

SLAA HOW ONLINE - Saturday Skype H.O.W. Basic Meeting

Before the meeting starts... [Secretary, Host or Chair, please check that the service positions are in place before starting.]

Secretary: Welcome to the **Saturday 'Skype' SLAA HOW Basic ONLINE meeting.**
My name is..... I am a sex and love addict and the Secretary of this meeting. Please make sure all your phones are switched off or on silent, and please mute your microphone. You can do this on Skype by clicking the microphone button in the call bar or by opening up the drop down menu called "Call" and selecting the "Mute" option. When you are asked by the Chairperson if you would like to share please then unmute your microphone and start speaking. When you have finished please re-mute your microphone.

We ask members not to cross talk or communicate with each other directly during the meeting once the meeting starts, including by Instant Messaging (I.M.) - except simply to say something like "Thanks" or "Congratulations" and the person's name. If at any point during the meeting cross talk is identified, the E-Literature person will copy the Non cross talk statement into the IM box.

Cross Talk Statement <http://www.box.com/s/6dbzee356agd846t9ci3>

Skype limits the meeting to 25 people including the host so our apologies in the future if the meeting fills up and you don't get in.

I will now hand the meeting over to..... to chair today's meeting.

Chairperson: My name is..... I am a sex and love addict and the Chairperson for this meeting. Would you please join me in the Serenity Prayer:

**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.
Thy will, not mine be done always.**

The Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous Preamble

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous is a Twelve Step, Twelve Tradition oriented fellowship based on the model pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous. The only requirement for SLAA membership is a desire to stop living out a pattern of sex and love addiction. SLAA is supported entirely through the contributions of its membership, and is free to all who need it. To counter the destructive consequences of sex and love addiction, we draw on five major resources:

1. **SOBRIETY:** Our willingness to stop acting out in our own personal bottom-line addictive behaviour on a daily basis.
2. **SPONSORSHIP/MEETINGS:** Our capacity to reach out for the supportive fellowship within S.L.A.A.
3. **STEPS:** Our practice of the Twelve Step program of recovery to achieve sexual and emotional sobriety.
4. **SERVICE:** Our giving back to the S.L.A.A. community what we continue to freely receive.
5. **SPIRITUALITY:** Our developing a relationship with a Power greater than ourselves which can guide and sustain us in recovery.

As a fellowship SLAA has no opinion on outside issues and seeks no controversy. SLAA is not affiliated with any other organisations, movements or causes, either religious or secular. Our primary purpose is to abstain from sex and love addiction and to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer. We find a common denominator in our obsessive/compulsive patterns, which transcends any personal differences of sexual orientation and gender identity. We need protect with care the anonymity of every SLAA member. Additionally, we try to avoid drawing undue attention to SLAA as a whole from the public media.

Would someone please read "**The 12 Characteristics of Sex and Love Addiction**"?
(Paste this & the other texts as & when needed into the IM box. Anyone can read.)

The 12 Characteristics of Sex & Love Addiction

The Twelve Characteristics of Sex & Love Addiction We may recognise ourselves in some of the characteristics that follow. As we recover, we may see in ourselves additional traits we did not previously detect. These characteristics are not offered as a definitive, diagnostic checklist. They do express the shared experience of many in the S.L.A.A. fellowship.

1. Having few healthy boundaries, we become sexually involved with and/or emotionally attached to people without knowing them.
2. Fearing abandonment and loneliness, we stay in, and return to, painful, destructive relationships, concealing our dependency needs from ourselves and others, growing more isolated and alienated from friends and loved ones, ourselves, and God.
3. Fearing emotional and/or sexual deprivation, we compulsively pursue and involve ourselves in one relationship after another, sometimes having more than one sexual or emotional liaison at a time.
4. We confuse love with neediness, physical and sexual attraction, pity and/or the need to rescue or be rescued.
5. We feel empty and incomplete when we are alone. Even though we fear intimacy and commitment, we continually search for relationships and sexual contacts.
6. We sexualize stress, guilt, loneliness, anger, shame, fear and envy. We use sex or emotional dependence as substitutes for nurturing, care, and support.
7. We use sex and emotional involvement to manipulate and control others.
8. We become immobilized or seriously distracted by romantic or sexual obsessions or fantasies.
9. We avoid responsibility for ourselves by attaching ourselves to people who are emotionally unavailable.
10. We stay enslaved to emotional dependency, romantic intrigue, or compulsive sexual activities.
11. To avoid feeling vulnerable, we may retreat from all intimate involvement, mistaking sexual and emotional anorexia for recovery.
12. We assign magical qualities to others. We idealize and pursue them, then blame them for not fulfilling our fantasies and expectations.

Chairperson: Is there anyone here at SLAA for the **first time**? Please give us your first name so we may get to know you.

(Feel free to share if you think there may be newcomers)

If there are any newcomers:

We welcome you to this meeting. Some of what you hear here may seem strange but we recommend that you try to listen to the similarities rather than differences. We also recommend that you attend 6 meetings before deciding whether SLAA is for you.

Newcomers, if you have questions or would like to stay on the call after the meeting ends, we will stay on the line for 10 minutes to speak with you.

Would someone please read **"The 12 Steps of SLAA"**?

The Twelve Steps of S.L.A.A.

1. We admitted we were powerless over sex and love addiction - 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 a Power greater than ourselves, 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 sex and love addicts, and to practice these principles in all areas of our lives.

Would someone please read **Tradition of the month** from **"The 12 Traditions of SLAA"**? (January = Month 1 = Tradition 1 etc)

The Twelve Traditions of S.L.A.A.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon S.L.A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority -- a loving God as this Power may be expressed through our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for S.L.A.A. membership is the desire to stop living out a pattern of sex and love addiction. Any two or more persons gathered together for mutual aid in recovering from sex and love addiction may call themselves an S.L.A.A. group, provided that as a group they have no other affiliation.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or S.L.A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to the sex and love addict who still suffers.
6. An S.L.A.A. group or S.L.A.A. as a whole ought never to endorse, finance, or lend the S.L.A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every S.L.A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. S.L.A.A. should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. S.L.A.A. as such ought never to be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. S.L.A.A. has no opinion on outside issues; hence the S.L.A.A. name ought never to 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, film, and other public media. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all fellow S.L.A.A. members.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Would someone who has completed Steps 1, 2 and 3 of the HOW program please read the **"H.O.W. Concept and Tools"**?

THE H.O.W. CONCEPT & TOOLS

The Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous H.O.W. Concept has been formed to offer the sex & love addict (who accepts the twelve steps and twelve traditions as a program of recovery) a disciplined and structured approach. The SLAA H.O.W. groups have been formed in the belief that our disease is absolute and

therefore only absolute acceptance of the H.O.W. program will offer any sustained sobriety to those of us whose compulsion has reached a critical level.

Therefore, the H.O.W. defined bottom-line sobriety; the steps, traditions and tools of recovery are not suggested. Rather, we accept them as requirements for our recovery. We commit ourselves to a black & white sobriety so that we may deal with the grey areas of living.

In H.O.W. we've found that if we commit to using the Tools of Recovery on a daily basis our disease of sex & love addiction can be arrested one day at a time. Here are the tools as we work them according to the H.O.W. concept:

1. BOTTOM-LINE SOBRIETY

Our willingness to stop acting out in our own bottom-line addictive behaviour on a daily basis. There are no absolutes for sobriety in SLAA, as individual patterns of sex & love addiction vary. In H.O.W. each sex & love addict works with a sponsor to identify his or her personal bottom lines. We become sober by abstaining from these bottom-line behaviours on a daily basis. We also believe that negative thinking is a large part of our disease, so we're learning one day at a time to abstain from negative thinking.

2. LITERATURE AND WRITING

We use the AA Big Book and the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions as tools of examination and release. When we substitute the words sex & love addict for 'alcoholic' and sex & love for 'alcohol' we feel we identify absolutely. Our writing assignments in H.O.W. are taken from these. In addition, we refer to SLAA-related literature.

3. TELEPHONE CALLS

We make 4 calls a day – 1 to our sponsor and 3 outreach calls to other SLAA members. The phone is like a lifeline: we need the contact. It can be like a mini meeting.

4. MEETINGS

We recommend you attend a minimum of 3 meetings per week. Meetings are dedicated to the concept of remaining honest, open-minded and willing to listen ... this is the H.O.W. of the program.

5. PRAYER AND MEDITATION

Our practice of daily prayer and meditation is to develop a relationship with a power greater than ourselves which can guide and sustain us in recovery. We ensure our continued and sustained abstinence from sex & love addiction by being forever aware that God is doing for us what we have never been able to do for ourselves.

6. SERVICE

This is freedom from the bondage of self. It's working the tools of the program to the best of our ability, giving back what we've been given. It's helping out at meetings e.g. being a secretary, chairperson or a spiritual time keeper, and welcoming newcomers. Sobriety is a service to ourselves and the group.

7. SPONSORSHIP

A SLAA H.O.W. sponsor is a sex & love addict who, thank God, has 30 days of continuous sobriety working the SLAA H.O.W. Concept and has taken the first three steps. In keeping with our 2nd tradition, our leaders are but trusted servants – they do not govern. A sponsor should be a person we are not in danger of acting out with, or are likely to find intrigue with. A potential sexual partner as sponsor would interfere with the primary purpose of the sponsor relationship, which is recovery through the program of SLAA. Sometimes this means the sponsor should be of the same sex; sometimes of the opposite sex. Discretion, common sense and our higher power can guide us in our selection.

Chairperson: Is anyone being **stepped up** today?

(If yes)

At this point of the meeting we ask the group to join us as we celebrate another example of the miracles that abound in SLAA. This portion of the meeting is known as "Stepping Up". The sponsor is asked to introduce a newcomer who has 30 days of continuous back-to-back abstinence, has taken the first three steps and is now ready to become a sponsor. Sponsor and sponsee share for two minutes each. Would the timekeeper please keep time.

Chairperson: Is anyone here celebrating their first 60 days of **SLAA HOW sobriety**?... 90 days?... 6 months?... 9 months?... 1 year or longer?

Chairperson: The purpose of this meeting is to focus on the basics of recovery. Our message is that the Power of the Twelve Steps can transform our relationships and our lives.

The format of this meeting is reading or sharing for up to 10 minutes, followed by time for group sharing and/or getting current.

The reading alternates as follows:

Week 1: Steps based on the month (ex. January, Step 1) SLAA Basic Text – Read the step of the month

Week 2: Concepts and Tools – Reread and focus on tool of the month, with second half of the year repeating as such: July – Tool 1, August – Tool 2, September – Tools 3&4, October – Tool 5, November – Tool, December – Tools 6&7

Week 3: Characteristics – Reread and focus on the characteristic of the month

Week 4: Guest Speaker sharing their experience, strength and hope in recovery or if none, chair picks a reading from the SLAA Basic Text.

Week 5: Signs of Recovery – Read and focus on the Sign of the month

12 Signs of Recovery of SLAA

1. We seek to develop a daily relationship with a Higher Power, knowing that we are not alone in our efforts to heal ourselves from our addiction.
2. We are willing to be vulnerable because the capacity to trust has been restored to us by our faith in a Higher Power.
3. We surrender, one day at a time, our whole life strategy of, and our obsession with, the pursuit of romantic and sexual intrigue and emotional dependency.
4. We learn to avoid situations that may put us at risk physically, morally, psychologically or spiritually.
5. We learn to accept and love ourselves, to take responsibility for our own lives, and to take care of our own needs before involving ourselves with others.
6. We become willing to ask for help, allowing ourselves to be vulnerable and learning to trust and accept others.
7. We allow ourselves to work through the pain of our low self-esteem and our fears of abandonment and responsibility. We learn to feel comfortable in solitude.
8. We begin to accept our imperfections and mistakes as part of being human, healing our shame and perfectionism while working on our character defects.
9. We begin to substitute honesty for self-destructive ways of expressing emotions and feelings.
10. We become honest in expressing who we are, developing true intimacy in our relationships with ourselves and others.
11. We learn to value sex as a by-product of sharing, commitment, trust and cooperation in a partnership.
12. We are restored to sanity, on a daily basis, by participating in the process of recovery.

It is Week 1, so we will read Step ___ from the Augustine Fellowship (SLAA Basic Text). We ask each person to read a short section. Please use your physical copy of the SLAA Basic Text.

It is Week 2, so we will reread the How Concepts and Tools focusing on (see above)

It is Week 3, so we will reread the Characteristics of Sex and Love Addiction, focusing on the characteristic of the month which is ____.

It is Week 4

“Today I would like to introduce today’s guest Chair Speaker _____, who has come to share on their relationship with the SLAA Basic Text, and their experience, strength and hope with us, for 10 minutes.”

(After the reading or speaker)

Chairperson: I will now ask people to come in and share. A share is an experience that has helped us to grow and has given us a new sense of awareness. Our group conscious decision suggests that, when asked to share, speakers refrain from reference to non SLAA literature, authors or counselors by name. Sponsors who have had a slip may share after 7 days of SLAA bottom-line sobriety. A reminder, that we ask members not to crosstalk or communicate with each other during the meeting.

If you'd like to share, please put your name and if you have fourteen days or more of sobriety in the IM box. If you are unable to access the IM box, please now let the Chairperson know and I will add your name to the share list. Keep in mind that when you sign up to speak, the order in which your name is listed is not necessarily the same for the chair.

Newcomers or those with less than fourteen days of sobriety, please type your name and type the word "newcomer" or minus 14 in the IM box. The chairperson will determine length of shares according to the number of people in the meeting. *(Chairperson decides length of shares – usually either 2 minutes with 1 minute warning or 3 minutes with 2 minute warning if a small meeting or on shorter reading weeks.)*

Today, speakers will share for ___ minutes with an additional minute to wind-up.

Toward the end of the meeting, we will call on newcomers to share.

(to timekeeper) Would you be happy to carry on keeping time?

Chairperson (around 13:40 GMT at your discretion): *Those with less than 14 days sobriety and/or newcomers may now also share.*

(CHAIRPERSON INVITES SPEAKERS TO SHARE UNTIL 13:50 GMT)

(After sharing)

Chairperson: Would all available sponsors please notify the Chairperson by IM (in this conversation box), state the length of your sobriety and to what level you are able to sponsor. Newcomers looking for a Sponsor, please feel free to IM potential sponsors directly.

(More info on sponsorship & literature is available on these links here, note literature may also be available in SLAA face-to-face local meetings: <http://www.slaafws.org/slaaforme> & <http://store.slaafws.org/ctgy/BP2.html>)

Chairperson: That brings us to the close of this SLAA HOW Basic meeting, and I will now hand the meeting back to the Secretary.

Secretary: Our seventh tradition tells us that we must be fully self-supporting through our own contributions. There is no charge for this meeting but you can contribute by giving service. We also ask that you donate at your next face to face meeting.

You can also donate online to SLAA Fellowship-Wide Services via this link here <http://store.slaafws.org/ctgy/GC8.html>

(post the below into the IM box)

Can we please have volunteers to call newcomers? Please indicate in an IM (in this box) to the Chairperson your willingness to contact newcomers. Newcomers, if you'd like a call please IM volunteers directly and request a call - contact the Chairperson if you need any further help with this after the meeting.

To receive a meeting schedule, and/or register for the Outreach Contact List, please email skypeslaahow@gmail.com and follow the links at the bottom of the auto-reply.

To access meeting formats, readings, documents and information, go to the SLAA HOW Online website (and click on "Sitemap"): <https://sites.google.com/site/slaahowonlinemeetings/>

Are there any **service reports**?

Announce any vacancies (for Host, Chair, Secretary, or e-Literature) Also Business meeting in week 4.

Are there any SLAA related announcements?

Would someone please read the **"The Promises"**?

THE PROMISES

If you have decided to follow the suggestions in this program a new life will begin to unfold within you. Along with this new life are promises that will guide and sustain you. They are manifested among us sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.

These are the promises we in this S.L.A.A. group have found:

1. We will regain control of our lives.
2. We will begin to feel dignity and respect for ourselves.
3. The loneliness will subside and we will begin to enjoy being alone.
4. We will no longer be plagued by an unceasing sense of longing.
5. In the company of family and friends, we will be with them in body and mind.
6. We will pursue interests and activities that we desire for ourselves.
7. Love will be a committed, thoughtful decision rather than a feeling by which we are overwhelmed.
8. We will love and accept ourselves.
9. We will relate to others from a state of wholeness.
10. We will extend ourselves for the purpose of nurturing our own or another's spiritual growth.
11. We will make peace with our past and make amends to those we have hurt.
12. We will be thankful for what has been given us, what has been taken away, and what has been left behind.

Secretary: I would like to thank the following people for making this meeting possible:

Host:

Secretary:

Chairperson:

e-Literature person:

Timekeeper: ... and everyone that offered service by reading, sharing and being present today.

The requirements of the SLAA HOW concept are what this particular group has found to be effective in working this program and does not represent SLAA as a whole. The opinions expressed here today by those who shared are our own and not necessarily those of SLAA as a whole. Remember our cherished tradition... "Whom you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here." Take what you like and leave the rest. Reason things out, talk to each other, let there be no gossip or criticism amongst us. Instead let the peace and love and understanding of the program grow in you one day at a time.

Newcomers, if you have questions or would like to stay on the call after the meeting ends, we will stay on the line for 10 minutes to speak with you.

After a moment of quiet meditation, for those who wish to, please “unmute” your microphone and join..... (**Chairperson**) in the Serenity Prayer.

(MEETING ENDS AT 15:00 GMT.)

**Week 4: Group Conscience Business Meeting after the SLAA HOW Basic meeting.
(max. 30mins)**

The Secretary usually leads the business meeting, asking for a note taker to type up proposed motions. We start with the “we” version of the serenity prayer, then draw up an agenda. Service positions, the meeting format, and other issues can be discussed. Could speakers please introduce yourself each time you would like to share on motions and other business meeting agenda items. We can also vote in those wishing to fill any vacant on-going service positions. At the end of our Business Meeting we close with the “we” version of the serenity prayer. We do this to keep our HP in our meeting.

**God grant US the serenity
to accept the things WE cannot change,
the courage to change the things WE can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.**

Notes:

- It is suggested in the name of anonymity, use a separate anonymous Skype account in these meetings - do not use a Skype account or set up a Skype account username using your full name as the ID or username.
- Requirements for doing service: 24 hours of abstinence from bottom-line behaviour as discussed with your sponsor. This includes both the Secretary and Chairperson positions.
- To be a meeting Host, have this meeting format to hand & sign into the SkypeSLAAHOW account by 15 mins before the start. Then create a **conference call** from those who have IM-ed to join the meeting, greet members, and see who will be the Chairperson & e-Literature person before the meeting starts, asking for volunteers if necessary. (Note a Secretary may prefer to do both roles, to host the meeting and be the e-Literature person who cuts & pastes readings into the IM box.) Note currently only Skype on a desktop computer or laptop (but not on a mobile device) can make conference calls (of course mobile devices can receive conference calls). For those technically inclined, more info is also available in Skype “Help”.

Please check the Chairperson &/or e-Literature person also has this full meeting format on hand, so if the Secretary inadvertently becomes disconnected during the meeting and drops the conference call, the Chairperson can click the **“Call group”** button to resume the

conference call and continue the meeting. And check that the readings &/or guest Chair Speaker are in place before starting.

Once a meeting participant has been added into a conference call, he/she can re-join the conversation from their side if they wish. So if they become disconnected from the voice conversation, from within the meeting group IM conversation they can click the **"Join call"** button to reconnect. (Those using a version of Skype on mobile devices etc which may not have this button could try consulting "Help" to work out how to join the call again.) The Secretary cannot re-add someone already added to a conference call.

Meeting documents & readings are available on the website: <https://sites.google.com/site/slaahowonlinemeetings/>. The AA Big Book is available electronically here as PDFs: <http://www.aa.org/bigbookonline/> (these can't be cut and pasted into the IM box but a link to the relevant chapter can be IM-ed in the group conversation box). Some (though not all) reading texts from the Augustine Fellowship Basic Text (a.k.a. SLAA Big Book / Handbook) are available here: <https://sites.google.com/site/slaahowonlinemeetings/>. Participants can also be invited to read using their physical copies of either book for those who have these.

- Secretary & Chairperson: To mute the incoming IM sound during the meeting, go to "Tools", "Options", "Sounds", un-tick "incoming IM", then click "Save".
- This meeting has a Host, Chair and secretary service positions, desirably for at least one month per each position, to ensure meetings are opened and hosted on a consistent basis. The e-Literature person can be a weekly rotating or an on-going service position (or covered by a Co-Secretary). Please keep announcing any vacant on-going positions during **"service reports"** until filled. (And if for the subsequent meeting there is no Secretary to open and host the meeting, then post this vacancy as an announcement on the SkypeSLAAHOW profile to alert the fellowship.) None of these positions are technically difficult, and more experienced Secretaries will always talk you through the processes.

End.