



What is a Contact?

In SAL 12 Step, we define a **contact** to be “reaching out to your sponsor or another woman who is working her own recovery.”

But what does that *mean*, exactly?

For some women, a live phone call is the only thing that counts as a contact. For others, a text or Marco Polo can be a contact. For all women, our needs with each contact differ even from one time to the next. With the help of your Higher Power, you will know what needs to count as a contact for you each time you make one.

As you consider this, please sit with the following questions:

- What is my intent in making this contact?
- Am I reaching out for connection or am I reaching out in distress?
- Am I reaching out from a place of vulnerability and authenticity?
- Does the format I am using allow me to hide my feelings? Would another format enable me to express myself more clearly?
- Do I need immediate feedback from another woman in recovery to help me take responsibility for my own actions or help me become grounded?
- Am I growing in how I contact others, or do I resort to the “same old” ways I have always reached out?
- Am I reaching out individually, whether to connect or in distress?

What some women in SAL working their recovery have to say:

- “If I am feeling shame, I will count any contact with someone in recovery as a contact. But, as I got quiet about it, I feel like the intention behind that contact matters.”

- “For me it must be a phone call. I have certainly had times where I hid behind a text or polo. But not every time. I think it really does take us being self aware in the moment. Even a willingness to self correct (if I send a text and then realize I am hiding I’ll then make a call). No one size fits all in my opinion.”
- “I think intent is huge. I started out just texting because I had a lot of fear about calling. My sponsor helped me learn how calling shows that I am stating that I am important and that I matter. Intent was a big part of our definition. (I didn’t think counseling counted as a contact, but After talking we realized it was the open heart we approached the appointment with, which made it qualify as a contact). I sometimes polo because it’s too late to call someone and I know I need to surrender.”
- “An actual call to a real person has much more potential for growth.”
- “A contact is pulling yourself out of isolation.”
- “I believe a contact would be where you actually connect and talk with someone about what is going on. So no messages, Marco Polo, etc. You go down a list until you connect with someone. There are wonderful blessings for both involved with an experience like this.”
- “Texting, Marco Polo, emailing, etc. are extremely easy for me; they become my way of hiding. I hit fear every time I think of calling someone, so I know that’s exactly what I need to do for my own growth.”
- “Reaching out requires vulnerability, I must call and discuss my issues so I can process.”
- “I use Marco polo for connection and a phone call for support.”

What are some of the benefits of reaching out to SAL members and your sponsor? The following thoughts are from SAL members:

- Helps me grow.
- Helps me come out of isolation.
- Helps me take responsibility for myself when I make an effort to share as much as I can with another member about what I am experiencing.
- Opens the door to a new set of relationships with understanding people.
- Helps me learn to be honest and to admit my behavior is not always commendable. When I am honest, I progress in my recovery.
- Helps the person I talk to.
- Helps ease my panic, anger and fear.

- Opens my understanding and my higher power is able to speak to me; I hear Truth.
- Helps me see my situation more clearly so I can make a healthy decision.
- Gives me a place to share happy news.
- Helps me recognize my intent and motives as to what I've said or done so I can stay true to the person I am trying to become and so I can set healthy boundaries.