

BOT CANDIDATE
WRITTEN INTERVIEW

NAME: **Max B.**

DATE: **06/11/2024**

REVISED WRITTEN INTERVIEW: **07/30/2025**

SECTION A. S.L.A.A. QUALIFICATION

A-1. Are you applying for the Board of Trustees (BOT) as an [circle all that apply]: •
S.L.A.A. Member • Non-Member • Returning BOT member

A-2. How long have you been a member of S.L.A.A.? 14 Years

• Please explain any lapses of membership.

I do not have lapses in membership.

A-3. What are your bottom-line behaviors?

- Sex outside of a committed relationship
- Obsessing over unmet expectations
- Not seeking validation and receiving with humility.

A-4. What is your current, continuous sobriety date? 07/02/2016

A-5. Have you worked the entire 12 Steps with a sponsor? • Yes • No

• If Yes, please describe. If No, please explain.

I have worked them four times, the first time was the perfect work..
The second was in a twelve step work shop, the next two times was with as a sponsor

A-6. Do you currently have a program sponsor and/or service sponsor? • Yes • No

• If Yes, how does your sponsor relationship work? If No, please explain.

My service sponsor is there for me as needed, if I have a question about anything I can turn to him.
The most important thing is his support and knowing who to turn to with issues he may not have
guidance to give. In turn he may have issues that he is looking for guidance on and we will talk about
them.

A-7. How often do you attend S.L.A.A. meetings?

I attend 3 meetings a week, 1 Intergroup meeting a month, 1 conference committee meeting a month, and other FWS meetings as needed throughout the year.

A-8. What, if any, service positions have you held within S.L.A.A.?

I am the current CPIC chair, Delegate, IG H&I Chair/CPIC conduit, IG Webmaster, IG Phone Line Rep. Meeting Secretary, Treasure, Literature rep, IG rep,

A-9. Have you served on any S.L.A.A. Conference Committees? • Yes • No

• If Yes, what committee did you most enjoy and why? If No, please feel free to explain.

I would say the most enjoyable was the work with the CPIC facing challenges and overcoming all of the roadblocks. Working with fellows that gave their best.

A-10. Helpful S.L.A.A. resources include the S.L.A.A. Basic Text, the FWS Website (www.slaafws.org), the FWS Newsletter, the Journal magazine, the Conference Service Manual (CSM) and the Corporate By-Laws.

• Please describe your familiarity with these resources.

I still read the Basic text to help clarify reading from the State of Grace and in work with fellows, I use our Website, Can help the newcomer navigate it. I have been a Subscriber to our Newsletter for years. I was exposed to the CSM and By-Laws of SLAA for the first-time last year. Over this year I have come to having a working knowledge of them.

SECTION B. PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

B-1. What business or professional experience, if any, do you have?

(i.e. accounting, audit, commerce, human resources, information technology, legal, management, etc.) I was in the United States Marine Corps for 15 years. I have worked in mid-level management in both education and retail, I started and owned my own IT training firm in the early 90s. Teaching IT as a contractor at all levels for over 20 years.

B-2. Have you worked at a nonprofit agency or have other volunteer experiences?

Over the last few years I have volunteered as a Veteran Peer Support Specialist – I am certified.

B-3. Have you done service work or been on a BOT outside of S.L.A.A.? If so, describe.

No I have not.

B-4. This question is to give us an idea of what additional skills/resources you have that would be useful for serving on the BOT.

Are you comfortable writing and editing documents? • Yes • No

Are you willing to carry on business discussions using email? • Yes • No

Have access to email? • Yes • No

Have access to the internet? • Yes • No

Have your own personal computer in order to ensure confidentiality? • Yes • No

Are you willing to register an email address with Google Groups? • Yes • No

Are you willing to adapt to new technology? • Yes • No

• Please feel free to explain any special circumstances:

None.

SECTION C. INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

C-1. In service at the group level, healthy interpersonal skills can be a deciding factor in effective communication and collaboration. How do you define the key elements of healthy interpersonal skills?

I believe the number one most important skill is listening, then honesty, setting boundaries, being accountable. Some ask why is listening is #1 if I am not listening how can I be honest in my interactions, I would not be able to set boundaries, without the previous I would fear being accountable.

• What are your personal strengths here?

I try to be open to Change & Honesty.

• What are your weaknesses?

I will sometime leap before I think, as soon as I do I get up brush myself off, do an inventory, and make an amends.

C-2. Give some examples of team or group work you've done involving group level decision making.

Working as a trusted servant in 12 step I do this all the time, The real test for me was being the leader of a team in the military and having to not lead by group conscience.

• Please describe how your interpersonal skills contributed to group level decision-making in these examples.

If you're the leader you must be accountable, the best group level decision I have been a part of all had great listeners and did not fear making mistakes.

C-3. Describe your understanding of group conscience.

A shared decision reached by a careful and respectful process where everyone has a voice, and everyone listens.

C-4. Would you give an example of a situation involving conflict where you felt you were most and least successful?

- **Most:** Any situation involving conflict that all walked away from it may be a little bruised but able to step up and take on the next project. Over my experiences in recovery, it would have been starting a new meeting and having an issue of location. Most of the group planning had one location in mind, a small minority wished a different location. We looked at the pros and cons and all agreed on a location. The meeting started and thrived until the pandemic and we lost the location.
- **Least:** Any situation involving conflict that you lost a team member due to not being able to carry their load and others having to carry it for them. Long before coming into recovery, I was working as a contractor. We worked in small teams and each had duties to complete the job. At times, a member of the team would not carry their load and would end up leaving the team. There was a lot of training for this job, and it would take a few weeks to bring a member up to speed. Others on the team would have to pick up the work.

C-5. The BOT recommends that BOT candidates serve at least three months on a BOT committee or BOT subcommittee in preparation for BOT service. Have you served on a BOT committee? • Yes • No

- If Yes, what were your contributions? If No, please feel free to explain.

I have not had the opportunity to, I have been looking in to BOT subcommittee work, but my Sponsor has always told me to always be sure there is no conflict of interest. In my work with CPIC and other work I do there is a possible conflict.

SECTION D. ACCOUNTABILITY / RELIABILITY / AVAILABILITY

D-1. Is there anything foreseeable that may stand in the way of your fulfilling this service commitment if you were elected/confirmed to the BOT?

No

D-2. Have you ever chosen to step back from a service/professional commitment? If so, please explain.

Yes, After I hit bottom I chose to step away from a venture I was a part of, I filed in attempting to use my will in my recovery and hit a deeper bottom.

D-3. At a minimum, the BOT has up to 12 two- to three-hour BOT video meetings per year. These meetings are typically on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday, depending on your geographic location (we use Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) for scheduling). They could start anytime during the day or night. As a BOT member, you will also chair a BOT committee, which should meet monthly, as well as be a BOT alternate on another BOT committee. The BOT uses emails

extensively for discussions and conducting business. Each BOT member is also expected to serve as BOT liaison to several Conference committees which meet at least once a month. Also, this BOT may have international members which means that each person must occasionally sacrifice convenience in order to accommodate all members on a call. Given this framework:

- Are you able to adjust your schedule and are you willing to do so gracefully? • Yes • No
- If you are traveling, are you willing to arrange to be on a call while away? • Yes • No
- Describe your availability to meet on weeknights, weekdays and weekends.

I am flexible in most cases, my only challenge is sometimes finding someone to cover another commitment.

D-4. You are expected to travel to the Annual Business Meeting each year.

Do you have any restrictions for traveling? • Yes • No

- If Yes, what are they?

None.

D-5. As a member of the BOT, your full name and address may be listed on the legal papers related to the non-profit corporation (*The Augustine Fellowship, S.L.A.A., Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc.*), resulting in a loss of your anonymity, as these documents are public record. How do you feel about that and does it change your willingness to serve on the BOT?

As a trusted servant I have had to surrender my anonymity in the past. It does not affect my willingness to be of service.

SECTION E. PERSONAL VALUES

Please write a 300 - 500 word essay for possible publication in the Journal magazine and/or the FWS Newsletter.

You may choose ONE of the following themes:

E-1. How do you practice the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and/or 12 Concepts in your everyday, personal life?

E-2. Which Step/Tradition and/or Characteristic/Sign speaks most closely to your character defects and how do you find personal recovery?

E-3. The Fifth Tradition states “Each Group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sex and love addict who still suffers.” What do you believe is the “message” of S.L.A.A., and how do our Traditions support translating such words into actions?

I am honored that fellows within our fellowship have recognized me as a suitable candidate for membership on our Board of trustees. As a delegate and chair of the Conference Public Information Committee (CPIC) for the last three years, I have worked with some of our most devoted fellows. I have found that if I use the tools of the program, I have put honesty at the front and ensure I practice principles before personalities. Sometimes as a group we have disagreements, and feathers may be ruffled. In doing the tenth step daily, I find my part in a conflict and do my best to find a resolution. I am most concerned that some of our fellows at the level of service like chairs and sub-chairs, and others are unable to accept the group consensus. I have always wondered why step eleven is not step one, I can understand that the addict who is just exploring recovery finds it hard sometimes to pray and meditate. At some level, even early in my recovery, I would do my best to clear my mind of self-will and turn my thoughts to find clarity. I would be able to then form a question that I would be able to ask my sponsor, therapist, or other trusted fellow. With the use of this early form of the eleventh step, I would have allowed my self-will to invade the process. The guidance given to me by my first sponsor after step one was to do my best to use step eleven to the best of my understanding going forward. This is not only a key element in my recovery, but it helped build a solid foundation of using the tools of recovery. The momentary pause is a short form of step eleven I have used it a few times in drafting this essay, and I will ask a trusted fellow to read this essay to ensure I am being mindful. As my first sponsor also suggested that after step two that I should practice step ten going forward, with the warning that simple words can do harm, and to be mindful. Mindfulness is being willing to practice step eleven. Step three asked me to turn my will and life over to the care of God, as I understood God. Without having an understanding of God through an informed consciousness, through meditation, and using the tools of the program, this is a hopeless task. For my recovery, faith and hope are the cornerstones of my recovery. The foundation of our fellowship is carrying the message to the addict still suffering. The paradox of the addict still suffering is one of understanding that as Sex and love addicts, we must continually put down the bottle. I know that my character defects will resurface at the drop of a hat. It is the group that holds me accountable, the group carries the message that gives me the strength and hope. I must use the tools of the program each and every day. It is a way of life. The topics for our essay given to us as nominees for the board of trustees this year cannot be answered alone; they are all connected. In working these steps, we need to be aware of the traditions. In service, we are willing to adhere to the traditions. The steps and traditions are not just a guide to recovery; they are a way of life. Our concepts provide a framework for how Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous' service structure should operate. The Steps, Traditions, and Concepts should not be abridged or made to fit our will. They are the cornerstones, they are the guides to each faze of my personal recovery, in their entirety they shape "Our Way of Life."

BOT CANDIDATE

ORAL INTERVIEW -Max B. (CA)

Suzanne D. (TX) – Interviewer Rick B. (FL) – Transcriber

28 June 2024

Do you have any questions for us? [I have no questions.](#)

1. Why do you want to serve on the Board of Trustees (BOT)?

a. [Well, my first inclination as far as looking at service at the level of the Board of Trustees](#)

was basically to be able to maybe have a little bit more of an impact on those still suffering. I know I have hit many roadblocks at different points in my recovery and in trying to make that impact for those that are still suffering. I talk to a lot of people about the roadblocks that I have hit and the majority of the time it is because of the fact that there's not that stable participation of fellows. I know that with the Board of Trustees and the service Committees, in general, at the Chair-level there is a little bit more stability in membership of fellows serving. And I believe that being able to have the input from the Committees and being able to take to our BOT and help steer some of those projects to completion. I feel I would have a little more of an impact on the addict that is still suffering.

2. What do you hope to accomplish?

- a. Honestly, to tell you the truth, I really have not set any really high goals with the service on the Board. I think that my main accomplishment that I would like to accomplish in the time that I would serve, which I believe is a 3-year term, would be to hopefully see the growth and participation that I saw pre-pandemic come back. So, I believe that one of the Committees that I feel is so important is the Membership Retention Committee. I would love to see all those members that had stepped away during the pandemic from service and in person meetings to actually come back. With the support of the BOT be able to make and do some movement in those areas. So that would be one quasi goal. I would say one goal that I would have would be to see if we can get the membership in person back into the rooms around the world, not just in my own Intergroup. So that would be one major goal that I would love to be able to accomplish in 3 years. To help steer the movement of those areas. And also, another goal that I have, and I will continue to have no matter where I am serving in service in SLAA, is to find the ways to be able to take and get into areas that we had not been before. Like our current survey that we are going to be doing this year. The data that we will get from that survey hopefully will be shared with people that will be able to see that – we are a more viable fellowship than current belief is among some professionals. I know I talked with people in mental health as I am involved in the mental health field, although not actively right now I have talked to a lot of people in recovery and it is like as soon as I talk about SLAA, principles of SLAA and where SLAA takes us in recovery. That is when I see the light go on and they say – Wow. Why have I missed this before? So, getting that word out to people I think is a particularly important goal of the Board Outreach Committee and the Board in general. To be able to encourage and steer the Committees into getting that word out. At least in the areas focus they can.

3. What issues do you see the BOT facing with the current state of our S.L.A.A. Fellowship?

- a. Oh. Rotation of service is the biggest issue I see. In the past, trying to get new people involved in the BOT has been a challenge. I see movement starting to take hold and starting to cycle in place. That is probably one of the most important things that I see as an issue with any Board and any nonprofit is that rotation of service. And it is actually not just on the Board, it is all the way up to triangle to the group and meeting level. And it is important, I see that happening. It is still the biggest issue in service. Just making sure that we get the people that are interested in serving at the Board-level, on

committees and just to be of service to our fellowship. Other issues I think sometimes we may not address, again being a committee chair, I have seen that it seems like sometimes things get stuck in a cycle of “Okay, where are we going to take this?” And I know that there are so many other concerns, fiscal concerns, and other concerns the Board has to look at when the project comes forward. But sometimes I think that even some of the simplest stuff gets tied up. Literature: Last year we passed the way we do literature it was an unbelievable step forward. And I think that streamlining a lot of things could benefit the fellowship as a whole, empowering other trusted servants to be able to make choices and decisions that really do not have to fall on the Board. The main responsibility of our Board is fiscal. To make sure that we stay fiscally sensible as a Fellowship. Also keeping within all of our Traditions and Concepts no matter what we are doing within the Fellowship. The next most important thing would be as a fellowship would see the key issues, I have seen in the past that are changing. But again, it is so slow. For a new growing fellowship. Because 1976. “Not new, but not old.” And We're still growing, and it is like the 12x12x12. It took how long to get through. The system of happening. You know we finally have gotten something that is a viable document. But yet, there's still people saying, “oh, this, this, and this needs to be tweaked, that needs to be tweaked.” But we have a viable document today. I am again. I think that the idea of being able to take and tell other trusted fellows: “Okay, hey, give it to us. If we need to review and if we need to take and put it in place. Or if we need to do something to put it in place. We will do so.” But we will trust what we have from our Fellowship is for the good of the Fellowship. And trust in our Higher Power. And practice “Principle before Personalities” of course. I would put in place on that.

4. What personal challenges can you foresee if you are elected to the BOT?

a. The blessing is that I talk with enough people in program that I do not think any of the personal challenges that I would have on the Board would be any different than the personal challenges I have had in other areas of service that I have had throughout my recovery. But the one greatest challenge, of course, is always ensuring that it is the will of the Fellowship and not my personal will. That is always going to be the greatest challenge. But that is one of the beautiful things about working as a group is that hopefully it does come to the will of the Higher Power. And I know that there have been pre pandemic, so many things that I had seen that were just unbelievable as far as how the conscious of the group made things happen. And got things moving at the group level and at the Intergroup level. And now it is starting to come back. So, I think that would probably be that one little challenge that I would have would be, “will of the Higher Power.” Always talking it over with trusted fellows, not just on my own head running something. Letting something germinate to ‘my will’ instead of the will of the Group Conscience and Higher Power.

5. How would you describe your emotional sobriety*?

a. I would say that my emotional sobriety over the last 3 years has been much stronger than ever before. I still think that as an addict, sometimes we will allow our emotions to, you know, be built up in ways that are not healthy. But, recognizing when that is happening is the number one most important thing for me. So, it is that recognition. And the last thing that I always do each and every day is I do my emotional inventory. Where was I

emotionally not there today? What do I need to do to change that in the future? And then understand that I am not perfect. There are gonna be times that the emotional level is gonna be not where it should be. But recognizing it when it is and stepping back and just saying "Okay, I'm taking my 30 seconds of silence". I am going to check out of a meeting early because something may not be there. I know self-care is important to emotional sobriety. Emotion improperly expressed is what eats me up and I think it is what eats all of us up. And it can affect all areas of our lives. It is something I have worked on, and I have checked. I check myself every day, all the time, even when I am driving down the road and somebody does something that brings up my emotional issues. I check it. I immediately recognized it, I talked about it, and you know it is there. So, I really do try to practice emotional sobriety in all areas of life. Is it perfect? Absolutely not. But it is a constant recognition that it is something I need to always maintain.

6. I am going to present a scenario and would like you to respond as best you can...***Because you are a BOT member, a member of the Fellowship contacts you. The member is upset about something which either you, the BOT, or a staff member has done. The situation is something that has been discussed by either the full BOT or the appropriate Committee and that group is comfortable with the situation and generally does not share the concerns of the member who has called you. Describe how you might handle the situation.***
- a. Well, been there, done that already. And I think that the main issue is trying to bring the individual to the understanding that it is about principles before personalities. That it is about the Group Conscience. And, then trying to, with the help of other fellows, of course, with guidance of other fellows, see if there are any other remedies that may need to be done. You know, in working the 12 Steps, the 10th Step is probably one of the most powerful things that I live by each and every day. And if we forget that 10th Step, and we allow ourselves to have any type of resentment. Somebody coming at us and asking us a question or presenting a scenario and resenting them for their concern instead of trying to help them understand what the concern may be, how it has been worked on, and how we are working on that issue. That is not going to help the individual and it is not going to help me. So, if for some reason I am resentful that is the first thing I am going to do. I am going to try to take and talk with other fellows about it. Do a 10th Step and understand that we are not perfect. This person may not have the understanding of recovery that other fellows may have, that they are having an issue with. And understanding that, it is okay, it is about the addict that is still suffering. And in some way that addict is still suffering. So, bringing to them a solution either through another fellow or through helping them understand that it is Group Conscious. Is the solution that I would try to go through and go through with. It does not work all the time. Do fellows sometimes have a resentment towards me because of the guidance I may have given them? Absolutely. But that is on them. It is not on me. I have done what I can do to help that fellow - that addict who is still suffering - because they are still suffering. Because they may not have the full understanding of the principles of the program.

7. With the information that you've shared in these interviews, which personal message would you

like conference members to keep in mind as they face this important vote?

The fellows in the program that know me know that I try to be honest and forthright in all of my activities in the Fellowship. Without that honesty there from myself, I cannot expect honesty from others. My advice for the to the fellows that will be considering my membership on the Board would be that if you feel that for any reason I cannot be honest and forthright with the people that I'm working with on the Board, with the Committees that I'll be helping in the work, with the fellows that I sponsor, with any area of service; let me know. Let me have that input as far as why you feel that maybe something I need to work on. Because without that input of my fellows, my trusted fellows, there is no way that I can stay sober. It takes the family, the tribe, to maintain our sobriety in all areas of our lives. And that is what it is about. It is about sobriety and maintaining our sobriety. And being of service to the Fellowship is one of the ways that I have kept my sobriety. And it helped me keep my sobriety. And being of service to other fellows: it is my hope that helps them to keep their sobriety. And it is not going to be perfect, and I will not even claim that it would be. I will never claim to serve perfectly. But with the input of other fellows, with the help of other trusted fellows, I believe that anything that I do for our Fellowship as a Board member, will be done not of my will but of a Group Conscience of my trusted fellows, the other Board members or other fellows that I have contact with in the Fellowship. I know that a lot of fellows that I am in fellowship with daily, that is they will always tell me that I am always honest and open about what we are talking about, what we are discussing at that point in time. So, my hope is that if it is your decision and it is a decision of the Higher Power that I am Board member that I will be able to serve imperfectly. With guidance, to have the best outcomes for the Fellowship. So that would be my word to our fellows and my hope that others can be drawn to service by the examples of those that are trusted servants in our fellowship.

EXPLAIN THE PROCESS OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT WITH THESE QUESTIONNAIRES AND THE ELECTION/APPOINTMENT PROCESS.

Any additional comments or questions? I would like to thank Rick B and Suzanne D for their service. I have no other questions.

**Please see the applicant's written interview for program sobriety information, including bottom lines and recovery*

Max B. (CA) 28Jun2024