

## ***What are S-Anon Family Groups?***

- A fellowship of the relatives and friends of sexaholics who share their experience, strength and hope in order to solve their common problems.
- A program of recovery adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous and based on the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions.
- A fellowship requiring no dues or fees for membership S-Anon is self-supporting through member contributions.
- The only requirement for membership is that the person is affected by the sexual behavior of a relative or friend.
- S-Anon's primary purpose is to offer members recovery from the effects upon us of another person's sexaholism and to help families and friends of sexaholics. S-Anon has a variety of literature, conventions and meetings to provide support for families and friends of sexaholics.
- S-Anon is an anonymous program: All members are asked to respect each other's anonymity, that is, to keep in confidence what is said and who is seen at an S-Anon meeting.

## ***What is S-Ateen?***

- A Twelve Step program for teenagers who have been affected by the sexual behavior of a relative or friend.
- Meetings follow S-Anon's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and principles.
- S-Ateen meetings are conducted separately from those of S-Anon, and are guided by adult S-Anon sponsors.

## ***S-Anon/S-Ateen groups are not:***

- Counseling or therapy groups – we do not give advice but share our experience, strength and hope with one another.
- Groups that discuss or endorse any specific religious point of view. S-Anon is a spiritual program, but its principles are open to all, regardless of faith or creed.
- Focused on gossiping, criticizing, or staying stuck in the problem. We are here to help ourselves and other group members by focusing on solutions.

If you have a client who has been affected by someone else's sexual behavior, they can find help in S-Anon, whether or not their sexaholic relative or friend seeks help for themselves. Here are some questions that may indicate if your client has been affected by the disease of sexaholism:

## ***Has the person:***

- Often felt hurt, ashamed or embarrassed by someone else's sexual conduct?
- Been afraid to upset the sexaholic for fear of his or her leaving?
- Found himself or herself searching for clues about someone else's sexual behavior?
- Fantasized, obsessed or worried about someone else's sexual behavior?
- Made threats to others or promises to themselves ("If this happens again, I'll leave.") that were not carried out?
- Tried to control somebody else's sexual thoughts or behavior by doing things like throwing away pornography, dressing suggestively, or had sex with them in order to keep them from being sexual with others?

S-Anon is a 12-Step program of recovery, and can be a source of hope and help for those affected by the sexual behavior of a family member or friend. Every member determines for himself or herself whether or not he or she meets the qualification of being affected by the sexaholism of a family member or friend; no referral is needed.

Many S-Anon members seek professional assistance in addition to attending meetings and working the 12 Steps.

S-Anon has meetings throughout the United States and Canada, as well as in Germany, the UK, and Japan.

For more information contact:

### **S-Anon International Family Groups, Inc. World Service Office**

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# *Information*

## *for*

# *Professionals*

## *About*

### *S-Anon and S-Ateen Family Groups*

*Hope and Help for  
Anyone Affected by Another  
Person's Sexual Behavior*

**S-ANON**  
International



Family Groups

### ***Has the person: (Cont'd)***

- Had a relationship with children, co-workers or other friends or family members that were affected by involvement with a sexaholic?
- Lied to others or made excuses to self about another person's sexual conduct?
- Had money problems because of someone else's sexual behavior?
- Engaged in uncomfortable, unwanted, or physically dangerous sexual behavior out of fear that the sexaholic would leave?
- Felt confused and unable to separate what is true from what is not true when talking with the sexaholic?
- Thought about or attempted suicide because of someone else's sexual behavior?
- Often used sex to keep peace in the family or smooth over problems?
- Felt that sex (for example, thinking about it, doing it, talking about it, worrying about it) plays an all-consuming role in the relationship?
- Felt abandoned emotionally because of the partner's use of pornography or masturbation?
- Helped someone get out of jail or other legal trouble as a result of that person's sexual behavior, or feared that this kind of thing could happen?
- Thought that the sexaholic's behavior was caused by other people, such as friends or sexual partners? By society in general? By his/her job, religion, or birth family?
- Suspected that anyone was inappropriately sexually interested in his or her children?
- Felt alone in his or her problem?

### ***Frequently Asked Questions:***

**Who would benefit from a referral to S-Anon or S-Ateen?** S-Anon is for any adult (spouse, parent, adult child, brother, sister, friend, co-worker) who has been affected by another person's sexual behavior. Whether or not the sexaholic seeks help for themselves, those troubled by the sexual behavior of another person can benefit from S-Anon.

**What about teens affected by someone's sexual behavior?** S-Ateen, part of the S-Anon Family Groups, is a fellowship of young people whose lives have been affected by the sexaholism of a family member or friend. (See reverse for more information.)

**How do I refer a client to S-Anon or S-Ateen?** You and your client are encouraged to contact our World Service Office (WSO) by phone, mail or e-mail at the address listed on the back of this pamphlet. The WSO will help your client connect with an S-Anon member in his or her area and locate a meeting. Some areas have local hotline numbers, which are listed on S-Anon's website. As a professional, you may also want to order literature to have on hand when talking to clients.

**What if there are no S-Anon groups in this area?** Encourage your client to contact the WSO, who will connect them with a member of S-Anon. Additionally the S-Anon pamphlet, "*What If There's No S-Anon Group in My Area?*", offers suggestions from members who have begun their recovery without the help of a nearby S-Anon meeting.

### ***Frequently Asked Questions: (Cont'd)***

**What can my client gain from an S-Anon meeting?** He or she will find help and friendship from others who understand because they share the same experience. Members find hope as they help each other recover from the effects of living with sexaholism.

**What can my client expect at an S-Anon meeting?** Your client is free to just listen and would not be expected to say anything about the situation until they feel comfortable doing so. It is customary in most meetings to use first names only. S-Anon Conference Approved Literature will be read and a topic introduced. Generally, experienced S-Anon members take turns leading the meeting. The leader calls on those that indicate they want to speak. Members share their experiences, without interruptions or giving advice. Members try to listen to others so as to gain insights into common problems. S-Anon is an anonymous program, which means we are asked to keep in confidence who we see at meetings and what is shared at meetings.

**How can I help the client get started in S-Anon?** Ask your client to attend six or more meetings before deciding whether S-Anon is for them, as something different will be discussed at each meeting. Suggest they get a sponsor (someone to use as a guide through the Steps) as soon as possible. Suggest finding a sponsor who has the recovery the person wants and who speaks of their practical experience using the Steps and Traditions. Encourage your client to develop a support network within the fellowship and attend meetings regularly as well as calling and getting to know more than one person.

### ***The Twelve Steps of S-Anon***

1. We admitted we were powerless over sexaholism-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 Him.
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 Him 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 Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

#### THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - 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 Him.
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 Him 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 Him, praying only for knowledge of His 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 alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

(The Twelve Steps are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Steps does not mean that AA is affiliated with this program. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism - use of this material in connection with programs which are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise.)