



To the Castimonia Newcomer

WELCOME TO OUR FELLOWSHIP!

If you are reading this letter, then you are probably new to Castimonia and this Christ-centered 12-step recovery program. We want to congratulate you on your courage in attending this meeting and in beginning your journey of recovery. We all remember what it was like attending our first recovery meeting. We were brought into recovery by various events in our lives: intense marital strain, troubled relationships, despair, etc... Some of us believed we did not belong in recovery; that is until we began to listen to others share their stories and their struggles. Then it became evident that we were in the right place. We were able to honestly admit that we needed help, thus we began our recovery process.

Currently, Castimonia meets five times a week. However, more meetings may be created as attendance grows. We also recommend attending other recovery meetings in your area. Typically, “90 meetings in 90 days” is recommended for those entering a program of recovery. This may seem excessive, but in order to become “sober,” extended meeting attendance and participation is imperative! We understand, however, that time is of value and you may not be able to attend this quantity of meetings; do not be discouraged. We encourage you to attend as many meetings as possible during the initial stages of your recovery. You will need the support of those who have been where you have been and can help you through this difficult time. They may even help you step out of your own denial of the problem. A list of meetings is included in this packet for your convenience. Each meeting and program has its own dynamics and we encourage everyone to experiment with various meeting formats that can help in their recovery program. Feel free to ask other Castimonia members for meeting suggestions.

It is not necessary to admit that you are a sex addict or have a problem with sexual purity until you are ready. Be honest and gentle with yourself, listen to others sharing, and speak up when you feel motivated to do so. We commend your courage, as it is not easy to share with others your inner-most feelings or past sexual activities.

We are here to help you in your journey of recovery. If you have questions or would like to further discuss Castimonia, please feel free to contact us at Castimonia@merimnao.org or visit us on the internet at castimonia.org.

Progress, not perfection!

Be Transformed By The Renewing Of Your Mind – Romans 12:2



A Letter from the Leadership of Castimonia

We, the facilitators of Castimonia, would like to extend to you our utmost gratitude for your attendance at this meeting. Attendance is an important part of your recovery and your presence is an important part of our own recovery. The facilitators of Castimonia appreciate your presence and participation at this meeting.

As facilitators of Castimonia, we put forth our best effort in serving you. However, this effort does not end with us. Castimonia is a ministry of Merimnao. The hierarchical structure is as follows. The facilitators of Castimonia are led by the Castimonia Executive Committee who in turn is led by the Director of Castimonia, Jorge S. Furthermore, Jorge reports to the Director of Merimnao, Ken Gross, who oversees all sub-ministries within Merimnao. An explanation of Merimnao and its ministries can be found in this newcomer packet. Merimnao is a ministry that depends on the guidance and support of the Merimnao Board of Directors. Accountability is an important part of recovery. The facilitators of Castimonia are held accountable by the aforementioned individuals, who can be contacted through The Fellowship at Cinco Ranch – 281.395.3950.

We will strive to support your recovery through our various ministries, in particular Castimonia. We will attempt to give you a safe place where you can begin your journey of recovery, as well as help you with our knowledge and understanding of our problem. If you have any questions, please contact us at Facilitators@Castimonia.org or ExecutiveCommittee@Castimonia.org.

Sincerely,

Jorge S., CPSAS
Executive Director

Clint W.
Executive Committee Member

Dale K.
Executive Committee Member



IMMEDIATELY:

Recommended activities to begin your journey of recovery.*

<p><u>See a Therapist:</u> Set up an appointment with a Certified Sex Addiction Therapist (CSAT). A list is enclosed in this packet. A psychiatrist may be in order as many Sex Addicts suffer from ADHD, depression, or other disorders that can inhibit recovery if not treated.</p>	<p><u>Recovery Books Reading:</u> Read recovery books by Patrick Carnes, <i>Out of the Shadows</i>, <i>Don't Call it Love</i>, etc... These can be purchased at a meeting, online, or checked out at your local library. See our suggested recovery books list in this newcomer packet.</p>
<p><u>Attend Recovery Meetings:</u> Attend as many sexual recovery meetings as possible. A list of meetings is included in this packet.</p>	<p><u>Eliminate Pornography:</u> Eliminate any and all pornography! This includes any movies or magazines that display any nudity or sexual actions/innuendos.</p>
<p><u>Cell Phone Number:</u> Change cell phone number. The only exception is if the number has never been used in acting out.</p>	<p><u>Internet Filtering Software:</u> Download internet and computer filtering software. Suggestions are included in this packet.</p>
<p><u>E-mail Address:</u> Change e-mail address. The only exception is if the e-mail had never been used in acting out. Also, eliminate any extra e-mail addresses, especially those used in acting out.</p>	<p><u>Financial Accounts:</u> Close any secret bank and credit card accounts.</p> <p><u>Sponsor:</u> Find a Sponsor! You will find one at one of your sexual recovery meetings.</p>
<p><u>Accountability:</u> Find an accountability partner (not your wife) to help you, ask you questions, and challenge you to remain sexually pure.</p>	<p><u>Triggers:</u> Begin to identify your sexual triggers. Discuss them with your sponsor & therapist.</p>

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DAILY:

Recommended activities to begin your journey of recovery.*

<p><u>Meditations:</u> Read daily <i>Letting God, Jesus Calling</i>, or other Meditations.</p>	<p><u>Affirmations:</u> Read a new affirmation out loud, each day, multiple times a day.</p>
<p><u>Prayers of Gratitude:</u> Morning & evening prayers for sobriety and recovery.</p>	<p><u>Steps:</u> Do any “step work.” Even a little will help!</p>
<p><u>Literature:</u> Read recovery materials, SAA book, sex addiction books, 12-step books, The Bible, etc....</p>	<p><u>Computer Use:</u> Limit computer use. Only use computers with filtering & accountability software installed.</p>
<p><u>Multimedia:</u> Allow only music and movies that support your recovery.</p>	<p><u>Television:</u> Limit or eliminate watching of television. Today’s television programs can be filled with sex and violence.</p>
<p><u>Caffeine:</u> Reduce intake of Caffeine.</p>	<p><u>Alcohol:</u> Limit or eliminate all alcohol.</p>
<p><u>Drugs:</u> No illegal drugs. Prescription drugs only as directed.</p>	<p><u>Sleep:</u> Get regular sleep (7 – 8 hours a night). Very important for your recovery.</p>
<p><u>Journal:</u> Daily recovery related entries in a journal.</p>	

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Understanding the Problem

Newcomers to this idea of personal sexual purity, whether they struggle with a sexually oriented thought life or are clearly identified sex addicts, often have trouble understanding the “problem” with which they are dealing. In this document we are going to outline the seriousness and complexity of this issue.

1. **Origins** – No matter what our own personal story might be of how we got to this point, there is always a common thread. Our “problem” has an emotional origin. Examples of this include abandonment, abuse, neglect or rejection by important individuals in our lives such as parents and spouses.
2. **Progressiveness** – Even though we may not be able to identify an exact beginning, at some point, we achieved a pleasant emotional state through acting out sexually. We also began to discover that we could mask and seemingly avoid difficult feelings like shame, loneliness and inadequacy that came with life’s situations such as lack of intimacy, approval or security. This soon passed and we had to act out more frequently or at deeper levels to achieve emotional satisfaction. The “problem” progresses even as we try to hide it from others and ourselves.
3. **Nature** – Since the “problem” has emotional roots and an ongoing emotional objective in our lives, we must recognize that sexual immorality is an issue of our innermost being. This makes it a spiritual issue, as our innermost beings are the spiritual part of us.
4. **Links** – As this “problem” develops in us, a link develops. That link is that our body becomes a slave of our emotional satisfaction. Our body and our innermost being work in combination with each other to get us to a “high,” or what we unconsciously perceive as “good” feelings.
5. **Escalation** – Once the link is established, the “problem” becomes more and more difficult to control. In a perverse turn around, it seems that the cravings of our body for more sexual acting out takes over. Some biological functions start to dictate our behavior, much like a drug or alcohol addict experiences. As mentioned earlier under progressiveness, we start to need more, and soon our compulsions run our lives.
6. **Deceptiveness** – Once the link and its subsequent escalation have set in, the “problem” becomes much more difficult to deal with. We start to identify the physical side of our acting out as the “problem.” Some of us believe that simply stopping the activity will deal with the issue. This is a lie and we are deceived!
7. **Outcomes** – Even though all individuals lie, addicts ramp up their lying behaviors. As we start to believe lies about our “problem,” we turn into highly proficient liars, people who learn to live life by lying their way through it. We believe that if people knew who we really are they would not accept us. Therefore, we adopt lying as a lifestyle, even lying about things we don’t need to!

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8. **Character** – As we become highly proficient liars, any goodness of character becomes infected. The “problem” has taken over with lying, cheating, betrayal, and stealing becoming the norm in our lives, hurting all those around us, especially our family. Not only do we lie to those around us, but we lie to ourselves. We call this denial. The greater the level of addiction, the greater and deeper the level of denial that we have a problem.
9. **Exposure** – Eventually, even though we have tried to hide it, our “problem” surfaces. It typically surfaces in one of three ways: very publically, privately within our family, or internally as we become aware of it. Exposure always results in feelings of shame.
10. **Shame** – Shame is at the core of our addiction. Shame is the emotion we feel as a result of our true identity or character being exposed. Shame rises up within us when we perceive ourselves as flawed and defective.
11. **Powerlessness** – Whether we accept it or not, we are powerless over the “problem,” instead the “problem” has power over us. Those who accept this as the truth can move forward toward allowing God to heal the “problem.” Those that don’t accept this truth are destined to continue the cycle of acting out followed by exposure and shame, and will continue to spiral downward. This spiral may result in severe consequences such as depression, marital discord, loss of employment, or even to the extremes of jail time or possibly even death; these consequences are often referred to as “rock bottom.”
12. **Helplessness** – Normally with an acceptance of powerlessness over the “problem” comes the realization of an inability to help oneself. Once a person finally gets to this point, they are ready to move to a position of brokenness and humility in accepting the help of others, and especially God.

You may now begin to realize that the issue of sexual purity in a man’s life is vital to his relationships with his loved ones and vital in his relationship with his maker. We use the word “vital” as it signifies life-giving. Lack of sexual purity destroys vitality, destroys character and virtue, and destroys a man from the inside out; it pushes a man toward a living death. (Proverbs 16:25 says: “There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.” NIV)

Once a man has reached a point where he is humbled by the shame, powerlessness, and hopelessness of his sexual acting out, he may be ready to start working on the solution to the “problem.” Castimonia provides a Christ-centered place and an environment where the “problem” can be addressed in a proven and systematic way.

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Suggested Meeting List

Castimonia	http://castimonia.org
Saturday , 10am – 11:30am The Fellowship at Cinco Ranch Student Building (Loft) 22765 Westheimer Parkway Katy, TX 77450	Monday , 7pm – 8:30pm The Fellowship at Cinco Ranch Community Room 22765 Westheimer Parkway Katy, TX 77450
Tuesday , 7pm – 8:30pm Vineyard Church of Sugar Land (Park in the front, ring bell, walk upstairs) 5015 Grove West Boulevard Stafford, TX 77477	Thursday , 7pm – 8:30pm Grace Fellowship United Methodist Church The Mansion, Room 204 2655 South Mason Road Katy, TX 77450
Friday Telemeeting , 12 noon – 1:00pm (CST) Call In Phone Number: 424.203.8405 Access Code: 407885 International Numbers can be found on Castimonia.org	
Houston SAA (Westside Meetings Only)	http://houstonsaa.org
Monday – Thursday, 12pm - 1pm St. Cyril of Alexandria Catholic Church Office Building, Room 223 10503 Westheimer Houston, TX 77082	Wednesday, 7:15pm – 8:30pm Memorial United Methodist Church Scout Building 12955 Memorial Drive Houston, Texas 77079
Sunday, 7:30pm – 8:30pm Emmanuel Episcopal Church Day School Building, Room 204 15051 Memorial Drive Houston, TX 77079	Tuesday & Friday, 6am – 7am Current - A Christian Church 26600 Westheimer Parkway Katy, TX 77494
Celebrate Recovery	http://www.celebraterecovery.com
Thursday, 6pm – 9pm Houston's First Baptist Church 7401 Katy Freeway Houston, TX 77024	Tuesday, 7pm – 9pm Church of the Holy Apostles 1225 W. Grand Parkway South Katy, TX 77450

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Suggested Therapists

Houston Center for Christian Counseling	http://www.christiancounselinghouston.com/
Tim Mavergeorge 402 Julie Rivers Drive Sugar Land, TX 77478 281.277.8811	Bill Ritter 609-B Park Grove Drive Katy, TX 77450 281.398.0022
David House 402 Julie Rivers Drive Sugar Land, TX 77478 281.277.8811	
Hope & Freedom Counseling Services	http://www.hopeandfreedom.com
Milton S. Magness 3730 Kirby Drive, Suite 1130 Houston, TX 77098 713.630.0111	
Renewing Hope	http://www.renewinghope.net
Marshall Rorie 11999 Katy Freeway, Suite 490 Houston, TX 77079 713.365.0700	
Innovations Counseling	http://www.innovationscounseling.com
Kevin Glasser 11999 Katy Freeway, Suite 490 Houston, TX 77079 281.597.9291	
Marriage & Family Therapy, PLLC	http://www.eniebourland.com
Enie Bourland 9950 Cypresswood Drive, Suite 206 Houston, TX 77070 281.813.0672	



Suggested Internet Filtering and Accountability Software

Accountability & Filtering Software:

- Safe Eyes
<http://www.internetsafety.com>
(Please contact the leadership of Castimonia on how installing “Safe Eyes” can benefit the ministry)
- Covenant Eyes
<http://www.cvnt.net>
- B-Secure/ B-Safe
<http://www.bsecure.com>
- Net Nanny
<http://www.netnanny.com>

Accountability Only

- X3Watch
<http://x3watch.com>

Informative Websites

- Castimonia Home Page
<http://castimonia.org>
- Sex Addicts Anonymous
<http://saa-recovery.org>
<http://houstonsaa.org>
- Porn Addiction – Sexual Addiction Treatment
<http://www.sexhelp.com>
<http://www.settingcaptivesfree.com>
<http://www.bebroken.com>
<http://xxxchurch.com>

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Suggested Book List for Men Struggling with Sexual Purity

For men struggling with lustful thoughts and minor actions:

Every Man's Battle

By Stephen Arterburn, Fred Stoeker

For men struggling with pornography:

In the Shadows of the Net: Breaking Free of Compulsive Online Sexual Behavior

By Patrick Carnes, David Delmonico, Elizabeth Griffin

The Pornography Trap: Setting Pastors and Laypersons Free from Sexual Addiction

By Mark R. Laaser, Ralph H. Earle Jr.

The Porn Trap: The Essential Guide to Overcoming Problems Caused by Pornography

By Wendy Maltz & Larry Maltz

Wired for Intimacy: How Pornography Hijacks the Male Brain

By William M. Struthers

The Secret in the Pew: Pornography in the Lives of Christian Men - Breaking the Bondage of Sexual Sin

By: David A. Blythe

For men with a sexual addiction or various addictive sexual behaviors:

Out of the Shadows

By Patrick Carnes

Healing the Wounds of Sexual Addiction

By Mark Laaser

STOP Sex Addiction: Real Hope, True Freedom for Sexual Addicts and Partners

By Milton S. Magness

Facing the Shadow: Starting Sexual and Relationship Recovery

By Patrick Carnes

30 Days to Hope & Freedom Workbook

By Milton S. Magness

Don't Call it Love

By Patrick Carnes

Sex Addicts Anonymous Green Book

By SAA ISO

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Twelve Steps and Their Biblical Origins

- 1. We admitted we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors, that our lives had become unmanageable.**
"I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out." (Romans 7:18)
- 2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**
"For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose." (Philippians 2:13)
- 3. We made a decision to turn our lives and our wills over to the care of God, as we understood God.**
"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:6-7)
- 4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**
"Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD." (Lamentations 3:40)
- 5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**
"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." (James 5:16)
- 6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**
"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." (James 4:10)
- 7. We humbly ask Him to remove all our shortcomings.**
"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)
- 8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**
"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)
- 9. We made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**
"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." (Romans 12:10, 18)
- 10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.**
"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Corinthians 10:12)
- 11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.**
"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will." (Romans 12:2)
- 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we try to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**
"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

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12-Step Meetings, Prayers, & Slogans

In attending a 12-Step meeting, such as Castimonia, you will hear different ideas, prayers, and slogans. In order to familiarize new members with a few of these items, we have written the most common ones below.

Serenity Prayer:

God, Grant me the Serenity, to accept the things I cannot change, the Courage to change the things I can, and the Wisdom to know the difference.

“One day at a time”	To look at recovery and life in only one day increments; allowing us to focus only on today, not the future, and not the past. (Matthew 6:34)
“Let go and Let God”	Means to let go of our everyday circumstances and let God take care of them.
“Higher Power”	General term used for a “power greater than ourselves.” In Castimonia, we openly acknowledge Jesus Christ as our “Higher Power.”
“Working the Steps”	To work the 12 steps (or portions of them) on a daily basis.
“Progress not Perfection”	Acknowledgement that we are not perfect at recovery, but are always striving for progress, even small amounts.
“Rock Bottom”	The lowest point of our addiction that led us into recovery.
“High-Bottom Problems”	Everyday problems that do not involve our sexual purity or intense strain.
“Take what you like and leave the rest”	To take only the portions of the meeting you like and that benefit you and not any portions you do not find helpful.
“3-Day Intensives/ Full Disclosure”	A therapist-led 3 day intensive couples counseling session that includes a full disclosure of sexual activities to spouse with follow-up polygraph.

The Lord’s Prayer:

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen.

“Keep coming back: It works if you work it, because you’re worth it!”

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Merimnao and Castimonia

When you come to a Castimonia meeting you will often see or hear the name “Merimnao” mentioned. We would like to explain the relationship of the two names here.

Merimnao is a “para-church” ministry, and a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the churches and community in the Katy/West Houston area in through ministering to the brokenhearted. It originated out of the same ministry within the church known as “The Fellowship at Cinco Ranch” (www.thefellowship.org). Brokenheartedness is a scriptural term that refers to the fact that people have an “inner part” which is so often broken. Widows and orphans are brokenhearted, individuals with life threatening illnesses are brokenhearted and people who have been abused or abandoned are brokenhearted; addicts, such as found in the fellowship known as Castimonia, are also brokenhearted.

Castimonia is therefore part of Merimnao, and Merimnao, as a para-church organization is part of the worldwide church that Jesus established after His death and resurrection.

Under the umbrella of Merimnao, there are other ministries, these can be thought of as “sister” ministries to Castimonia. The closest sister ministry of course is Parakaleo, the group for wives, fiancés or girlfriends of men struggling with compulsive sexual behaviors. Here is a current short list our other sister ministries:

- Sozo - Post Abortion Support
- New Hope - Breast Cancer Support
- Adelphé – General women’s issues
- Divorce Support - Divorce Recovery and Support
- Barrayo – For men dealing with childhood sexual abuse
- Parent Advocates – For the parents of difficult teenagers
- Grief Support – Grief Support and Recovery
- Poimenes – For men in spiritual authority
- Naphaleos – For men and women struggling with alcohol

Each time you attend a Castimonia meeting, or donate time in service or financial resources you will be supporting the overall ministry of Merimnao. In turn, each of those other sister ministries support Castimonia. Mutual support is given financially, in service and in prayer primarily.

It is usual for members of our ministries to develop a heart of gratefulness, and want to give back to help others as they have been helped. We have found it quite common for group members to want to give financially. We therefore encourage them to give dedicated gifts directly to Merimnao. If you want to do this, please speak with one of the Castimonia facilitators.

Another way group members have given back is in service. Speak to your facilitator if you sense that you ought to serve the group in some way. You can contact the leadership of Merimnao by e-mail at info@merimnao.org.

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