

and freedom with which it was offered to you. That and recovery are the great gifts of sponsorship.

Here is a checklist you might want to keep in mind when you are considering a sponsor.

- Does the potential sponsor have what you want?
- How long has the potential sponsor been in SAA?
- How long has the sponsor been sober?
- Does the sponsor have a sponsor?
- Is the sponsor working the Twelve Steps and Traditions with a sponsor?
- Does the sponsor attend meetings regularly?
- How often does the sponsor want to speak to you or see you?
- How often do you want to see or speak to the sponsor?

### The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over addictive sexual behavior, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts and to practice these principles in our lives

### Members willing to Sponsor

Sponsor's name:

Number:

Sponsor's name:

Number:

Sponsor's name:

Number:

Sponsor's name:

Number:

### The Twelve Traditions

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SAA unity
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority as expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for SAA membership is a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or SAA as a whole
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the sex addict who still suffers
6. An SAA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SAA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every SAA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions
8. Sex Addicts Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers
9. SAA, as such, ought never to be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve
10. Sex Addicts Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SAA name ought never to be drawn into public controversy
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV and films
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities to carry its message to the sex



# Tri County Recovery

## Getting a Sponsor

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## SAA

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# Who Needs a Sponsor Anyway?

1. Fellowship members who experience relapse and do not have a sponsor
2. Members who have attended meetings a while but never worked with a sponsor
3. Members who need to change sponsors
4. Online and telemeeting members who have no face-to-face meeting
5. Members brand new to SAA

Whether we're just coming into the SAA fellowship or have been here awhile, we realize we cannot stop our sexual addiction by our own unaided efforts. Many of us knew it before we came in. We all need help. Part of that help is sponsorship. In fact, it is an old saying that you cannot work an SAA program without a sponsor. **So who needs a sponsor in SAA?**

The answer is certain: **Everybody.**

## What is Sponsorship?

Sponsorship is the mentor-relation between an SAA member - or sponsee and a sponsor, a member who has already worked the program and has experienced the gift of sobriety. The sponsor helps the sponsee to determine their own addictive sexual behavior. The sponsor guides the sponsee on how to use the literature and tools of the program, how to work the Twelve Steps and Traditions, and how to find sobriety.

While the SAA fellowship is not a religion of any kind, it is spiritual in nature. For it has been our experience that a Higher Power will direct the recovery process. In this matter, what sponsors do is listen to you and point the way, so that sponsees as a result of working SAA's Twelve-Step program may have a spiritual awakening in their own time, in their own way, and for themselves.

## Who is a Sponsor?

A sponsor is an SAA member who is sexually sober. A sponsor is experienced in service, attends meetings regularly, and also works with a sponsor. A sponsor has worked through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions sufficiently to be able to help another addict along the way.

## Why Sponsorship?

It is a proven practice, handed down through generations, that recovery from addiction can only take place with others. All the steps and traditions are written in the "We".

1. We recover as individuals but we do not recover alone.
2. We recover together.
3. We recover helping others and being helped by others.

Meetings do this; program calls do this; fellowship does this. And sponsorship does this. And in this, the sponsor's recovery is helped just as much as the sponsee's.

## What Sort of Person is a Sponsor?

A sponsor is a sex addict who knows what addictive sexual behavior is and can speak to another addict with the authenticity of experience. A sponsor can level with you. A sponsor can listen to you with understanding and neutrality. A sponsor knows that sex addiction is a chronic condition that needs the daily remedy of a program and wants to offer it to you regardless of what your behaviors have been

## How Shall I Go about Getting Sponsored?

For those new to SAA, it's a good idea to start looking for a sponsor right away. One suggestion is to go to a number of meetings until you find someone who has the recovery you want and to ask them if they will help you get it too.

If you are having difficulty getting a sponsor, you may want to consider a temporary sponsor. That means a sponsor willing to work with you on a short-term basis. The temporary sponsor may not be able to take you on as a full-time sponsee, but will at least help you to get started. Or, if it works out, you may actually become sponsor and sponsee!

If your situation is such that you cannot attend in-person meetings, you may still be sponsored by email or over the phone. For some, conferring through online video works well, and the staff at the ISO can give you a contact list of members who offer long-distance sponsorship. So don't be shy: many people in SAA have achieved sobriety while being sponsored by people they have never met in person.

## How Shall I Know Whom to Choose?

Find someone who has what you want. How will you know that? It may be through a certain sobriety or spiritual quality. You will sense it. You might want to choose someone with whom you can't get away with things, someone you feel you can tell the truth to. While you may choose someone whose sexual orientation, personality, or lifestyle is compatible with yours, it is also true that great benefit can be gained from a sponsor whose personality or life style is quite different from your own

## How Do I Know a Sponsor is Safe and Sound?

It is best not to use as an SAA sponsor someone who has an outside-SAA relationship with you. This includes significant others, relatives, friends, business associates, spiritual ministers, mental health professionals, and sponsors from other Twelve Step fellowships. For they often lack particular experience in dealing with SAA sexual addiction and recovery.

As a general rule, sponsees steer clear of sponsorship with anyone to whom they are sexually attracted.

## What if Someone I Ask Says No?

Potential sponsors may decline your request for reasons such as insufficient time, inexperience, or a full quota. You may feel badly, but don't take it personally: keep asking until you find one! Searching for a sponsor may feel daunting, but once you get a sponsor you will find the search to have been worth it.

## Does My Abstinence Have to be the Same as My Sponsor's?

No. Your sponsor may seek sexual sobriety in one area, and you in another, for SAA does not have a single definition of abstinence. Therefore a particular sexual behavior toxic to one member may be all right for another. Your sexual abstinence will consist of ceasing your own particular addictive sexual behavior

## What Can I Expect from a Sponsor?

In SAA, there are various styles of sponsorship. Some sponsors use our SAA literature. Others use outside literature, including that from other fellowships.

Some sponsors require a personal meeting every week; some only have phone time. Some have certain limits on their availability, some none. Some require attendance at a certain number of SAA meetings a week. Some ask you to call them at a certain time every day; some do not. Some have the sponsee move rapidly through the Twelve Steps, while others go more slowly.

So, to prepare yourself to get a sponsor, it's wise to ask other members about how their own sponsors work. That way, when interviewing potential sponsors, you arrive somewhat informed and you are able to ask about their style and expectations. And you are also better prepared to ask for what you ideally want. This can help both of you determine whether you're a good match

## Are There any Do's and Don'ts in Starting Sponsorship?

Generally speaking, you should not expect from your sponsor any services that are given by a professional counselor or therapist. A sponsor is not responsible for a sponsee's recovery. It's also a good idea not to think of your sponsor as being your Higher Power or best friend. And you certainly may question a sponsor's suggestions to get to the reasoning behind them.

Also, you may change your sponsor. And if you feel your sponsor is behaving improperly, by all means ask other sober members about what is going on. If they agree that something is amiss, go ahead and find a different sponsor. While you may talk to your sponsor about anything you mutually agree to, remember, your sponsor will be simply a recovering fellow sex addict who helps you solve one problem.

Whatever suggestions the sponsor offers in working the Twelve Steps, go with them honestly and fully. This means don't make up some program of your own secretly and alongside it. The program tools being offered to you are the same that kept your sponsor sober, and they can help keep you stay sexually sober too.

## Starting on the Path to Recovery

Let those few simple tools of SAA recovery be your focus. Your sponsor is a trusted servant who wants you to experience the gifts of recovery too. Difficult as it may be to imagine now, you will one day be able to pass on your program of recovery to someone who needs it, just as your sponsor passed it on to you when you started out. You will be able to offer it with the same kindness