

WHAT DOES A SPONSOR DO?

EACH GROUP HAS BUT ONE PRIMARY PURPOSE—TO CARRY ITS MESSAGE TO THE SEX ADDICT WHO STILL SUFFERS.

TRADITION FIVE OF SAA.

SAA sponsors are actively working Step Twelve as well as Tradition Five. "Working the program" may have as many meanings as there are members working the program, but a common factor appears to be working the Twelve Steps of SAA. Members who are sober and are available for sponsorship are "giving away" what has been given to them: tools of recovery.

These tools are many and have been useful to helping a sponsor stay sober in their recovery. One of these tools is making a daily or regular call to a sponsor. Our sex addiction kept us in isolation for so long that to call another person was to go against years of habit and conditioning, but regular contact with a sponsor helped us to cultivate connecting with other people in the program. This exercise in regularly picking up the phone and eventually memorizing our sponsor's phone number proved lifesaving when we found ourselves being dangerously triggered or having slippery thoughts or behaviors that could compromise our newfound sobriety.

There are many other tools of recovery that a sponsor will pass on to their sponsee. All we need to do is keep coming back not only to meetings but also to our sponsor. They will pass on the most effective way to work for our sobriety in SAA: working the Twelve Steps. In working the Twelve Steps, we discover who we were, who we are, and who we hope to be. Our sponsor shows us how they have worked the Twelve Steps and how they themselves have stayed sexually sober. This is giving what they have, nothing more, nothing less.

WHAT DOES A SPONSOR NOT DO?

PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES.

To be certain, a sponsor does not get you sober. We alone are responsible for our work in our own sobriety, and we work for that one day at a time. Our sponsor cannot make us go to meetings or work the Twelve Steps. That decision is ours to make and act on because the consequences of our decision are ours to live with, not the sponsor's.

On a more practical level, a sponsor does not take advantage of the sponsee by asking for money, employment, housing, or a relationship. The sponsor's role is simply to guide the sponsee in recovery by sharing the tools they have been given by their own sponsor. If you feel that a sponsor is taking advantage of you, you have the right to end the sponsorship and get another sponsor even if it is a temporary sponsor.

Contact

The Eugene SAA Intergroup, and the ISO of Sex Addicts Anonymous, are committed to reaching out to the sex addict who still suffers.

"Our primary purpose is to stay sexually healthy and to help other sex addicts achieve freedom from addictive sexual behavior."

Make contact with Eugene SAA:

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Corvallis: **(541) 757-2204**

Mail: **Eugene SAA Intergroup
P.O. Box 24931**

Eugene, Oregon 97402-0432

E-mail: **contact@eugenessaa.com**

Website: **www.eugenessaa.com**

Make contact with the ISO of SAA:

Telephone: **1-800-477-8191**

or **1-713-869-4902**

(outside of the USA and Canada)

Mail: **ISO of SAA
PO Box 70949
Houston, TX 77270 USA**

E-mail: **info@saa-recovery.org**

Web: **www.saa-recovery.org**



Eugene S.A.A. Intergroup

From Shame to Grace

The Eugene S.A.A. Intergroup is an autonomous registered fellowship composed of registered groups of recovering sex addicts who follow the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Sex Addicts Anonymous® (S.A.A.).

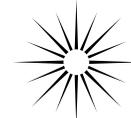
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What is a Sponsor?

HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS A RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE TO OTHER SEX ADDICTS AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OF OUR LIVES.

TWELFTH STEP OF SAA

A sponsor is an established member in Sex Addicts Anonymous who guides a newcomer with working the Twelve Step program of SAA. As a guideline, a sponsor is an SAA member with some time in the program and, most importantly, some time in continuous sobriety from their inner circle boundaries, guidelines of which can be found in the Three Circles pamphlet.



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WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME, THE SPONSEE?

ONE DAY AT A TIME.

This will vary and depend on the sponsor and what their requirements are for sponsoring other members. Most sponsors require prospective sponsees to work the Steps or there can be no sponsorship. This is a way that sponsors can work with sponsees who are willing to do the work of recovery. Again, we alone are responsible for the work we do in our recovery. What we put into our recovery is what we get out of it. We suggest, though, that you ask a potential sponsor what is expected of their sponsee.

HOW DO I CHOOSE A SPONSOR? AND WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN A POTENTIAL SPONSOR?

LIVING IN THE SOLUTION.

Newcomers have asked this question many times of other members. Depending on a meeting's format, a Trusted Servant, or Chairperson, can ask the group if there are any members who are willing to be sponsors or temporary sponsors. Others will have that information on their phone list. Some members may announce their availability for sponsorship either during their sharing, or pitch, or during announcements.

A great way to choose a sponsor is to listen at meetings. Listen to members share their experience, strength and hope about recovery. Are they mentioning working the Twelve Steps and working with their own sponsor? Have their lives become better as a result of working their program and living in the solution? Or does the member share about their problems and not mention any sort of solution? Are their lives still unmanageable as the result of their sex addiction? Pay attention to your own gut feelings about a person. This will help guide you as well. An important question to ask yourself is: Do you want what they have? We suggest seeking a sponsor who is sexually sober from their inner circle boundaries and is working the Twelve Steps.

You can also announce that you're looking for a sponsor during sharing or announcements. This way available sponsors will be able to approach you or offer their suggestions about sponsorship.

If no one in your group has worked the Steps, you may find a sponsor in another Twelve Step fellowship or you may begin to co-sponsor with another member for the purpose of working the Steps.

Some members have found it useful to attend larger meetings, retreats, and the International Convention of SAA to find a sponsor.

WHAT IF A PERSON SAYS THEY CANNOT SPONSOR ME?

KEEP COMING BACK!

What is important to realize here is not to take it personally. They may tell you their reason why they cannot sponsor you: they

may have too many sponsees; or they're not ready to sponsor yet. Keep asking, and ask other group members for suggestions in sponsorship. This may very well lead you to a person who is just right to sponsor you.

CAN I CHANGE SPONSORS?

LET GO AND LET GOD.

If your relationship with a sponsor is no longer working out for you because it's not supportive of your recovery, you can change sponsors. Having closure with your old sponsor is a good way to transition to a new sponsor. However, you may want to consider the motive behind changing sponsors. Be sure that you're not changing sponsors because they are doing the job of a sponsor by calling you on behaviors and addictive thinking which can lead you to act out perhaps even relapse.

Sometimes the work of a sponsor consists of telling us what we don't like to hear. Check with another SAA member to see if your motives are warranted. However, if you don't feel like checking in with another member, this could be a sign that you're seeking "an easier, softer way."

CAN I SPONSOR MYSELF?

OUR BEST THINKING GOT US HERE.

This is not suggested. It's often shared at meetings that our best thinking got us here. To sponsor ourselves is to fool ourselves because essentially we're right back in our addictive thinking. In our active sex addiction we may have wanted to recover but we wanted to recover on our own terms by saying to ourselves, "I'll cruise just once a week," or, "I'll stop acting out on work days." Those promises eventually did not keep us sober.

So it is with recovery. We had to be open to this new territory called recovery and we needed the help of others who have been where we were and have found their way out. They have an idea of what we can expect on our journey of recovery because they have been where we are. In sponsorship, we learn about humility by reaching out for help. Remember: we do not recover alone.

CAN MY WIFE, HUSBAND, OR PARTNER SPONSOR ME? THERAPIST OR COUNSELOR? CLERGY?

FIRST THINGS FIRST.

People in our lives who are close to us are not effective as our sponsor because they are emotionally invested in us. We need someone with a different perspective, who was not emotionally attached to us; and most important of all, who has worked the Twelve Steps. We need to be honest in our step work especially with regards to working Steps One, Four, Five, Eight, Nine and Ten. We need someone with an objective view of our past when we reveal ourselves in working the Twelve Steps.

Therapists, counselors and clergy have a wealth of knowledge and much information to share with us, but if they are to be our sponsor they must be a sponsor first with regards to working the Twelve Steps of SAA. It is very helpful if they

themselves have worked the Twelve Steps in their own lives. In this way, they are "giving away what they have." If not, let them continue to be your therapist or clergy and get a sponsor in the SAA program. Knowledge and information about sex addiction are good facts to know, but they cannot keep us sober. We need to work the Steps with another sober sex addict and utilize the tools of the SAA program in order to live with our sex addiction on a daily basis in recovery.

DO I NEED A SPONSOR?

GAIN A SENSE OF HOPE.

Having a sponsor in SAA is not a requirement for membership, but having the desire to stop sexually addictive behavior is. Although there are some people who have some time in abstinence from their inner circle boundaries and don't have a sponsor, most of us simply could not stay sexually sober on our own. We needed the help of another sober member of SAA to guide us in our work for our own sobriety from destructive sexually addictive behaviors. We also found it very helpful in our early sobriety to be able to call our sponsor who gave us permission to call them. It was important for our recovery to get a sponsor as soon as possible.

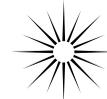
WHAT HAS SPONSORSHIP DONE FOR OTHER PEOPLE?

IF YOU WANT WHAT WE HAVE.

In working the Twelve Steps of SAA with a sponsor, we discover who we were, who we are now, and who we want to be in sobriety. In the process of working our program with our sponsor we build a safe and trusting relationship with another human being who knows our character defects as well as our assets. We gain a sense of acceptance, belonging and strength. Most importantly, we gain a sense of hope that we can recover, one day at a time.

Contributed by Joel D.

IF YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS, PLEASE ASK OTHER PEOPLE IN THE PROGRAM.



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The views expressed herein are those of the author, and may not reflect those of the Eugene SAA Intergroup, or SAA as a whole.