

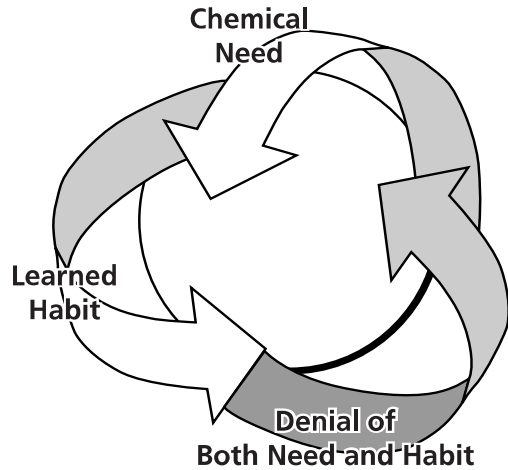
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## The Cycles of Addiction and Recovery

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### THE CYCLE OF ADDICTION

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*The Cycle of Addiction: In all cases, the addiction becomes "Priority One," a separate issue from all else. As it progresses, it begins to negate everything else.*

Copies of this and other SOS brochures may be obtained from the SOS Clearinghouse. This brochure was updated February 2002.

#### *SOS International Clearinghouse*

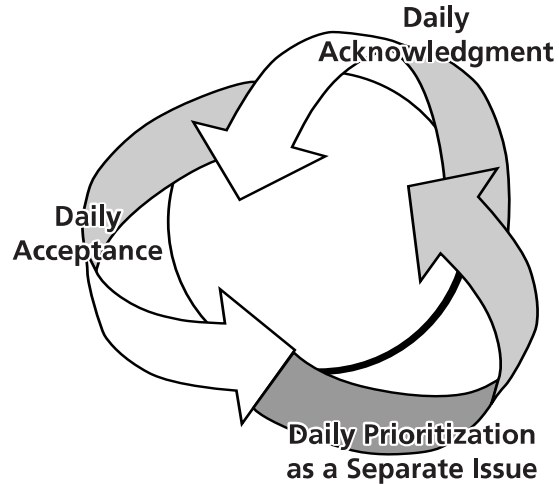
*(Secular Organizations for Sobriety/Save Our Selves)*

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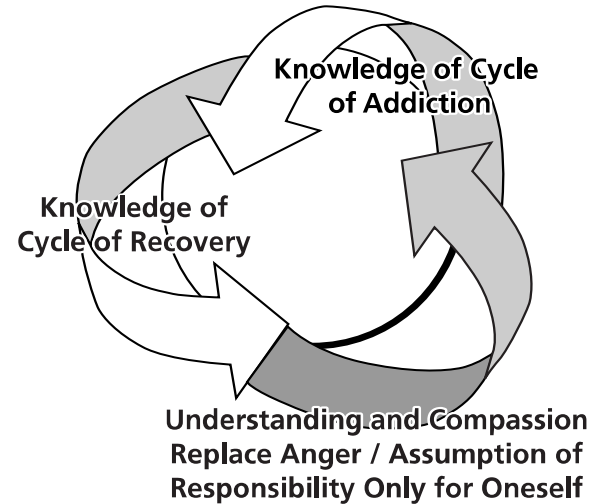


### THE CYCLE OF SOBRIETY

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*The Cycle of Sobriety: This cycle remains in place only as long as the addicted individual cognitively chooses to acknowledge the existence of his or her addiction.*



### THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS RECOVERY CYCLE

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*The Family and Friends Recovery Cycle: Knowledge of addiction and sobriety cycles can free family members and friends of the chemically dependent loved one to rightfully assume responsibility for their own lives only.*

# SOS

*recovery for families and friends of alcoholics and addicts*

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# FAMILY & FRIENDS RECOVERY

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A publication of the  
Secular Organizations for Sobriety  
(Save Our Selves)

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## General Principles of SOS

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- All those who want to gain understanding of their feelings about their relationships with an addicted person are welcome.
- SOS is not a spin-off of any religious or secular group. SOS is concerned with aiding family and friends in developing understanding and compassion for the addicted person.
- Although sobriety is an individual responsibility the acceptance and help from others in close contact is a vital adjunct to recovery.
- In SOS, family and friends gain insight into the workings of other recovering persons as members share experiences, information, strength, and encouragement in friendly, honest, and supportive group meetings.
- Honest, clear, and direct communication of feelings, thoughts, and knowledge aids in recovery. Support in choosing nondestructive, nondelusional, and rational approaches to living sober, rewarding lives aids in developing new and better relationships.
- SOS guards the anonymity of all who attend meetings, and the contents of its discussions, from those not within the group.
- SOS encourages the scientific study of all aspects of alcoholism and addiction. SOS does not limit its outlook to one area of knowledge or theory of alcoholism and addiction.

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## The SOS Groups

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SOS is a nonprofit network of autonomous, nonprofessional local groups dedicated solely to helping individuals achieve and maintain

sobriety. There are groups meeting in many cities throughout the world. For information about a group in your area, or if you would like to start a group, contact:

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E-mail: sos@cfwest.org  
www.cfwest.org/sos • www.sossobriety.org

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## Recommended Reading

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*How to Stay Sober: Recovery without Religion* by James Christopher (Prometheus Books, 1988).

Christopher describes his own “recovery without religion.” He focuses on the practical aspects of his triumph over alcoholism and includes guidelines for the formation of secular support groups. \$20.95

*Unhooked: Staying Sober and Drug-Free* by James Christopher (Prometheus Books, 1988).

Christopher recounts the evolution of SOS, invites the reader to sit in on a fictionalized SOS meeting, and offers further strategies for achieving and maintaining sobriety and self-respect. \$18.95.

*SOS Sobriety: The Proven Alternative to 12-Step Programs* by James Christopher (Prometheus Books, 1992).

Christopher describes methods of alcohol and drug abstinence as advocated by SOS, the world’s largest non-twelve-step addiction recovery program. Christopher’s “sobriety priority” approach is reinforced by interviews with addiction experts and moving recovery stories. \$18.95

Prices include shipping and handling. Order through Clearinghouse (above).

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## The SOS Newsletter

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The SOS International Clearinghouse publishes a quarterly newsletter filled with items of interest to all recovering persons, to professionals, and to the families and friends of addicted individuals.

The *SOS International Newsletter* serves as an information source for group conveners, and as a forum for newsletter subscribers.

Subscriptions are available for \$18 per year.

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## Family Recovery

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Many family members and friends of alcoholics and individuals addicted to other drugs come to a program of recovery reaching out for help. They come desperately looking for help in the way of answers to their questions about chemical dependency and the difficulties in their relationships that this dependency has caused. Although they are not the ones who are addicted, their lives have been greatly affected by the addiction of someone they love.

Until these family members and friends learn about chemical dependency, their well-meaning actions may further alienate relationships; they may escalate conflict and violence with the chemically dependent person.

By coming to SOS, family members and friends can learn about the Cycle of Addiction. When they can perceive the phases of chemical need and denial of learned habits within the chemically dependent person, the Cycle of Sobriety will be understood as an individual journey for that person. It is then that supportive action by the family and friends can begin, improved relationships can begin, and family recovery can begin.

This path to recovery starts by understanding that sobriety is the responsibility of the addicted individual. The family has its own recovery cycle: that of recovering from the feelings of being responsible for the chemical addiction.

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## Suggested Guidelines for Family and Friends Recovery

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- Be gentle with yourself and the addicted person in your family. Remember, sobriety skills are not developed overnight, so give yourself credit for being understanding.
- Attend as many SOS meetings as you can. If you like, attend other family recovery-group meetings. Take what you can use from these and leave the rest.
- Get names and phone numbers from sober individuals in recovery and their family members at meetings. Use these phone numbers. Practice calling people when you are feeling okay so that you will be able to call more easily when you are in need of help.
- Try putting some simplified structure into your life: get up and get dressed at a regular time, take a walk before or after dinner, etc.
- Do some reading on alcoholism and addiction from the books on the “Recommended Reading” list. Visit a local library or bookstore and see what others they may have to offer.

Publication of this material is made possible by support from SOS members and friends and by the Council for Secular Humanism, a nonprofit educational organization.