

SAA: Nottingham Wednesday Meeting

Meeting Script

Opening

Good evening. My name is _____ and I am a sex addict.

➤ *[In person meeting only]*

As we open the meeting, please make sure all mobile phones are switched off.

For the toilets, turn left out of this room, go through the first door and they're on your left.

If the fire alarm goes off, you can turn left or right out of this room, to go down either staircase, following the green fire exit signs.

Free parking is available outside but please make sure all cars are out by 9.30pm, when the barrier will be locked.

➤ *[Telemeeting only]*

Just to make members aware before we start the meeting, that anyone using the Free Conference Call App can see participant's telephone numbers. If members wish to preserve their anonymity then please drop off the call and re-dial using the 141 prefix before the meeting's telephone number.

Please treat this meeting as you would any face to face meeting and make sure that when you are not speaking that you mute your phone by pressing *6 or mute when using the app. Remember this is a program of constant thought of others and unmuted phones can cause unwanted disruption to the meeting. To unmute your phone type *6 again or unmute on the app. If you are having issues with the conference system please speak to the secretary after the meeting.

Welcome! This is the Nottingham Wednesday Meeting of Sex Addicts Anonymous.

SAA is a fellowship of men and women who share our experience, strength and hope with each other so that we may stop our addictive sexual behaviour and help others to recover from sexual addiction and dependency. Membership is open to all who share a desire to stop our compulsive sexual behaviour and are willing to try to follow this simple programme.

The programme is based on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous but we are not affiliated with AA or any other organisation or agency. We are not aligned with any religion, sect or denomination. Our only connection with the organization that operates this building is that of a renter of meeting space.

This is not a place to meet sexual partners, nor is it group therapy. We try to listen respectfully to what others have to say and share our own experience as it seems appropriate. We do not give advice.

Anonymity is a cornerstone of the Twelve Step Programme. We use only our first names here. Whatever our status or position outside this group is not an issue. Whoever you see and whatever you hear in this room, let them stay here when you leave. If you are new or having a trying time, remember that others of us have been there too. Keep coming back, it works!

Please could I have a volunteer to read:

- The Problem
- How It Works
- The 12 Steps

Meditation

Thank you. We will now have a moment's silence in which to reflect on why we are here and to think of the still suffering addict.

[30 seconds]

Newcomers

Thank you. A newcomer is someone who is attending one of their first six SAA meetings. Do we have any newcomers at this evening's meeting?

[If appropriate:]

Welcome. Please can we have the Letter To The Newcomer.

Newcomers are entitled to a free literature pack, containing SAA leaflets to help you with your recovery. Our Literature Secretary [name] will help you with this at the end of the meeting.

Sponsorship

Please can we have the **Sponsorship Statement**.

Members who are available to be sponsors or temporary sponsors, please raise your hands now.

Thank you. If you're having trouble finding a sponsor, a list of phone numbers of potential sponsors is available. Please see me at the end of the meeting for more details.

Group Introductions

We now come to Group Introductions in which we each introduce ourselves by our first name only, and, if we wish, say how we are feeling at this moment. Please keep this very brief as there will be an opportunity for general sharing later.

Starting with the secretary: My name is _____ and I am a _____

Weekly Topic

Week 1: Reading (Twelve & Twelve)

We now come to this week's topic, which is a reading from The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, which was written by a co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. The book gives context and perspective to working through the Twelve Steps. It also lists and describes the Twelve Traditions that our fellowship follows.

Week 2: Main Share

We now come to this week's topic. Once a month, one of our members delivers a 'Main Share', which lasts 15 minutes. Any member can deliver a Main Share on any topic they wish, and if you would like to do so at a future meeting, please let me know.

[Either:] This week, _____ has volunteered to give a Main Share.....

[Or:] As nobody is available to give a Main Share this month, we will listen to a recording which may help us in our recovery. This can be a recording of a Main Share from AA or SAA, or a radio programme or podcast relevant to SAA recovery. If you would like to suggest a CD or podcast, please let me know.

This week, we will be listening to _____

Week 3: Reading (Green Book)

We now come to this week's topic. At our meetings we read from the Blue Book, also known as the AA Big Book, and the SAA Green Book. The Blue Book is the original guide to working the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and it keeps us connected to the long history and traditions of AA and of Twelve Step Fellowship. The SAA Green Book is just as useful, as it contains advice specifically tailored to sex addiction.

This week we will be reading from the Green Book.

Week 4: Ten minute meditation

We now come to the focus of this week's meeting, which is a ten minute meditation. Some of us find meditation or silent reflection a useful way to clear our minds of daily worries, bringing us back into contact with our Higher Power.

Secretary will act as timekeeper.

Week 5: Reading (Blue Book)

We now come to this week's topic. At our meetings we read from the Blue Book, also known as the AA Big Book, and the SAA Green Book. The Blue Book is the original guide to working the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and it keeps us connected to the long history and traditions of AA and of Twelve Step Fellowship. The SAA Green Book is just as useful, as it contains advice specifically tailored to sex addiction.

This week, we will be reading from the Blue Book.

General Sharing

When sharing, please remember to avoid mentioning places and behaviours that may be triggering to others. Please use "I" statements rather than "you" statements, and please avoid cross-sharing. This means we speak to the group as a whole and do not make direct comments on someone else's share, or give them advice or criticism. Remember each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the still suffering sex addict.

Could you try to keep your shares to approximately five minutes, and please do not be offended if you are asked to stop by me.

The Seventh Tradition

We now come to the Seventh Tradition. That every SAA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. Please give only as you can and as you see fit. Please bear in mind, however, that the rent for this room is £9 per meeting plus other expenses, including refreshments and group literature. If you can afford to give a little extra, your support will help us all in our recovery. Newcomers are not expected to contribute at their first meeting.

[If necessary: Please be aware that last week we only managed to raise £__.]

Group Business

All members are welcome to join us for fellowship after the meeting every week.
[Details]

Would anyone like to bring any group business?

Sobriety Chips

Secretary: Can I ask someone to do the chips?

The Promises

Secretary: And finally, The Promises. Please read one and then pass them along.

Service Positions & Closing

Secretary: In closing, we would like to thank all members that do service for this group:

Treasurer: [name]

Greeter: [name]

Literature Secretary: [name]

Teas and Coffees: [name]

Main Share Finder: [name]

And thank you for allowing me to be of service to you as group secretary. Service Positions are essential to our meeting's survival and they renew every three months.

The opinions expressed here today were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you like and leave the rest.

Remember that anonymity is a core tradition on which the programme depends. Will you join me in reading the words on this card:

What you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here.

Whatever problems you have, there are those among us who have had them too. If you keep an open mind, you will find help. Let us talk to one another and reason things out but let us not gossip or criticise. Instead, let the understanding, love and peace of the programme grow in each of us one day at a time.

Please join me in the closing serenity prayer, standing and holding hands, using the word God as you understand it.

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

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

Readings

The Problem

Many of us find our histories have several characteristics in common. Early on, as children and adolescents, we had come to feel disconnected – from siblings and peers, from parents and from ourselves. We felt inadequate, unworthy, alone and afraid. Our insides never matched what we saw on the outsides of others. We lost the ability to trust in others to fulfil our needs for nurturing and security.

To compensate for our loss, we started to develop a reliance on sexual experience as a way of escaping the pain and the emptiness of our lives. Some of us feared being sexual at all. We weren't able to see that our sexuality was healthy and God-given.

Looking for love in all the wrong places, we became true addicts: promiscuity, dependent relationships, abusive relationships, pornography, compulsive masturbation, anonymous sexual encounters, and much more besides. We got it through the eyes. We bought it, we sold it, we traded it, we gave it away. Addicted to the tease, the forbidden, to the high, we abused others and we abused ourselves.

In a vicious downward spiral of despair we acted out to try to take away our pain, but this only increased our self-hatred which, sooner or later, we would try to ease again by acting out. The more we did it, the more difficult it was for us to stop. We risked our relationships, our jobs, our health, our freedom, even our lives. We felt guilty, ashamed and in pain, and we were driven ever inwards, away from reality, away from love, lost inside ourselves.

Our addiction made true intimacy impossible. Lust killed love. We took from others to fill up what was lacking in ourselves and, in desperate search of the Big Fix, we turned other human beings into objects of our gratification. We could never know true intimacy with another because we were addicted to the unreal, the chemistry, the intoxication and the intensity of the pursuit. We looked for the instant hit, the danger, the connection that had the magic because it bypassed intimacy and true union with another, which we feared more than death. Conning ourselves time and again that the next one would save us, we were really losing our lives.

In the solution, by surrendering again and again to the discipline of meeting with each other, we find that people, without knowing it, through the honest revelation of our lives, confront us with our disease as it really is; and, by bringing our disease out of the shadows and into the light of the meeting, we deprive it of its source of power, which is in our secrecy and shame. As time passes, we gradually realise that we are coming to accept ourselves and to recognise that we really do have worth and value. Our healing has already begun.

How It Works

We are sex addicts. Our addiction nearly destroyed our lives, but we found freedom through the recovery programme of Sex Addicts Anonymous. In the fellowship of SAA, we discovered that we are not alone and that meeting regularly together to share experience, strength and hope gives us the choice to live a new life.

Our addictive sexual behaviour was causing pain: to ourselves, our friends, and our loved ones. Our lives were out of control. We may have wanted to quit, making promises, and many attempts to stop, yet we repeatedly failed to do so. For each of us, there came a moment of crisis. When we finally reached out for help, we found recovery through the programme of SAA.

We have found, through long and painful experience, that we are unable to achieve recovery from our sexual addiction through our own efforts. Our programme is based on the belief, confirmed by our experience, that a Power greater than ourselves can accomplish for us what we could not do alone. By surrendering our addiction to a Higher Power, we receive the gift of recovery, one day at a time.

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 all 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.

Letter To The Newcomer

Dear Newcomer,

Welcome to SAA.

When we came to our first meeting, many of us experienced a variety of emotions. 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 could not 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 we needed help.

The programme of SAA is patterned after the Twelve Steps 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 SAA is a desire to stop addictive sexual behaviours. It is a programme of progress, not perfection. If you are willing to be honest and have a desire to have and to maintain healthy relationships, then we believe that 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. Remember, however, that there is no obligation on you to attend meetings if you do not want to. We encourage you to talk to others and to exchange phone numbers with those whom you relate to. We urge you not to feel offended if others do not want to give their phone numbers, and remember that you only have to give your own number where you feel comfortable doing so.

We also suggest that you select a temporary sponsor to assist you in learning the basics. Ask someone you relate to if they would be willing to be your temporary sponsor until you learn your way around.

We are happy that you are here, for it is the newcomer who keeps SAA alive and well. You may not believe it at this moment, but we have as much to learn from you, as you have to learn for us. We encourage you to take it one day a time, be gentle with yourself and keep coming back!

Sponsorship Statement

One of the most vital aspects of the program is sponsorship. A sponsor is a person in the fellowship who acts as a guide to working the program of SAA, a fellow addict that we can rely upon for support. Ideally, a sponsor is abstinent from addictive sexual behaviour, has worked the steps, and can teach you what he or she has learned from working the program. We can learn from a sponsor's experience, struggles, successes and mistakes. Our sponsor can help explain programme fundamentals, such as how to define our sexual sobriety. Most importantly, sponsors guide us through the Twelve Steps.

If we feel like acting out, we can call our sponsor to talk about it. A sponsor can help hold us accountable for our behaviour. If we make a commitment to attend a meeting, our sponsor can note whether we got to the meeting or not. Sponsors can tell us if they think we are at risk of relapse. They can suggest when we are not being fully honest with ourselves. Often a sponsor is the person in the fellowship who knows us best.

Sobriety Chips

At our meeting, we celebrate progress not perfection by giving away chips with a clap, and a hug if you wish. These chips are for any period of sobriety you choose.

Is there anyone celebrating:

Multiples of years

18 months

12 months

9 months

6 months

3 months

2 months

1 month

Most importantly, is there anyone wishing to celebrate a new way of life with a one day sobriety chip?

The Promises

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway 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 experience 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: We think not.

They are being fulfilled among us: sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.

They will always materialise if we work for them.

Group Conscience

Service Positions

To be read out by the Secretary at Group Conscience to renew Service Positions:

Because every SAA Group is self-organising, Service Positions are essential to our meeting's survival. Service Positions renew every three months. If you hold a Service Position, it's expected that you will attend this meeting every week. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please find someone to stand in for you during Group Business.

To hold the positions of Secretary or Treasurer you should have at least six months sobriety and have worked up to Step Five or beyond. If nobody who fits this criteria is available to take these positions, others may volunteer. All other positions are open to all members.

At this Group Conscience, we ask every member who currently holds a Service Position if they would like to keep their position. Then we ask if any other members would like to volunteer for the position. Finally, each position will be decided according to a vote.

Voting Procedure

For each position:

[name], would you be happy to keep your position of _____?
Would anyone like to second them?

Would any other member like to volunteer themselves for the position?
Would anyone like to second them?

If a person wants to keep their existing position and nobody stands against them:

- Invite them to say a few words about why they would like the position (optional)
- For Treasurer & Secretary, ask for their sobriety time and what step they are on
- The person standing leaves the room or closes their eyes
- The group votes: For / Against / Abstentions
- They need a majority 'For' to be reappointed

If a new person is standing for a position unopposed:

- Invite them to say a few words about why they would like the position
- For Treasurer & Secretary, ask for their sobriety time and what step they are on
- The person standing leaves the room or closes their eyes
- The group votes: For / Against / Abstentions
- They need a majority 'For' to be appointed

If more than one person is standing for the same position

- Invite each candidate to say a few words about why they would like the position
- For Treasurer & Secretary, ask for their sobriety time and what step they are on
- Those standing leave the room or closes their eyes
- The group votes: for each candidate & for abstentions
- The person with the most votes is appointed

Repeat process for all Service Positions and then ask another member to repeat the process for you, the secretary.

Introduction to Step One Presentations

To be read out before Step One Main Shares:

Secretary: (name), you are about to share with us your First Step. We acknowledge and affirm your courage in taking this step. We want to clarify some things about this experience for each of us.

The primary purpose for you giving this formal first step presentation is to aid you in your programme of recovery. It need not be done to please the group, or gain status. There is no right or wrong way to give a First Step. Any effort you make is legitimate.

Here are some suggestions which others who have gone before have found helpful. We encourage you to be specific about your behaviours and to speak from your heart in order for you to be in touch with the pain and reality of your addiction. Try not to bury yourself in shame. Let us hear you, not your addict speaking.

The group has a responsibility to be loving, caring and accepting of you. The members will avoid judging you, giving advice to you or "taking care" of you.

If you wish you may request that no one interrupt you during your presentation. However, several members have affirmed that on reflection such interruptions have helped to guide them and to make the First Step experience more meaningful. Regardless of your choice in this matter, if you have not finished your presentation by then, I will let you know when 15 minutes of our meeting time remains. This will allow you a few minutes to complete your presentation and allow time for members to share what it was like being with you through this process.

If you do not finish you may have more time next week. Remember, we are here for you!

May God grant you serenity.