



THE FIRST STEP

LifeSTAR 
NETWORK™
Sexual Trauma & Addiction Recovery

Taking the first step toward recovery.

LifeSTAR Network provides assistance to individuals struggling with pornography and sexual addictions, as well as help for their family members. LifeSTAR Network's private, customized programs are available online through www.lifestarnetwork.org.

See back flap for additional information.



THE FIRST STEP

People have struggled with compulsive sexual behaviors for centuries with nowhere to go for help, largely because the problem had never been defined. In the 1970s researchers discovered that human beings could become addicted to behaviors and activities as well as chemicals and alcohol. While some may struggle with the label of “addict,” it is important to note that there are varying degrees of compulsive sexual behavior—from problematic behavior to serious addiction. For the simplicity of this booklet we’ve chosen to use the terms “sexual addict” and “sexual addiction” rather than “those suffering from compulsive sexual behavior” and “compulsive sexual behavior,” respectively. If you are reading this booklet, chances are you may be suffering from some degree of compulsive sexual behavior (or you may have a partner or loved one with this problem). Whatever the degree of your problem, please don’t let the terms we have used in this booklet stand in the way of getting the help you need.

Recovering from sexual addiction is not a simple process, nor is living with an addict. In fact, most recovering addicts and their partners agree that true recovery is a process they will be working on for the rest of their lives. We offer this booklet to those who are ready to commit to recovery but don't know how to begin. The principles taught in the following pages will also help the partners of sexual addicts whether or not their partner is seeking help. Though the partner's path to recovery is different from the addict's path, there are some fundamental similarities, and both partners and addicts will benefit from the steps to recovery listed within this booklet.

We've all seen what happens when a rock is thrown into a still pond. The ripples expand and spread until they reach the shore on every side. As you follow the principles in this *First Step* booklet, you will find that mastering these simple steps will have a ripple effect on your life and your addiction, and can affect your healing in ways you never dreamed possible.

Experience has shown that developing a network of support and finding out that *you are not alone* is very beneficial in the recovery process. For this reason we recommend that you get involved in a 12-step program or group. We also recommend

that you engage the services of a qualified licensed therapist in your local area to help you through the recovery process.

In addition to *First Step*, **LifeSTAR Network** offers supplemental instructional materials that can greatly enhance your recovery work. Our workbook series *Recovery from Sexual Addiction* and our series for the *Partners of Addicts* are based on our highly successful outpatient treatment program and are available online at www.lifestarnetwork.org, where you will also find other helpful tools that will aid in your recovery.

The following checklist and worksheet will help you get started in your recovery. They will help you establish order and balance and will lay the foundation for the healing work you are about to begin. Follow the instructions carefully and don't dive in too fast. Addicts and partners of addicts have a tendency to do things in extreme—either all or nothing. This worksheet will help you to regulate these tendencies and to pace yourself so you don't experience burnout, and instead, find a healthy moderation coming back into your routine.

Please resist the inclination to disregard or minimize these recommendations or to overanalyze or question the reasoning behind them. **Just get started.** When you are further into

recovery, you will understand the benefit of each of the steps and of the “dailies” (as we call them), but for right now just get some good recovery habits in place, which will often help you replace bad habits.

Please note:

This is not a cure. It is not therapy. It is a way to get started.

STEP ONE: Come Out of Hiding

Choose one way to come out of hiding and find out you’re not alone:

- Join a 12-step group. (For more info, go to www.lifestarnetwork.org/resources.cfm.)
- Talk to a licensed therapist who has a background in sex addiction therapy. (For “how to find a therapist,” go to www.lifestarnetwork.org/find-therapist.cfm.)
- Talk to someone you trust about your addiction, such as a close friend, clergy, or family member.

STEP TWO: Positive Self-Talk

If you’re an addict or the partner of an addict, negative self-talk will sabotage and defeat your efforts at recovery, so we’re recommending you do daily affirmations from an affirmation book. These books are available online or at your local bookstore. Following are some that we recommend:

For men: *Touchstones: A Book of Daily Meditations*
(Hazelden Publishing)

For women: *The Language of Letting Go* (Melody Beattie)

For women and men: *Answers in the Heart: Daily Meditations* (Hazelden Publishing)

So that you can get started today, we have included a week of affirmations at the end of this booklet.

STEP THREE: Self-Care

We suggest you choose at least one (but not more than two) dailies from each of the three categories: personal, physical, and spiritual. Make a copy of the worksheet that follows the dailies (or online at www.lifestarnetwork.org/dailies), fill in the dailies you have chosen, and commit right now that you will build these positive habits daily. Be conscientious in filling out the worksheet each day and before long you will be experiencing the ripple effect mentioned earlier, as you watch these positive habits affect every area of your life.

Following the dailies and the worksheet, you will find some examples from recovering addicts and how they have used their dailies to improve their lives.

Remember:

This is not a cure. It is not therapy. It is a way to get started.

DAILIES

Personal:

- Keep a journal
- Repeat daily affirmations

Suggested affirmation books:

For men and women: *Answers in the Heart: Daily Meditations* (Hazelden Publishing)

For men: *Touchstones: A Book of Daily Meditations* (Hazelden Publishing)

For women: *The Language of Letting Go* (Melody Beattie)

- Personal Development
 - Start a new hobby, such as gardening, recreational reading, musical instrument, and so forth
 - Take a community education course
 - Express creativity, such as artwork, writing poetry, and so forth

Recovery reading (15 minutes daily)

Suggested books:

Sexaholics Anonymous White Book
www.sa.org

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous Basic Text
www.slaafws.org

Discussing Pornography Problems with a Spouse: Confronting and Disclosing Secret Behaviors
(Rory C. Reid, Dan Gray)

The Drug of the New Millennium (Mark Kastleman)

Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction
(Patrick J. Carnes)

Women, Sex, and Addiction: A Search for Love and Power (Charlotte S. Kasl)

Specifically for Partners:

Codependent No More: How to Stop Controlling Others and Start Caring for Yourself (Melody Beattie)

Facing Codependence : What It Is, Where It Comes from, How It Sabotages Our Lives (Pia Mellody)

Physical:

- Exercise - 30 minutes at least 3 times a week
(walk, bike, hike, swim, run, etc.)
- Nutrition
Learn about nutrition—plan meals in advance
Eat balanced meals
Avoid junk food (including sugar and caffeine)
- Rest and Relaxation:
Get adequate sleep
Limit TV to little or none

Spiritual:

- Prayer
- Meditation
- Scripture or religious reading
- Church service

DAILIES WORKSHEET

Choose at least one (but not more than two) dailies from each of the three categories: spiritual, personal, and physical. Print out a copy of this worksheet, fill in the dailies you have chosen, and commit right now that you will build these posi-

ACTIVITY	Sun	Mon

tive habits daily. Be conscientious in filling out the worksheet each day and before long you will be experiencing the ripple effect mentioned in the Getting Started booklet, as you watch these positive habits affect every area of your life.

WEEK OF _____

Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat

EXAMPLES:

John gets up every day and spends 15 minutes in meditation, then does an affirmation from *Touchstones*. Three days a week he swims laps at the YMCA; and once a week he attends a 12-step meeting.

Jon's Worksheet

WEEK OF Jan. 28th

ACTIVITY	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Meditate (15 min.)	X	X	missed	X	X	X	missed
Affirmations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Swim at YMCA		X		X		X	
Attend SA Group					X		

Sally reads the *Bible* each day upon arising. She walks with a neighbor every morning and is taking a community education course in preparing healthy meals. Rather than watching TV until midnight, she committed to being in bed by 10:30 p.m. each night. She is seeing a sex-addiction therapist once a week with her husband.

Sally's Worksheet

WEEK OF Sept. 8th

ACTIVITY	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Read Bible	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	--	--
Walk w/Doreen		✓	oops	✓	✓	✓	--
Bed by 10:30pm	10:00	10:15	10:15	10:15	10:45	12:00	11:45
Class at College					✓		
Meet w/Dr. Taylor		✓					

Helen reads daily from Pia Mellody's *Facing Codependence*. At the end of each day she writes in her journal. She also attends a weekly meeting of S-Anon. She would like to get back to her old habit of jogging, but hasn't fully committed to this daily step.

Helen's Worksheet

WEEK OF May 5th

ACTIVITY	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Read Facing CoDep.		X	X	X	X	X	
Write in journal	X	X	X	X	X	X	--
Go jogging		20 min.					
Attend S-Anon				X			

Jared's life was so out of balance, the most he could do was say a prayer once a day. That was his one, sole daily. After three months he had built up the courage to talk to his pastor and he is planning to get started with the online SLAA group.

Jared's Worksheet

WEEK OF Nov. 7th

ACTIVITY	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Pray Daily	✓	✓	--	--	--	✓	--

Though we have given you guidelines and suggestions, it is important that you do not overdo these dailies and that you take them at your own pace. After all, this is your life and your recovery and no one knows your needs and your capabilities better than you do. Start this program today and evaluate your progress daily. Add or delete activities as needed to keep a healthy balance in your life.

Remember:

This is not a cure. It is not therapy. It is a way to get started.

If you have followed all the suggestions in this booklet, you will be involved in some kind of therapy or group—whether it is with a licensed therapist or a 12-step program (or both). We urge you to continue this therapy and follow through on the commitments you have made toward your healing. To supplement your recovery process we also recommend **LifeSTAR Network's** series of workbooks *Recovery from Sexual Addiction*. These workbooks and other recovery tools, as well as information about our *Getting Started Workshops*, are available online at www.lifestarnetwork.org.

STARTER AFFIRMATIONS

- To wish to be well is a part of becoming well.
—Seneca

Commitment to recovery is an affirmation of our wish to be well. Today I will focus on the positive desire for wellness that is the core of my commitment.

- We can do no great things, only small things with great love.
—Mother Teresa

Today I will do one kind thing for myself and one for someone else. I will love myself and let myself receive the love that is there for me.

- What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing.
—Aristotle

Today I am willing to learn by doing. I will learn something about myself by following through on my daily plan.

- Good judgment comes from experience and experience comes from poor judgment.
—Mark Twain

Recovery is a messy business. Today I will give myself permission to experiment, to make mistakes. I will learn from the day's business and move on.

- If I were to begin my life again, I should want it as it was. I would only open my eyes a little more.
—Jules Renard

Today I will take the time to be more aware of my interactions with others. I will remember that each day is a gift to me.

- If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.
—Mark Twain

Today I will be honest with myself. I will tell the truth. Denial ties me to the past.

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If your group would like the rights to use or reproduce any part of this material, or if you would like to be certified as a LifeSTAR Network therapist, please contact Dan Gray or Todd Olson at LifeSTAR Network, at 151 E. 5600 South, #204, Murray, Utah 84107, (801)262-4599. Website: www.lifestarnetwork.org.

The LifeSTAR Network program—as well as any associated products or those recommended within—is not intended to take the place of therapy. We advise all users of this program to consider face-to-face counseling with a qualified licensed therapist in your local area.

Dan Gray, LCSW, the clinical director of LifeSTAR Network, is a licensed clinical social worker specializing in addictions counseling. He has lectured and provided training and consultation to numerous community, religious, and professional organizations.

Todd Olson, LCSW, is the program director of LifeSTAR Network. He is a licensed clinical social worker specializing in sexual addiction, anorexia, codependence, and trauma survival. His private practice includes individuals, couples, and group therapy.

Both **Dan Gray** and **Todd Olson** are available for on-site training and consultation by contacting LifeSTAR Network, 151 E. 5600 South, #204, Murray, Utah 84107, (801) 262-4599.

Website: www.lifestarnetwork.org.



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