

[The following is a 1984 letter to the fellowship asking the question, "What is SA?" It is included here for the benefit of those not familiar with some of the history of SA.]

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Dear Friends in SA,

We are about to share together in the task of responding to all the leads coming in from those who have read our brochure and are serious about wanting this program. Because of the response, and questions being raised about the program within SA, we should stop and ask ourselves the crucial question, Just what is our program? What do we really have to offer? If we speak with uncertainty or out of weakness, or if we are divided on what our message really is, we will offer nothing but uncertainty, weakness, confusion, and ultimately despair to those coming to us for life and hope.

Many are perceiving around us today in other 12-Step programs, including AA itself, a pronounced trend away from the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions as originally set forth in the AA literature—the source of it all. Someone was saying in a local AA meeting, "I can't remember the last time anyone talked about the Steps." Sad but true. Anything but the Steps. And will they say the same about us?

If we stop and think about it, I'm sure we'll see what the program is not—that it is not organization power. . . personality power, money power, pop psychology power, or "fuzzy love" power.

The 12-Step program is from first to last God-power. The program of the Big Book, The Twelve and Twelve, and our own literature has to do with the power of a changed life—a life ruled by God instead of self. SA is not a self-help program!

So just what is the SA program?

First of all, it has to do with what we call sexaholism and sexaholics. Sexaholics are not everybody; we are those who have lost control in the lust/sex/relationship area. We are those who have been unable to regain control by ourselves. SA is not for everybody with sex problems; it is for those who want to stop their sexually self-destructive thinking and behavior but can't.

Secondly, the SA program means sobriety. Without sexual sobriety we have nothing. Without sobriety we would have to strike any pretended relation to the original 12-Step program and advertise hand-holding "rap sessions" for those who want a "support group." And we can't talk about sobriety without defining it—even if we don't hit people over the head with our definition (Remember, it's attraction rather than promotion). Our experiences and group consciences past and present clearly draw the line

here. That's the way it is in both AA and SA. And marriage is marriage in the simple historic concept of the term, nothing else. That's simply the way it is. SA is not for everyone. There are other groups that open this door as wide as some would have it opened, and they are welcome there.

Membership in SA is contingent upon only one thing—the desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober. We've been doing just fine with our definition; it is a proven force of attraction; some SA groups insist on its being read in every meeting. Many groups experience wrestling with this issue, but our common experience has brought us through to where we are.

What sobriety really means is freedom—freedom not to be and not to do what we always had to be and do.

Therefore let us stand.

Thirdly, the SA program presents a clear view of the sexaholic person and God. In Step Three it says, "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God...." Being caretakers of our own will and lives destroyed us and brought us into the program! Now we turn them over to the One who can and lovingly does truly care for us.

See how the Big Book and Twelve and Twelve speak of God and man:

"First of all, we had to quit playing God. It didn't work. Next, we decided that hereafter in this drama of life, God was going to be our Director. He is the Principal; we are His agents. He is the Father and we are His children."

(Bill W. in the Big Book, p. 62)

The AA literature does not founder on any trendy controversies; it keeps it simple—man is man, and God is God.

The Steps clearly imply that the alcoholic or sexaholic is defective, incomplete, in opposition to God, and powerless to save himself (see Steps One, Two, Three, Six, Seven, and Eleven). But the Steps don't leave us there (we knew that all along anyway!) they speak of the One who is for the defective, the powerless, and the unwell—the One who sets us free and awakens us, the One we can truly know. God is truly for the sexaholic.

The fundamental premise of the entire 12-Step program is, "I can't; God can; I'll let Him." Listen to Bill W.'s story:

"There I humbly offered myself to God, as I then understood Him, to do with me as He would. I placed myself unreservedly under His care and direction. I admitted for the first time that of myself I was nothing; that without Him I was lost. I ruthlessly faced my sins and became willing to have my new-found Friend take them away, root and branch. I have not had a drink since." (Big Book, p. 13)

In summary, what is the SA program? It is:

Sexaholism as a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual malady.

Sexual Sobriety

God

The 12 Steps

The 12 Traditions.

This is our Program! Therefore, let us stand!

This is our Program; let us make haste slowly in all our rush to activity. Let us put the priority on action—taking the actions of the Steps in our own personal lives first. Everything will flow from this, even the right organizational structure.

We're about to reach out our hands to those desperate for a miracle. Try offering true sexaholics any power other than God as mediated through surrendered lives and see what happens!

I urge us all to not let any of our decisions and activity get ahead of our slow growth in sobriety, victory over our defects, and unity of Fellowship. As in "A Vision For You," the priority is always that we get our own house in order first—that our relationship with Him be right. Then, it is promised, great events will come to pass for us and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us.

[signed Roy]

P.S. For those of our new friends who may not be familiar with these terms, the "Big Book" is the book Alcoholics Anonymous, and the Twelve and Twelve is the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. These can be purchased at most AA meetings or from the AA Central Offices in your city.