



## SA Guidelines For Writing A Formal Disclosure

The following steps will assist you in writing your Formal Disclosure. This is a process that takes time, commitment, support, and often several drafts before you are ready to present FD to your partner or spouse. Your therapist will assist you in this process. Please use good boundaries in storing the formal disclosure while you work on this letter. Using your sex history time line, begin with a first draft. You may start with earliest memories to present date if that helps or you may start with first courtship steps in your relationship. As an adjunct support, please read the appropriate support books and materials as assigned by your therapist.

### **STEPS FOR DRAFTING YOUR FORMAL DISCLOSURE:**

1. Start with an opening statement to your spouse. Keep it simple and straightforward. This is not a time for excessive apologies or excuses. Let your spouse know you are grateful for their attendance and support.
2. Use a timeline with dates and months, be as specific as you can. Include all of the following. If this doesn't apply to your acting out, you can omit. Please remember limits of confidentiality and mandated reporting of your therapist should you disclose activity with children

## Strip clubs

- Pornography (any kind)
  - Prostitutes
  - Homosexual Partners
  - Affair Partners
  - Sexual Massage
  - Phone Sex
  - Craigslist
  - Group Sex
  - BDSM
  - Sex Clubs
  - Bestiality
  - Pedophilia
  - Sex Shops
  - Sex Bars
  - Gay Bars
  - 
  - Arrests & Law suits
  - Swingers
  - Secret PO Boxes
  - Secret Families
  - Secret Phones
  - Secret Homes or Apartments
  - Job Loss
  - Money Impact
  - Other Addictions
3. Change any use of the conditional tense to the past tense.

**Poor Example:** I would leave work in the afternoons to go to topless bars.

**Good Example:** I left work in the afternoons to go to topless bars.

4. Include time frames when each acting out incident happened, and by telling how often it occurred.

**Good Example:**

In June of 2000, while on a business trip to San Francisco, I went to a back room behind a bar and had unprotected intercourse with a female prostitute. I paid the prostitute \$50 in cash.

## OR

Between early 1998 and late 2001, when I went on regular business trips to New York and Philadelphia, I watched pay-per-view pornographic movies on the TV in my hotel room almost every night and masturbated once to three times each night. I estimate I watched pay-per-view programs a total of 65 times, or 150 hours and masturbated an estimated total of 220 times. Include money spent and lies told.

5. References to the partner are not to be written in the second person.

**Poor Example:** Many times I lied to my wife about my sexual secrets.

**Good Example:** Many times I lied to you about my sexual secrets.

6. Use clinical or anatomically correct terms and avoid slang or sexual jargon.

**Example:** oral sex, not blowjob, pornography rather than porn, prostitute instead of massage therapist, breasts rather than the slang terms often used, and "I paid for oral sex to be preformed on me," rather than "I got a blow job."

7. Use "I" statements and focus on you, the addict's actions and behaviors:

### **Example:**

**Poor Example:** I picked up a prostitute and went to a motel and she gave me a blowjob.

**Good Example:** I picked up a female prostitute in Hollywood on my way home from the airport on September 17, 2007. I took her to the Motel Six on Sunset in Hollywood, and paid \$50 to her to receive unprotected oral sex from her. I was with her approximately 30 minutes. I lied to you about my plane being late.

**Poor Example:** The woman I was seeing called me and invited me to get together, so we met and had dinner at a restaurant. Afterward she invited me to her apartment and we had sex.

**Good Example:** Sometime toward the end of August of last year, I received a call from the woman I was having an affair with and I agreed to meet and have dinner with her at a restaurant that you and I often go to (name). I spent \$200 on dinner. Afterward I went to her apartment and had protected intercourse with her. I was with her for about 3 hours and I lied to you stating that I had been at work.

8. Regarding use of names of acting out partners— a name is used only if the partner knows the person (such as a friend or family member of the partner, a neighbor, or someone the addict has a work relationship with).

If, however, the relationship partner does not know the acting out partner and they have never met, then the person is referred to by the person's gender.

**Example:**

During a sales conference in 1997 I flirted with a woman I met in a workshop. I ate several meals with her over the course of the conference, and on the last night I invited her to my room and had (protected/unprotected) intercourse with her.

9. Including the addict's thoughts and feelings or narrative-like details to describe what happened, or explanations of the addict's behavior are omitted. The facts are stated simply and directly, with only enough detail for the relationship partner to follow the sequence of events and to convey what happened honestly and completely. The addict does not include detailed descriptions of the body parts or sensations.

**Example:**

**Poor Example:** I went to a nude bar in downtown L.A. with my buddy, Joe. He talked me into it. After we got there I was nervous because I had never been to a place like that before. I knew I was wrong but felt manipulated and talked into it. I had intended just to watch but one or two of the dancers sat down and I felt sorry for her, so we bought them several drinks.

Joe got drunk and passed out, and the girl pulled me into a room and began to touch me on my chest and penis. I felt guilty because I didn't want to violate my marriage vows, but I had no way of leaving and had to go along with it. She gave me a hand job and I paid her \$40.

**Good Example:** I agreed to go with a male friend (name given if known to relationship partner) to a topless bar in Las Vegas. While there I watched the topless dancers, talked to some of the prostitutes and bought them several drinks. I also had about four drinks. I spent \$\$\$. I accepted one prostitute's offer to go to a room where men receive sexual services and she masturbated me there. I paid \$\$\$ to have her do this.

10. Add details of what happened if the reference is vague, incomplete or unclear.

It is important to include enough information so your partner is not confused about what transpired. However, do not include specific hurtful details that outline the nitty gritty of the sexual act as this can further traumatize your spouse.

**Example:**

**Poor Example:** I called up an escort service and they sent someone over and we had sex.

**Good Example:** On February 9, 2001, I called an escort service while on a business trip to New York, and had a male prostitute

sent to my hotel room. I received unprotected oral sex and had protected anal intercourse with him. I spent \$\$.

11. If the acting out involved spending money, that needs to be included, along with the amount.

**Example:**

I called an escort service and had a male prostitute sent to my hotel room. I received unprotected oral sex and had protected anal intercourse with him. I spent a total of \$350.

It is also important to include any additional information pertinent to the amounts that were spent on the addiction.

**Example:**

While I was secretly paying for prostitutes, I was aware that there often wasn't enough money to pay our mortgage.

12. If the acting out involved lying to the relationship partner or taking advantage of opportunities provided by the partner's routine or in other ways indirectly involved the partner in some way, that needs to be included.

**Example:**

Many times I lied to you that I was working late when I really was going to sexual bookstores before I came home. (Then would follow details of what was done at the bookstores.)

**OR**

Often I went to topless bars when you were out of town. Once I dropped you off at the airport for you to fly to a conference and another time I took you to the airport to visit your mom, and both times I drove straight from the airport to a topless bar. (Then what happened at the topless bar.)

13. The addict will include all incidents of flirting, sexualizing co-workers, friends, family members or others, fantasy and so forth.

**Example:**

Whenever we were out together, or I was out in public alone, such as shopping together, eating together at a restaurant or going to a movie together, I would often stare and go into sexual fantasy about other women. I would deny doing this when you confronted me.

14. Finally, once every single sexually acting out behavior has been included, it is imperative for the addict to also include behaviors and other addictions that were hurtful to the partner including: drugs, alcohol, gambling, online gaming, social media flirting, physical violence, emotional and verbal abuse, hiding spending on non-sexual purchases, abusive child discipline, constant berating of the partner's family or friends, etc.

This part does not have to be as detailed as the sexual portion is, but if these additional issues have been present, they need to be addressed as part of the addictive process. And if there are any tie-ins to the sexual acting out, those need to be mentioned as well.

**Example:**

Besides my sexual acting out, I have been abusive physically and verbally to you and the children. I have often yelled at you and on at least three occasions I shoved you and once threw some dishes and broke them in your presence. I have often yelled at the children and said shaming things to them. I had no right to treat you or our children so poorly and to hurt all of you this way.

Please begin writing your first draft and keep this draft in a protected place of privacy. Your therapist will walk you through the process.