



May 2021

Using a Sponsor/Being a Sponsor

Monarch Monthly



The Three Rivers Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous Serving Northeast Indiana

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What about Changing Sponsors?

Remember when we used to read the WHOLE "Tools of Recovery" pamphlet at meetings? It was long, but hearing it so many times helped me remember parts of it. I really like this part: "You may have more than one sponsor and may change sponsors at will."

(I have had several sponsors in my time in OA, but have been blessed with two women who have been my sponsors over the last 23 years. I currently work with one, but still stay in contact with the other. They have heard me cry, complain, get angry, and most importantly to me -- they have let me start over again and again. I remember this when I wonder when a sponsee is finally going to "get it together" - ha! As if we ever really do that!)

Back to this: "You may have more than one sponsor and may change sponsors at will."

Do you like your sponsor?

Do you get help from your sponsor?

Do you feel challenged by your sponsor?

Do you trust your sponsor?

If you are not really comfortable with your sponsor, or don't think you're being pushed enough by her/him, it's okay to get another sponsor. This could mean adding on a sponsor, or replacing the one you have.

Many compulsive overeaters have a hard time in relationships with other people. A sponsor/sponsee relationship is a place where we can practice and learn how to "be" around other people. It's a way for us to learn to ask for help, instead of "figuring everything out" ourselves.

This relationship is to be a place for honesty...big time honesty. If you're not honest, you're wasting your own time, as well as his/hers.

Your sponsor is another human being, so be honest, but be kind. If it's not working well, it's okay to talk about it. Maybe there can be some changes in the way you work together. And if that doesn't work, it's okay to say, "Thanks for all your help. I've decided to start working with another sponsor. I hope we can still be in touch."

It's not easy, but it is simple. And that's how this program works.

— Gratefully, DM



An Angel for Me

Sponsorship is one of the fundamental bases for the 12-step program. It was strange to me. I struggled with relationships and had many wounds from past relationships causing me much damage and pain.

My first sponsor was available to talk with me about food and recovery and the many, many questions I

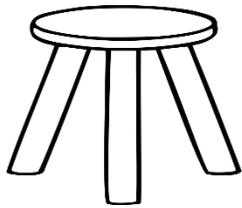
had. I was very needy and took up a lot of her time. She was an angel for me. I have had other sponsors, but the relationships have not been like that first person.

Today I have a trusted spiritual guide who I can talk with about the situations troubling me. She is kind and compassionate yet challenges me to do things I am reluctant to do that will be good for me. That is what a good sponsor does for me, support me yet challenge me to grow.

My service as a sponsor is a great honor and privilege for me. I am blessed to accompany an OA member as they navigate the 12 steps and figure out how to live without excess food. The journey blessed me with a revival of the basics of the program and I am shown answers to my problems in the discussions with another person.

Through the gift of sponsorship, I can have deep personal relationships without pain or injury to me or to the other person. That's a miracle of recovery for me.

— Debra Hughes



Sponsorship 101

When I became acquainted with Overeaters Anonymous nearly forty years ago, we relied heavily on Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book), the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, and other materials such as Stools and Bottles. The AA three-legged stool described Steps One, Two, and Three, addressing the disease of the body, the mind, and the spirit. Therefore, having three sponsors was common, one each for the physical, mental/emotional, and spiritual facets of our particular disease symptoms.

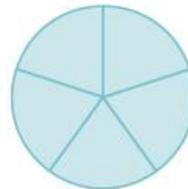
I started the program with a temporary sponsor for three months until I met other members and heard their stories. I did not have a food sponsor (called your meal plan in every day), but I did call my step sponsor every day at 7 a.m. as requested, often leaving a message. I learned later that she had been caring for her dying husband and compulsively eating, necessitating a change within the first two years. I talked with my

spiritual sponsor nearly every day, shared my writing, and remained close to her until her death. I had a third sponsor for the anorexic face of my disease. We talked frequently in the early years and then less often unless symptoms became prominent, which happened 2-3 times for several months.

Through the years, I have maintained at least two sponsors and adding a third for “working mom,” annulment process, dating after divorce, health challenges, and job loss/search when it occurred. Life happens and I needed support as much as I supported others. Today, I have two sponsors. They have different gifts and hours of availability. I have an “inner circle,” ladies I have known for decades with whom I can share my writing and concerns when neither sponsor is available or for additional feedback.

I know people who have had only one sponsor for decades, but that has not been my experience due to relapse, leaving program, retirement, travel, job change, health issues, and death. I am grateful for all these ladies, who gave what they had when I needed it. I pray to provide the same generosity to those I sponsor.

— N.J., Illinois



Parts of My Action Plan

Having a sponsor and being a sponsor are important parts of my Action Plan. I fondly remember my first sponsor, an elderly woman with many years of OA recovery. She was always patient and gentle with me. I am grateful for my current sponsor who supports me and “carries the message of recovery” by sharing her experience, strength and hope with me.

One of my main roles as a sponsor is guiding my sponsee through the 12 Steps, using the Big Book and OA literature. We explore the options for finding physical, emotional and spiritual health.

As I sponsor, I need to understand my limitations: I am not a therapist or doctor; I cannot “make” my sponsee do her program work; I am not responsible for her recovery or relapse.

I sponsor because it helps me “give back” to a program that has given me a life of joy and serenity. It gives me motivation to stay committed to my own recovery program. A wonderful bonus is what sponsoring gives ME: my sponsees support me and my recovery, they often give me new ideas to think about, help me to better understand the steps/traditions and they inspire me.

— Joyce H.



A Fire Hose for My Recovery

Without a sponsor, I am trying to work this program by myself. Doing it by myself didn't work before OA and it doesn't work well in OA either. Maybe I get good ideas from the literature and from what I hear in meetings. But that is a comparative trickle to the fire hose blast I get from working with a sponsor.

Meetings are there for all of us and aren't intended to focus on just answering all my questions today. Sponsorship, on the other hand, is all about answering my questions, sharing detailed experience of how the program worked for another OAer and working on the places I am having a hard time. Can someone recover without a sponsor? People in isolated areas have over and over. But if I have access to someone who can be a sponsor, why wouldn't I want to take advantage of everything available to help me recover? Why would I walk 100 miles when I have the option to drive?

Then there is the question of having a sponsor but not using them. This makes as much sense as buying a car but continuing to ride a mule around town. A sponsor is only valuable if I use him/her. How valuable they are is often up to me. The more I work on my sponsor assignments, the more I communicate with my sponsor, the more questions I ask my sponsor, the more I get out of being sponsored.

Being a sponsor is just as rewarding as having a sponsor. When I give my sponsees suggestions, I have to stop and ask myself, “When is the last time I did that?” or “Am I still doing that?” Sponsoring helps keep me honest about continuing to do those things that are important for my recovery.

You've probably gotten that great feeling talking with a newcomer and helping them understand something about the program. Working with other compulsive overeaters is key to recovery. When I sponsor I am getting regular opportunities to work with another compulsive overeater. This has the effect of making deposits into my recovery bank. The more deposits I have in my recovery bank, the better prepared I am for difficult times.

Sometimes I wish a sponsee would contact me more often or complete an assignment more quickly. But then I have to stop and think. Have I put that assignment my sponsor gave me on the shelf or am I doing my best to work through it? That helps me be more understanding of my sponsees. At the same time that helps me know when a sponsee needs a gentle prod or maybe a loving kick in the pants. I, too, have times I need a gentle prod and occasionally a kick. Being a sponsor helps me practice balance, patience, honesty, unselfishness, compassion and many more things. My recovery would definitely be less solid without it.

— K.G. (MM, December 2015)



...By Any Other Name

More recently, I've found myself unwilling to find a new sponsor. For some reason I have been dragging my feet. In talking with an OA friend after a meeting the other day, she shared that she had stopped using the word "sponsor". For her, the word "sponsor" had taken on a parental or disciplinary feeling. She didn't know why she had started feeling that way. She realized she still needed things that sponsorship traditionally offered. So she started playing around with terms that didn't trigger her parental or disciplinary feelings. Two terms she started using were "Fellow Traveler" and "Partner in Recovery".

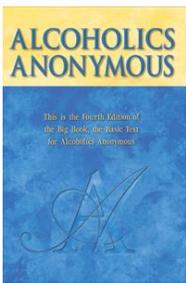
That struck a chord with me. For some reason I had come to associate "sponsor" with someone giving me a to-do list. It felt like I had enough keeping me busy without another to-do list to think about. I started looking at it like when I asked myself what I needed from a Higher Power while reshaping my God concept in my first step two. What do I need from a "Partner

in Recovery"? Self-commitment accountability? Feeling validation? Experience resources? Unconditional acceptance?

I'm not sure about what term I want to use instead of sponsor for right now. Recovery Sounding Board? Loving Witness? Recovery Mirror? Fire Hose? I guess I need to think on this for a while yet. Just thought I'd share this for anyone else having some difficulties with the word "sponsor" right now.

— K.G.

Favorite Big Book Quotes



One of my favorite Big Book quotes is from the story Acceptance Was the Answer . (formerly Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict.) Now, when I am disturbed, I know what I need to do if I want my serenity back.

"And acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation—some fact of my life—unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment."

(AA Big Book 4th Ed. Pg 417)

-KG

Big Book Quotes Needed!

Do you have some favorite quotes from the AA Big Book? We now have a section in the newsletter for people's favorite Big Book quotes! Please include the page number and a little about why you like it, if you are willing. Send them to:

newsletter@3riversOA.org and keep them coming.



No Blooming in Recovery

The Goshen Saturday meeting which usually hosts the Blooming in Recovery workshop has decided not to hold the workshop this year. We hope to hold a face to face Blooming in Recovery workshop next May. Hope to

see you there! In lieu of our workshop please attend the Kalamazoo workshop below!

Kalamazoo Sponsorship Workshop

The OA groups in Kalamazoo will be hosting a Zoom workshop on sponsorship on Saturday, May 22nd from 10:30-noon ET. We encourage everyone in our Intergroup area to attend this workshop in lieu of the Blooming in Recovery workshop. The Zoom ID is 899 3716 8614 and the password is 508288.



Region 5 Rep Needed

Intergroup is in need of someone to serve as a Region 5 Rep. The rep would attend Region 5 assemblies 3 times per year and report back to the Intergroup. Assemblies are the regional OA business meetings. Reps from the 7 other states/provinces (Indiana, central & northern Illinois, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan and Southwest Ontario) will be there. The next assembly in July will be via Zoom. Possibly this fall, the assembly will start meeting in person again. Attendance would require a few hours drive. All travel, lodging and meals expenses would be reimbursed by the Intergroup. One year of abstinence is required to be a voting representative. If you are interested in this service, even if you aren't quite to a year yet, please contact Debra M.,

chair@3riversOA.org.



Can't Read the Newsletter Online?

Do you know of someone who can't read our newsletter online? Maybe they don't have a computer or phone capable of doing it? Maybe they have problems reading large amounts of text on a phone or computer screen? We would like to try sending them a printed newsletter via US Mail, if that would be helpful.

Please have them call me at 574-742-1042 and ask to be sent a printed newsletter.

June Newsletter



Promises of Recovery

Slogan: If you do what you always did, you'll get what you always got.

The June Monarch Monthly topic will be "Promises of Recovery." What is your favorite recovery promise? Why? What other meaningful recovery promises do you find in the literature in addition to those on pages 83 & 84 of the Big Book, 4th Ed? What promises have come true for you? What promises are you still waiting for?

The Slogan of the Month is: "If you do what you always did, you'll get what you always got."

Write about the main topic, the slogan or both. **Articles are due Thursday, May 20th.** Thanks for making our newsletter great! Send articles to:

newsletter@3RiversOA.org

Need Help Finding a Sponsor?

Having trouble finding a sponsor? Now you can request help from Region 5 OA. Just go to the link below and enter your information.

region5oa.org/request-for-assistance-in-find-a-sponsor

Bank Account Register

Three Rivers Intergroup

April-2021

Initial Balance: \$2,977.90

Current Balance: \$3,152.57

Check	Date	Description	Category	Withdrawal	Deposit	Balance
	3/30/2021	Beginning Balance				\$2,977.90
	4/10/2021	7th Tradition	Member Donation		\$23.97	\$3,001.87
	4/10/2021	Postage Stamps (20)-Kevin	Newsletter	\$10.00		\$2,991.87
	4/12/2021	7th Tradition	Member Donation		\$35.00	\$3,026.87
	4/15/2021	Website Hosting 1yr-SFI-Kevin	Website Hosting	\$96.30		\$2,930.57
	4/26/2021	7th Tradition	Elk Mon #02327		\$222.00	\$3,152.57
						\$3,152.57
						\$3,152.57
	4/26/2021	Ending Balance				\$3,152.57
Totals				\$106.30	\$280.97	\$3,152.57

Transaction Type	Month Total	YTD Total	Proposed Budget	Percent
FW Mon #03792	\$0.00	\$75.00	\$217.56	34.5%
Elk Mon #02327	\$222.00	\$392.00	\$455.49	86.1%
FW MonN #57032	\$0.00	\$25.00	\$0.00	
Gosh Wed #89142	\$0.00	\$87.09	\$32.92	264.5%
Ga Thur #51350	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
FW Thur #54657	\$0.00	\$123.00	\$163.15	75.4%
FW Sat #37739	\$0.00	\$103.67	\$532.71	19.5%
Gosh Sat #22495	\$0.00	\$90.00	\$598.17	15.0%
Member Donation	\$58.97	\$188.10	\$0.00	
Workshop Income	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$160.00	9.4%
Deposit Total	\$280.97	\$1,098.86	\$2,160.00	50.9%

Transaction Type	Month Total	YTD Total	Proposed Budget	Percent
New Meeting Startup	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Newsletter	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$180.00	5.6%
Public Information	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$750.00	0.0%
Region 5 Assembly	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$600.00	0.0%
Region 5/WSO Donation	\$0.00	\$1,209.83	\$0.00	
Website Hosting	\$96.30	\$96.30	\$100.00	96.3%
Workshop Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$180.00	0.0%
Zoom/Phone Conf Srvc	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	0.0%
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	0.0%
Payment Total	\$106.30	\$1,316.13	\$2,160.00	60.9%

OA Three Rivers Intergroup Monthly Meeting, 3/30/2021

Meeting opened with the Serenity Prayer at 7:31pm.

This meeting was held on Zoom (ID 970 5024 1729, Password 198390).

Attendance, Positions, and Meetings Represented:

- Debra M, Chair, Fort Wayne Monday noon
- Dave, Vice Chair, Goshen Wednesday
- Kevin G, Treasurer, Goshen Saturday
- Christina H, Secretary, Fort Wayne Saturday
- Joyce H, Elkhart Monday

Today's agenda was accepted with the following changes:

- 12th Step Within is on hold until further notice (removed from today's agenda).
- 2021 Budget was approved at the 3/30/2021 intergroup meeting (removed from today's agenda).

Minutes from 2/23/2021 were accepted without changes (thank you to Jodi for taking them).

Treasurer's Report accepted without changes.

Region 5 Representative Report:

- Jodi is not present today, but she asked Debra to share the 'find a sponsor' feature on the Region 5 website with us.
- Jodi also let us know that she could not attend the assembly due to family issues, but she was able to send us someone's minutes from the assembly.

Newcomer Report:

- Elkhart Monday = 1
- Fort Wayne Monday noon = 1
- Fort Wayne Monday night = not reported
- Goshen Wednesday = 0
- Fort Wayne Thursday = not reported
- Fort Wayne Saturday = 0
- Goshen Saturday = 0

Newsletter Report:

- Kevin received 3 articles for this month! It'll be out soon (April 1st or 2nd).
- May: Using / being a sponsor; when someone is their own sponsor they have a fool for a sponsor.
- Kevin has gotten 2 requests for printed newsletters, which he mailed out using intergroup postage.

Announcements:

- Kevin is looking into conference microphones for hybrid Zoom / in-person meetings.

7:56pm, Meeting closed with the unity promise.

Submitted by Christina H, Three Rivers Intergroup Secretary

Would You Like to Check Out Our Intergroup Meeting?

We meet on the last Tuesday of the month (except December) at 7:30pm via Zoom. All in our Intergroup area are welcome! Just click [Zoom Meeting](#). If prompted for an ID or password use ID: **970 5024 1729** and Password: **198390**.

Email chair@3riversOA.org ahead of time to ask for the documents that will be used in the meeting.

Three Rivers Intergroup Meeting List

Instead of including a meeting list that may be out of date before it is sent out, we recommend you rely on the master meeting list on our website for meeting information. Please go to: 3riversoa.org/meetings.

Donations to the Three Rivers Intergroup

You can make online donations with a credit/debit card to the Three Rivers Intergroup by going to: 3riversOA.org and clicking the "Donate" link. You can also mail a check. Go to: 3riversOA.org and click the Contact Us link to get the mailing address.

Region 5 Website: Region5oa.org

OA World Service Office Website: OA.org

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