

ACTIVE ADDICTION RECOVERY

The following are 10 key elements of Active Addiction Recovery that will give you the greatest chances for success. These are the essential minimum requirements for someone to be in Active Addiction Recovery:

1. GROUP MEETINGS
2. 12-STEP WORK/SPONSOR
3. ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNERS
4. THERAPY
5. TRIGGERS & BOUNDARIES
6. THOUGHT STOPPING
7. TRANSPARENCY
8. SLIPS
9. RECOVERY READING
10. SELF-CARE

1. **GROUP MEETINGS.** Attend weekly 12-step support group meetings:

- 1) Sexaholics Anonymous (SA) - SA.org
- 2) Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) - SAA-Recovery.org
- 3) Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA) - SLAAfws.org
- 4) S-Anon and COSA (similar to Alanon) - designed for partners and family members of the sex addict to provide support and address codependency issues - SAnon.org and COSA-recovery.org
- 5) LDS Addiction Recovery Program (ARP) Mtgs, etc. - addictionrecovery.lds.org

Group work is invaluable to the healing process. etc. (Click [here](#) for more info about working with 12 step groups and how to [find the right type of group.](#))

2. **12-STEP WORK/SPONSOR.** Find a sponsor and work the 12 Steps. (Click for insights [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) for insights on finding a good sponsor and [working](#) the 12 Steps.) Here are some of the benefits of working the 12 Steps:

- 1) Invites God into your life and the healing process; accesses a power greater than yourself; increases submission to God/surrender
- 2) Increases humility by daily submitting to God and turning your troubles over to Him
- 3) Increases spirituality
- 4) Stops isolation, increases social support and human connection
- 5) Increases openness, honesty, transparency--reducing shame and secrecy
- 6) Increases accountability to self and others
- 7) Helps identify and root out negative thoughts, beliefs and emotions
- 8) Helps turn from selfishness and self-reliance to God-reliance
- 9) Increases motivation and commitment to recovery
- 10) Increases psychological well-being

3. **ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNERS.** Have multiple accountability partners to connect with regularly for emotional support through phone calls, texts, etc. (See "Accountability Partners" handout.)

4. **THERAPY.** Work with a therapist and/or a therapeutic recovery group (i.e. [LifeStar Addiction Recovery Program](#)) to address underlying issues in yourself and your relationships. Individual, couple, and/or group therapy may be needed. Frequent "Journal Therapy" or "Process Writing" is an important part of the therapeutic process to regularly identify and process negative thoughts, beliefs and emotions.
5. **TRIGGERS & BOUNDARIES.** Identify your triggers and vulnerabilities, and clearly define your healthy boundaries and "bottom lines" with specific strategies for prevention. (See additional Triggers & Boundaries worksheet.)
6. **THOUGHT STOPPING.** Develop mental discipline by practicing thought stopping daily, i.e. A-D-D -- *Acknowledge* the thought, *Demystify* it, *Distract* (do something else).
7. **TRANSPARENCY.** Develop the ability to be *open, honest, humble, vulnerable* and *emotionally transparent* with self and others even when facing negative consequences (i.e. unlock cell phone, share email passwords, proactively share slips, etc.). Stay "present" in your relationships by regularly communicating your thoughts and feelings (positive and negative) as desired by loved ones to help rebuild trust. (Do "9 Core Emotion Exercise.") In addition to 1) Transparency/Honesty, 2) Humility/Willingness to do (or go through) whatever it takes, and 3) God-reliance instead of self-reliance are the three hallmark characteristics of someone in active recovery.
8. **SLIPS.** Share any slips with your sponsor, accountability partner (or spouse) within 24 hrs to minimize the addictive fuel of shame and secrecy.
9. **RECOVERY READING.** Continually educate yourself about addiction and the recovery process with tools for overcoming it. Read and/or listen to books, i.e.: Sexaholics Anonymous, Patrick Carnes books, Mark Laaser books, etc.
10. **SELF-CARE.** Practice good, daily self-care. Take things one day at a time. How are you in the areas of: Sleep, Water intake, Nutrition / Healthy Food & Fuel, Exercise, Mental Nourishment / Affirmations / Positive Self-Talk, Relaxation, Spirituality, Other Self-Care.

References:

- *Making Advances* by Marnie C. Ferree
- Compiled by Laura M. Brotherson, LMFT, CST, CFLE -- [StrengtheningMarriage.com](#) (rev May 2018)