

The results of the August 2018 sponsorship workshop covered several areas including:

- Benefits of having a sponsor
- Benefits of being a sponsor
- How to find a sponsor
- What to look for in a sponsor
- What questions are important to ask a potential sponsor
- How to know if you're ready to be a sponsor
- What works for sponsors and sponsees

Benefits of having a sponsor:

- Strengthens and makes all the difference in my recovery
- Combats isolation
- Accountability
- Guidance through the steps
- Opportunity to build a trusting, shame-free relationship
- Teaches Integrity and honesty by example
- Helps me to -
 - be an adult,
 - face things
 - make time for OA
 - create structure in my life
 - Focus on my HP
 - realize that eating is not the answer to life's problems

Benefits of Being a sponsor:

- Keeps me humble
- Reminds me of who I was when I began my recovery journey
- Keeps me accountable to my own program
- Allows a way to offer my experience, strength and hope to others
- Allows me to take risks and try new things
- Grounds me
- Opportunity to learn from my sponsees
- Importance of giving back what I have so generously been given
- Helps me keep my abstinence

How to find a sponsor?

- Be brave!

- Ask!! Don't wait for someone to come to you
- Persevere through fear
- Talk to people and identify who has what you want
- Announce that you want one
- Attend a lot of different meetings - online, telephone, or in-person
- Look on the Getting Started List
- Take the "we care list"
- Website
- Online OA groups
- Ask another member how s/he found their sponsor
- Ask for a temporary sponsor to help you get started
- Keep coming back, don't give up

What to look for in a sponsor?

- Motivated
- Physical, emotional and spiritual progress in recovery
- Someone I can relate to
- Good communicator
- Honesty
- Abstinence
- Flexibility
- Has done their own step work
- Someone who sounds like they have peace, contentment, joy and enjoyment
- Someone who walks the walk, follows the program & is fully engaged
- Availability
- Accountability
- Principled
- Respectful
- Firm
- Compassionate
- Knowledgeable of OA
- Willingness
- Applies the steps and tools in their life each day

What questions are important to ask a potential sponsor?

- What will you ask of me?
- What can I expect?
- How many sponsees do you already have?
- How often do we meet and for how long?
- Where will we meet?
- How do you work the steps?
- Do you use the OA 12 & 12? The Big Book? Other resources?

- How long have you been abstinent?
- How do you structure the relationship with those you sponsor?
- What are your “deal breakers”?
- Do you have enough time to meet regularly?
- Must I report my food to you each day?
- How do I stay accountable?
- How long have you been sponsoring and why did you begin?
- Do my defects of character make me harder to work with?
- What is your definition of abstinence?
- What happens if I don’t take your advice?
- What would make you end the sponsoring relationship?
- How do you work your program and how have you benefited from OA?
- Do you have your own sponsor?
- If the person is not available to sponsor, ask if they may know someone who is available
- As your recovery progresses, be open to the possibility that you may need another type of sponsor
- Male/female sponsoring relationships are fine – set boundaries and approach honestly
- Be sure YOU are willing to work on your program before asking someone to sponsor you

How to know you’re ready to be a sponsor?

- I have experience, strength and hope to share
- I had completed the first 3 steps
- I had been abstinent for 30 days
- I become willing to take the risk, be imperfect, make mistakes and be seen
- I am working my recovery honestly and wholeheartedly
- When I’ve been abstinent and committed to working the steps
- I am willing to do more service
- My sponsor says I’m ready
- Your Higher power has placed you in the path to be asked
- I have a sponsor and am working/have worked the steps with him/her
- I have strong abstinence
- There is no one answer. Ask myself if I have ESH to share.
- My sponsor made it a condition of my 12th Step
- Someone asked me
- My sponsor suggested I might be, and that I come to this workshop
- My sponsor and HP tell me I am
- When I am are comfortable in your recovery and abstinence
- Your life situation allows you to devote the necessary time to your sponsee(s)
- On the job training – not to figure things out for the sponsee but to say, “This is what I do”.

Expectations to have or have in the future for Sponsees

- Work the steps and use the tools
- One minute on the problem and two on the solution – no dumping
- Willingness to work the program
- Open to new ideas
- Honesty, even though it's hard and scary
- Good listener
- Follow through with meeting times, cancel in advance if needed
- Communication
- Accountability
- Go to meetings
- Do service
- Be willing to follow G.O.D., good orderly direction
- 3 meetings a week
- Daily phone calls
- Grow
- Stay abstinent
- Input on Experience, Strength and Hope
- Availability when I have a question
- Patience with the process. It does not happen overnight
- Meet regularly, or contact by phone, email or text
- Have a home meeting
- Encourage them to sponsor
- I learn more from my sponsees every day and tell them that!

What's works for you when you sponsor (or when you've been sponsored)

- Listening more than talking
- Keeping in contact regularly
- Communication
- My sponsor does not work my program, that's my job
- Daily feedback, email or text
- Honesty
- Being flexible as to contact time/frequency
- Emphasis on accountability, honesty, service, step work, humility, and progress (not perfection)
- Sharing my own experience, strength and hope, rather than giving advice
- Using the Step 4 worksheet
- My sponsor has expectations of me and I know them
- Keeping my own recovery in check so I'm not in bondage of self and can be of service
- Reinforce the positive
- Sponsee writes and shares workbook answers

- Supportive
- Don't work harder at the sponsorship relations than the sponsee
- Have concrete expectations of your sponsee