same or similar issues. This supportive community offers the kind of help and encouragement needed to initiate and sustain recovery.

- **Recovery tools:** The SAA Twelve-Step program provides the tools, guidance, and accountability needed to recover from sex addiction.
- **Hope:** SAA offers hope of a new way of life, free from compulsive sexual behavior.

SAA offers daily support and accountability for clients between professional appointments. Our program has helped many people recover from a wide range of problematic sexual behaviors. As a result, many professionals refer their clients to SAA as a complement to professional treatment.

What SAA does not do

SAA is not therapy or treatment, has no opinion on the subject, and does not diagnose any medical or psychological conditions. All participation is voluntary. SAA does not pressure or solicit people to attend. SAA offers no clinical, scientific, or professional expertise. We do not participate in research or keep any records or case studies. We are not allied or affiliated with any outside organization or cause, although SAA members, groups, and special workers in our international service office frequently cooperate with them. SAA does not compete with anyone. We make no claims of effectiveness.

Free resources for the professional community

Sex Addicts Anonymous is happy to cooperate with professionals. SAA provides free and confidential resources for

you as well as for your clients. Resources available for you as a professional include:

- Free email subscription to our bi-monthly newsletter The Outer Circle
- Client referral packets (collection of basic pamphlets and a welcome letter from SAA to the newcomer, customized for your local area)
- List of SAA members willing to talk to your clients, if available
- SAA speakers and informational presentations at your facility
- Open meetings (meetings that you, your colleagues, and other non-sex addicts are welcome to attend)
- Exhibitors and/or speakers for professional conferences
- SAA literature

The Twelve Steps of Sex Addicts Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over addictive sexual behavior - 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 practice these principles in our lives.

How to Contact SAA

International Service Organization of SAA, Inc. (SAA):

P. O. Box 70949

Houston, TX 77270, United States

info@saa-recovery.org

www.saa-recovery.org

+1 713-869-4902