**SAA Orientation Meeting Format**

Welcome to the Sex Addicts Anonymous®, **SAA Orientation** meeting. My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I’ll be the leader for this afternoon’s meeting.

This is an Open Orientation meeting, for all those who are dealing with or wish to learn more about sexual addiction and the SAA program. This particular meeting is not exclusive to addicts only as we welcome any newcomers, spouses, partners, professionals and students who are looking to understand more on sex addiction and the SAA recovery program. This meeting is not designed as therapy, group therapy or counseling but rather as an informative introduction specifically to the Houston SAA fellowship. I, along with the other members present, are not qualified professionals or licensed therapists. We are simply here to share information on the fellowship and share our experiences in the recovery program. The length of this meeting is 90 minutes, but there is no requirement to stay the entire time as you are free to come and go as desired. At this time, please turn off or mute your cell phone and please refrain from texting so as not to disturb the meeting. We start our meetings with a moment of silence for the addict that still suffers, followed by the **Serenity Prayer**. A copy of the Serenity Prayer is in your folder if needed. Please join me in a moment of silence followed by the **Serenity Prayer**.

We strive to practice anonymity and confidentiality, so that the meeting will be a safe place for each and every sex addict. Because this is an open meeting and to protect the anonymity of those present, you are welcome to state your first name before sharing but you are not required to do so if you feel uncomfortable. In this particular meeting, we leave it up to the individual to share with the group their first name, whether they are an addict or not. Newcomers need not admit to a sex addiction.

Are there any members of the media present who are here in a professional capacity rather than for their personal recovery? If so, please raise your hand.  *(discuss if anyone feels uncomfortable)*

The main mission of this meeting is intended for those who are directly involved in the process of recovery.  If you are not involved in the recovery from sex, love, or other process-related addiction either directly or as a friend or family member of one who is, we ask that you follow our Tradition of Anonymity. Whom we meet or what is said in a meeting is treated as confidential and is not discussed with non-group members. The goal of this meeting is to maintain an environment free of judgment. In a typical meeting, members would introduce themselves by sharing their first name only and the fact that they are a sex addict. Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am a sex addict. If you wish, please state the reason you are here. *(go around the room with introductions)*

**Does anyone have any questions about anonymity?**

I will be passing an optional sign-in sheet around. It is optional to add your first name and phone number, but please, at least, fill in why you are here so we have an idea of why people are coming to this meeting. In a typical meeting a sign-in sheet would go around twice to let people share their first name, phone number, sometimes their email address and whether they need a sponsor or are willing to sponsor. It is passed a second time to allow those that want to collect names for accountability partners or sponsors. I will pass this list again to see if anyone wants to record a contact. We suggest members have at least 6 people they can reach out to at almost any time. Most members are very welcome to listen and sometimes our Higher Power lets us call them when they need a call the most.

We begin the meeting with some readings that are included in our typical SAA meeting formats then the floor will be open to questions and discussion. These are typically read at the beginning of each meeting by volunteers in the group. to remind members of why we are here, what the program involves and its purpose. I’d now like to ask some of you to assist in our regular readings.

Could someone please read “**Who We Are**”?

Does anyone have any questions about Who We Are?

Could someone please read “**Our Program**”?

Does anyone have any questions about our program? [long pause] Does anyone want to share how they work the program: phone calls, meetings, being sponsored?

Could someone please read “**The Twelve Steps**”?

Does anyone he any questions about The Twelve Steps of SAA? [long pause] Does anyone want to share how you worked a step?

Could someone please read “**The Abstinence Statement**”?

Does anyone have any questions about the Abstinence statement? [long pause] Does anyone want to tell us about their own abstinence definitions?

These readings are based from the SAA Green Book, the basic text of the SAA program. Some meeting’s readings are based from the AA Big Book. All meetings are autonomous and can choose what literature and format they want to use as long as they follow the Twelve Steps and Traditions of SAA.

Part of some meetings are chip meetings where we take a moment to offer a welcome or surrender chip, which is white, to any newcomer who wishes to commit themselves to the program and/or any member who has suffered a relapse and wishes to re-commit themselves and begin their “sobriety date” over again. We also acknowledge those who have achieved a length of sobriety from their Inner Circle behaviors, also known as “bottom line behaviors” for 30 days (red chip), 60 days (yellow chip), 90 days (green chip), six months (blue chip), nine months (fuchsia chip), and gold medallions for members who are celebrating one year, 18 months or multiple years of sobriety. These are not given as rewards but rather as tokens that serve as a tool of encouragement along the addict’s path of recovery.

**Would anyone like a white welcome or surrender chip?**

After the opening readings, the meeting enters into its regular format. Each meeting has a different format so we encourage newcomers to try out many different groups so they can to find which meeting they feel most comfortable in, get the most out of, and can work into their schedule. We do suggest a newcomer attend at least 6 meetings to see if SAA is right for them. Meeting formats may contain some chosen literature either from the SAA Green Book or another book or article regarding the addiction.

Meetings also include a period of time dedicated to open sharing on either the literature that was read or whatever they are currently dealing with in their recovery. Everything being shared within the meetings is confidential and is treated as confidential by all members. Members are cautioned not to divulge any information of any illegal behaviors or activities such as deliberately exposing someone to HIV, sex with a minor, and any other sex crimes as such information could be used against them in a court of law and reportable in the State of Texas. The floor is then open to sharing from members. Most meetings do not allow “cross-talking” between attendees where commenting on another person’s share is prohibited however some meetings do allow cross-talk and even feedback depending on the format.

Some meeting formats include time dedicated to step presentations where members can volunteer to read or share their work on a specific step. Other formats may include topic discussions, discussion geared towards sharing positive things that happened during the week, meditation, and commitment to a healthy, positive activity. Newcomers are encouraged not only to try out as many meetings as they can, but also try each one a few times to give each format a chance and really become familiar with each meeting.

**Does anyone have any questions about the meeting formats?**

At this time, we’d like to open the floor to any questions or comments regarding the SAA program and sex addiction. Just like an ordinary meeting, we encourage you to be considerate of your own anonymity and that of the group this afternoon. And just like in an ordinary meeting, if you feel like a share or question is too explicit, we encourage you to please raise your hand. The floor is now open. Are there any questions? Anything about the Steps, our Higher Power, sponsorship and sponsees, the three circles of sobriety, how to find a meeting, how your behavior affects a spouse, what bring you here today, anything?

*We want everyone to know that there are programs available for spouses/partners, as they are an important part of the recovery process.*

Co-Dependents of Sex Addicts or COSA meetings are available for people whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior. This can include spouses, partners or family members. This program is separate from SAA but follows many of the same principles. Just as living with an active sex addict is overwhelming, so too can be living with a recovering sex addict. Just as those in SAA have found experience, strength, and hope from others in the program, members of the COSA program have been able to find the same help and support. A non-addict cannot fully understand what it is like to live with sex addiction. Likewise, an addict cannot fully understand the pain and damage that we have caused our loved ones. We both need to be able to share and be open with others that understand our experience and therefore can truly empathize with us. An individual does not have to have their spouse, partner, etc. active in the SAA program in order to attend the COSA meetings. The COSA program is there for you regardless of your loved one’s recovery status.

Another program we have here in Houston is Infidelity Survivors Anonymous (ISA).  ISA is a support group for individuals who have experienced inﬁdelity-induced trauma caused by any form of sexual betrayal in their relationships; including sexual or emotional affairs, pornography or cyber-sex, compulsive sexual behavior, sexual addiction or other sexual heinous behavior. In ISA one learns helpful and practical tools to cope with the trauma and other consequences of inﬁdelity. Women from any spiritual background are warmly welcome to attend our meetings.

There are flyers for these programs and other literature on the table.

*This section to be read ONLY if none of the attendees have any questions, or questions wane:*

*[Each of you should have received a packet when you came in. Inside you will find further information on specific elements included in the SAA program and common questions regarding the addiction and recovery. You’ll notice that some sections have a note in reference of further material. Instead of burdening each of you with extensive reading material, we thought it would be best to leave it up to each individual to decide which topics they would like to learn more on. You will find the extended printouts regarding each section available on the table. Feel free to grab as many sections as you like after the meeting.*

*We’ve also included a blank sheet in which to write down any notes or questions you may have during the meeting. Our goal is to try and answer questions to the best of our ability and we understand that new questions arise sometimes after you’ve left the meeting. Please feel free to email any other questions you may have by visiting the address at the bottom of the note sheets or bring them with you to the next SAA Orientation meeting if you’d like to attend.]*

 **(10 minutes before the close of meeting)** That is all the time we have for sharing. If you did not get an opportunity to share or ask questions or felt uncomfortable speaking, please grab someone after the meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to say to everyone, especially the newcomers, to **Keep Coming Back**. The SAA program is not just a weekly meeting but a 12 Step program and life-long commitment that requires courage and hope.

 It is now time to honor our **7th Tradition** which states that every SAA group ought to be self-supporting, declining outside contributions. Meetings usually pass an envelope or basket to collect small donations of a few dollars from the members present. The money collected will be used to pay for the group’s room rent and SAA literature. The SAA pamphlets and printouts are free to attendees and books may be purchased at prices marked. Please let me or one of the other members know if you are interested in purchasing any materials.

We end our meetings with readings that help to enforce the structure of the program as well as provide hope and encouragement. Could someone please read “**How We Live**”?

We thank you all for coming this afternoon. We hope that this meeting has answered some of your questions and brought a better understanding of sex addiction and recovery. Please know that you are welcome to attend, SAA Orientation meetings in the future if you wish and please be sure to contact us if you have any other questions before then. You can visit our website at www.houstonsaa.org for more information.

At the very end of our meetings we rise and say the Serenity Prayer again and state the motto “Keep coming back, it works if you work it, because you’re worth it.” Many of us in the program have found that statement to be absolutely true and a great source of motivation.

In closing, please stand, join hands and help me recite **The Serenity Prayer**.