

South Florida Intergroup's S.L.A.A. Meeting Starter Kit

[All Files in Zip Format](#)

[All Files in Stuffit Format](#)

[All Files in tar-gzip Format](#)

[Basic Meeting Format](#)

[Diverse Meeting Formats](#)

[Forty Questions for Self-Diagnosis](#)

[Group Registration Form](#)

[Group Information Change Form](#)

[Literature Order Form](#)

[Are You Addicted? Pamphlet](#)

[Media Guidelines Pamphlet](#)

[Info for Professionals Pamphlet](#)

[Division of Contributions Pamphlet](#)

[S.L.A.A. Preamble Reading](#)

[Twelve Promises Reading](#)

[Twelve Steps Reading](#)

[Twelve Traditions Reading](#)

Dear Meeting Starter,

Congratulations! You have made the first step in starting a new S.L.A.A. meeting. You have sought out resources. You may already have a location and time in mind, or you may not know how to decide on location and time. Hopefully, the information on this page will be a valuable resource for you.

- Preparation for the First Meeting

- Finding a Location

Finding a location is one key challenge to overcome. Keep in mind two things.

(1) The location and time must work into your schedule and the schedule of anyone else who is starting the meeting with you.

(2) The location and time must be reasonably available for the potential membership in your area.

The location should be easy to find, inexpensive, and conducive to a quiet, safe, and secure meeting. It is wise to check several locations before making a deposit.

- Talking to Facilities Managers and Owners

Many S.L.A.A. meetings start under the name Augustine Fellowship to avoid prejudices. One can say to the manager or owner of a facility, "We want to start a support group at your facility that supports the recovery of those who have relationship compulsions. If you were to provide us with a meeting space, how much would you charge per month, and what space might you have available?" Professional-sounding statements similar to this one present an honest expression of what S.L.A.A. provides without creating alarm and indicate immediately that the facility could provide a service to the community while receiving unexpected income in exchange.

In one instance a church leader asked, "What do you mean by relationship compulsions?" The Meeting Starter's response was, "There are all kinds of compulsions related to relationships: codependency, compulsive adultery, sexual dysfunction, and problems with pornography." That satisfied the leader's curiosity without bringing up the

forms of sex and love addiction that are the object of sensational media coverage.

- Securing a Location

Usually a location is secured by paying a deposit and receiving a key for the room to be used. Make sure you check the key when you receive it.

Often the Meeting Starters donate the deposit. On other occasions another S.L.A.A. Meeting may vote to seed the new meeting. This is an act of service that strengthens the recovery of those involved in providing the deposit.

- Setting Up a Notebook

You may wish to put together a three-ring notebook with pre-punched plastic page holders that you can get at most office supply stores. In it you can place the documents included in this kit.

- Ordering Literature

You may also wish to order literature from F.W.S. at <http://www.slaafws.org>. There is a literature order form included in this kit, however the prices may vary. It is always wise to get the most current prices by calling the office number on the form if you order by mail.

It is suggested that you purchase at least two S.L.A.A. Basic Texts, a full set of pamphlets, and a one year subscription to the Journal a month before your first meeting. This way you have adequate literature for readings and set a good tone from the beginning. If you cannot afford literature yet, you can make copies of the free pamphlets included in this kit, although they do not cover all the important topics. Unless you already own some S.L.A.A. literature from which you can read, you may need to find a way to order literature fairly soon.

- Pamphlet Copies

It is suggested that you print or copy many of the pamphlets that are included in this kit, especially the [Addicted to Sex? Addicted to Love? pamphlet](#), which is often given to newcomers. Each pamphlet in this kit can be freely duplicated according to their copyright.

- Meeting Lists

It is advisable to print lists of nearby meetings to have available at your group. Selfishly hiding the existence of other meetings in an effort to gain numbers at the meeting you are starting will not help your personal recovery. The meeting will grow if it is meant to grow. You can to some degree affect its likelihood of growing if you follow prudent procedures and keep the meeting place safe.

Meeting lists are available from your local intergroup. For South Florida the meeting list is available online at <http://www.SouthFloridaSLAA.org/schedule.html>

- Building Membership

- Registering the Group

Registering your new group will provide those looking for recovery a way to find your group. This is an important step in building membership.

Included in this kit is a form for registering your new group. Also included is a form for changing registration information if you need to do so later. You may also want to contact your local intergroup if one exists for your area so that they can include your meeting in any published lists for your area. In Florida there are three intergroups. The South Florida Intergroup serves the bottom half of the Florida Peninsula. The Palm Beach Intergroup provides further services and events for Palm Beach County and the surrounding area. The Tampa Bay Intergroup provides services for meetings in the Greater Tampa Area and surrounding areas.

Links and other intergroup resources are available [here](#).

- Posting in Media

Included in this kit are the guidelines for media. Please take the time to read them. You will find that there are a number of ways you can make the existence of your meeting public without overstepping your bounds. A simple press release to local papers is one way to let the public know your meeting exists, but remember to keep full names out of classified listings. A first name and phone number will do.

- Other Twelve-Step Fellowships

Some twelve-step meeting locations outside of S.L.A.A. allow general postings on a special bulletin board. You can briefly describe what S.L.A.A. is and give information about how and when to get to your meeting.

- Letters to Professionals

You can write letters to therapists, treatment center, clinicians, clergy, and other mental health and church professionals. Referrals are a large part of S.L.A.A. membership building.

- Twelve Step Work

Word of mouth, sponsorship, and twelve-step work are some of the best ways to build membership. There is a pamphlet on sponsorship that you can purchase from F.W.S., and the S.L.A.A. Basic Text has a chapter on the Twelfth Step.

One great way to spread the word is to tell your own personal story of addiction and recovery to those who exhibit signs of Sex and Love Addiction.

- The Early Meetings

- Letting Go

When you set a date, pay your deposit, and get your key, you have made a great first step. The next challenge is to let go. This does not mean that you don't put due diligence into building the membership. It simply means that you may need to find satisfaction with very little at first.

Some Meeting Starters held whole meetings by themselves for a month or two before people started coming. Other groups have only had two or three members for years, yet these people do recover. Most large meetings have gone through years of these stages in the past, and just because a meeting is large does not mean it will stay large. Meetings often fluctuate in size.

- The Service Structure

Contacting others in local intergroups and other S.L.A.A. service bodies may provide you with the encouragement and resources you need to overcome challenges. It is wise to make connection with these people before you start your first meeting.

- Creating Safety

One important thing in avoiding loss of membership is to create safety. This is partly done in the selection of meeting location, however having a chairperson that keeps discussions going in a positive, healthy direction is also important. Some groups are careful to steer new members away from fantasizing about or making advances toward other members. If you want to reach those who have shame and fear associated with their past, you will have to work to create a safe environment. Of course, you can only make the effort. Whether safety actually arises is up to God.

- The Traditions

The Twelve Traditions are important guidelines to help a group grow along healthy lines and in such a way that S.L.A.A. integrity is maintained. They are included in this kit. Please take the time to read them. You may also wish to read them at every meeting, especially if your membership has not been exposed to the Twelve Traditions in

S.L.A.A. or any other twelve-step fellowship.

- As the Group Grows

- Adding a Business Meeting

Once there are more than one sober S.L.A.A. member attending the new meeting, you will want to hold a business meeting periodically. Once a month or once every two months are common business meeting frequencies for most groups.

At the business meeting the membership may wish to change the meeting format, set minimum sobriety requirements for chairpeople, choose new chairpeople on a monthly rotation, rename the group, establish a Treasurer who would give a financial report at each meeting, set other policy, handle emergencies, or prepare press releases.

It is best if Meeting Starters avoid controlling. A healthy group has more than one leader. Let go, and let God speak through the Group Conscience.

It is also best if the chairperson rotates so that there is variety in meeting leadership. It may seem like other chairpeople don't do it right, but there is nothing that limits meeting growth more than the monotony of one chairperson for several months.

- Intergroup Representative

At some point in the growth of your group you may want to pick an Intergroup Representative to represent your group in a local intergroup if you have one. If you don't have one, you are welcomed to start one, but not now. First things first. Start your group. In time you may have sufficient experience to start an Intergroup and be led to do so.

[Back to the S.F.I. Home Page](#)

www.SouthFloridaSLAA.org