

THE STEPS ARE THE SPIRITUAL SOLUTION / The Recovery "Tourist"

(pages 99-100 from the [SAA "Green Book"](#))

Some of us started out as a "tourist" at SAA meetings—the member who shows up every week or every other week, who shares at meetings, who may even buy and read the literature, but who doesn't get a sponsor, doesn't work the steps, certainly never stays for a business meeting—and who doesn't stop acting out on his or her inner-circle behaviors for more than a few weeks at a time before the next relapse. This resistance to surrendering to the SAA program is rooted in pride and a stubborn unwillingness to admit defeat, despite the pain and consequences already experienced. As an SAA "tourist," we cling to the belief that we are not really powerless and that just going to meetings (maybe combined with just going to church, or just seeing a therapist, or just getting a slip signed, or just reading a book) will be enough to turn things around without too much inconvenience. Many tourists drop in and out for months or even years before one final crisis brings us to our bottom and makes us willing, at last, to get serious.

This experience brings into focus the difficult truth that no addict is compelled to work the suggested steps in this program. A member can't be kicked out because he relapsed or because she hasn't moved past Step One. Tradition Three assures us that anyone with a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior, however slight the desire, is welcome in SAA, for as long as it takes for recovery to take hold. That said, our hearts go out in compassion to those suffering sex addicts who still hang back, when the solution to our common addiction is so close and when their brothers and sisters in SAA stand ready to help and guide the way.

In our experience, though meetings are important, they are not sufficient for recovery from sex addiction. We need the spiritual solution offered by the Twelve Steps. To be sure, meetings are where most of us first encounter the steps, learn about the program, find our sponsors, and share with others our desire for recovery. But if we want to actually experience recovery in our lives, there are no shortcuts. We have to work the steps to experience the fruits of working the steps.

The steps are the spiritual solution to our addiction—leading not only to a life of abstinence from our addictive sexual behaviors, but to a fulfilling life of service to our brothers and sisters in recovery and beyond. The spiritual awakening described in Step Twelve puts us on the path of service and connects us with our Higher Power, our fellow addicts, and our world in ways we had never dreamed possible. This awakening is the foundation of a responsible and joyful existence as we seek and find our Higher Power's will for us—both in our individual lives and in the life of our fellowship.

And for this priceless gift of recovery, so astonishingly simple, so freely available, we are humbly grateful. We invite all suffering sex addicts, inside and outside the rooms of SAA, to join with us in accepting this gift.