

Abstinence in SAA

Our goal when entering the SAA program is abstinence from one or more specific sexual behaviors. But unlike other programs for recovering alcoholics or drug addicts, Sex Addicts Anonymous does not have a universal definition of abstinence.

Most of us have no desire to stop being sexual altogether. It is not sex in and of itself that causes us problems, but the addiction to certain sexual behaviors. In SAA we will better able to determine what behavior is addictive and what is healthy. However, the fellowship does not dictate to its members what is and isn't addictive sexual behavior. Instead we have found it necessary for each member to define his or her own abstinence.

We are individuals, and our addictive behaviors, while similar, are unique to us. What may be healthy for one member could be clearly addictive for another. SAA simply cannot predict every possible way of acting out and define them all for everyone. As a fellowship, we wouldn't want to deny that any particular behavior might be acting out for a member. Nor would we want to restrict behaviors that are healthy for some of us. Since different addicts suffer from different behaviors, and since our sexuality is experienced in so many different ways, it is necessary that SAA members define for themselves, with the help of their sponsors or others in recovery, which of their sexual behaviors they consider to be "acting out."

[From *Sex Addicts Anonymous*, pages 14-15]