

over-committed as this may lead to service burnout and could cause resentments. Because sponsorship is a special relationship between two recovering people, there is often a limit to the number of people with which this type of relationship can be simultaneously maintained.

How can I stop sponsoring someone?

Once you have determined that ending the sponsor/sponsee relationship is the best course of action, simply have a conversation and explain why you no longer can sponsor that person. Sponsorship is meant to enhance your recovery. If continuing to work with the sponsee compromises your sobriety, serenity, and/or program, seek the counsel of your sponsor and/or other members before having a conversation with the sponsee.

What do I do if a sponsee doesn't want help?

It is futile to force unwanted advice and help onto another. Don't take it personally should they not apply your suggestions. Consider evaluating if this person is a good fit for you to continue sponsoring.

Some Suggested Sponsorship "Don'ts"

- Avoid being judgmental, instead place principles before personalities.
- Avoid imposing your personal views, instead remain open-minded.
- Refrain from taking another's inventory, instead allow them to arrive at their own conclusions.
- Don't make decisions for the newcomer, instead make suggestions.
- Don't pretend to know all the answers, instead remain humble, remembering we are all addicts in recovery doing the best with what we have.

Some Suggested Sponsorship "Do's"

- Present an example of how the program is working in your life by practicing the principles in all your affairs.
- Encourage sponsees to attend meetings and be of service.

- Introduce sponsees to others in the program to build a support network.
- Patiently guide sponsees through the Twelve Step literature.
- Treat each sponsee as an individual; we are each unique examples of the program.

Above all, remember that the pillars of the program are recovery, unity, and service. Our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. We are being given a treasured opportunity to participate in our own recovery and in that of another.

A Word About Sponsorship:

To Be Read In Meetings

A Sponsor is a fellow addict with a working knowledge of the Twelve Steps, who lives by the principles, and has a solid program in their life.

Look for someone who inspires you to work the Steps and is working a program you admire. Experience has shown that having a Sponsor is of great value and importance in recovery.

We hope you make it a priority.

With their experience, strength, and hope, Sponsors compassionately guide and challenge you in recovery.

While there are no set rules, as a guideline, we suggest avoiding anyone with whom there is a possibility of a romantic or physical relationship. Sponsorship should be a safe relationship. Find someone you can trust and with whom you can be honest.

Do not be afraid to ask someone to Sponsor you. You could inquire if they would consider being your Temporary Sponsor. In time, you will know if the relationship is working and should become more permanent.

About Sponsorship



MARIJUANA ANONYMOUS

**A Twelve Step Program of Recovery
for Marijuana Addicts**

Marijuana Anonymous World Services
5551 Hollywood Blvd. #1043
Hollywood, California 90028-6814
+1.800.766.6779

MA12.org or Marijuana-Anonymous.org
Support@MA12.org

What is Sponsorship?

Sponsorship is one recovering person talking to another. It is a two-way relationship based upon mutual respect and the principles of the program. While sharing experience, strength, and hope, both members enrich their lives and deepen their understanding of the basic principles of the program. The sponsor and the sponsee meet as equals to work the Steps and if possible attend meetings together.

The communication and mutual sharing helps both the sponsor and the sponsee. For the newcomer, a sponsor is someone with whom they can talk through problems, ask questions, and discover a life with hope in recovery. For the sponsor, helping others allows a sponsor to give back what was freely given to them and continues the acts of service that are vital to our recovery.

Getting a Sponsor:

Is a sponsor required?

It is not required; however, working the Steps with a sponsor is an invaluable tool of recovery. A relationship with a sponsor often helps the sponsee develop an ability to trust others and communicate effectively. Having frequent, close contact with another member of the program provides an opportunity to discuss issues in private that one might not be willing to raise in front of the group.

When is the right time to begin working with a sponsor?

Everyone's recovery process is their own, and there is no specific timeline to follow; no particular length of sobriety is required. It is important to get beyond any fear of asking other people for help. Stepping out of your comfort zone to work with someone else is an important part of recovery. We are not burdening sponsors by sharing our challenges. In fact, it is an honor to be asked to be someone's sponsor. To get started, you can ask a person to be a temporary sponsor, or interim sponsor, and see how the relationship develops.

How will I know if someone is a good fit to be my sponsor?

There are no specific rules for choosing a sponsor. It is worth considering someone who inspires you and with whom you would like to work the program. In order to find a sponsor, widen your exposure to recovering people by attending as many meetings as possible. A sponsor can be found at in-person, virtual, or phone meetings. Many sponsor/sponsee relationships exist and thrive without ever having met in person. *Marijuana Anonymous does not provide sponsors, but we can offer guidance in finding one.*

Should a sponsor be of the same gender?

The gender of a sponsor you select to guide you through the Steps is at your discretion. We suggest avoiding sponsorship relationships that may lead to problematic attachments, including romantic or physical relationships, which could detract from your recovery.

How often should I contact my sponsor?

It is up to you and your sponsor to determine how often you communicate. Many sponsors ask newcomers to contact them regularly for the first month or two. If your sponsor is away or can't be reached, it is suggested you call other members of the program. Having more than one person that you can reach out to regularly is advisable.

Must I do anything a sponsor asks, or agree with whatever they says?

Ultimately your recovery is your responsibility; it is up to you how you apply their suggestions. This peer-support relationship is one of trust and shared experiences. If clarification is needed or disagreements emerge, then discuss them with your sponsor. If you continue to feel the suggestions they make aren't in alignment with the type of program you want to work, consider finding another sponsor.

What if I want to change sponsor?

There is no long-term commitment required between the sponsor and sponsee. If you feel a different person will better enhance your recovery, then it is suggested to gently let your current sponsor know. This is frequently done in Twelve Step programs, and many long-time members have had several different sponsors.

Being a Sponsor:

When should I consider myself ready to sponsor?

When you feel prepared to guide others through the Steps and you are willing to spend time and effort with a person, you are most likely ready. It is suggested that you be further along in the Steps than a potential sponsee. Check with your sponsor before you make a commitment to someone.

How do I become a sponsor?

Make it known that you're willing to sponsor, or talk about sponsorship. Many meetings will have some sort of sponsorship announcement. In virtual meetings, when someone is ready to sponsor, they will often place an asterisk in front of their name, such as *Name. Create the opportunity for someone to ask by making yourself available after meetings to talk with newcomers, especially when they announce they are looking for a sponsor.

What is the proper approach to sponsorship?

There is no proper approach. Many use similar methods as their own sponsors as a starting point on which to build. Each sponsor is different and free to work the way their experience dictates. Some sponsors are direct and outline the program as they see it. Some are more casual, guiding only when asked, allowing the newcomer to find their own way. Some approaches will fail. A sponsor is not responsible for anyone else's sobriety or their approach to the program.

Must I sponsor someone if asked?

There is no obligation to commit yourself to sponsorship. Because of the many benefits sponsorship provides, you may want to consider being their temporary sponsor. In time, you will know if the relationship is working and should become more permanent. If you are not comfortable sponsoring them, politely decline and encourage them to ask others.

How many people can a sponsor work with?

Only you can decide how many sponsees is best for you. Different people have different amounts of time and energy to apply to the program. Caution needs to be exercised to avoid becoming