

## **SPONSORSHIP**

“No one understands a pill addict better than another pill addict”

Getting a sponsor, attending meetings, and working the Twelve Steps of Pills Anonymous (P.A.) are typically the first suggestions that you will hear as a newcomer to P. A. What is a sponsor and why do you need one? When and how do you get a sponsor? What is your role as a sponsee? This pamphlet will help you to understand what sponsorship is and why having a sponsor is an essential part of your recovery.

### **WHAT IS A SPONSOR?**

“A sponsor can guide you out of the pill bottle and into the solution”

Sponsors are members of the P. A. fellowship who are willing to share their experience, strength, and hope with you. A sponsor will guide you through the Twelve Steps of Pills Anonymous, and speak openly and honestly with you about what recovery has been like for them. A sponsor can be that understanding person you turn to when you are afraid, doubtful or confused. A sponsor usually has more clean time than you and is actively working the twelve steps of recovery. Typically, a sponsor will be of your same gender to avoid complicating the relationship with sexual attraction. There are exceptions to this rule but it is best to avoid any distraction that may keep you

from sharing openly and honestly with your sponsor.

A sponsor should never act as your doctor, attorney, therapist, banker, marriage counselor or parent, and they do not have the power to keep you clean. Your relationship with a sponsor is a special one-on-one pairing which should be comprised of compassion, honesty, and trust.

### **WHY DO YOU NEED A SPONSOR?**

“My best thinking earned me a seat in these rooms”

First and foremost, a sponsor guides you through the Twelve Steps of Pills Anonymous. If you are reading this, chances are, the way you have been living your life has not been working. As a newcomer you will need someone who can answer your questions and be totally honest with you when your head is full of destructive thoughts and self-delusion. Rest assured your sponsor has had most of the same questions you probably have. For example, “Why is God mentioned so many times in the steps?”, “What if I don’t believe in God?”, “Why do I need to go to meetings?”, or “What if I relapse?”. Your sponsor can lead you in the right direction to help you avoid pitfalls since he or she has probably walked through many of the same situations and experienced similar fears and emotions.

## **WHEN AND HOW DO YOU GET A SPONSOR?**

“If we are drowning, we need that life raft now”

In other words, get a sponsor as soon as possible! In some meetings, potential sponsors are prompted to raise their hands to make it easier for you to spot them. Listen to what people have to say. When you hear something that makes sense to you, or you find someone that “has what you want”, approach them with the question of sponsorship.

Do not be offended or take it personally if they say no. There are many reasons why someone might not be accepting new sponsees. However, they may be able to suggest someone else that would be a good fit for you.

Don’t feel obligated to say yes if someone offers to be your sponsor. The choice is yours.

We suggest that you have only one sponsor at a time. This prevents potential conflict or the temptation to manipulate them to get the answers you want. Some of us have had the same sponsor for many years; some of us have changed sponsors throughout our recovery journey.

You may be afraid to ask someone to be your sponsor. You may have learned not to trust anyone and the idea of asking someone for help may feel intimidating. Keep in mind that getting a sponsor takes courage. Have faith that what has worked for others will also work for you.

## WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS A SPONSEE?

“The phone suddenly weighs a thousand pounds”

H.O.W. will you know what to do as a sponsee? As long as you are Honest, Open, and Willing, you are on the right path! Be Honest with yourself and your sponsor. Be Open to suggestions from your sponsor. Be Willing to do whatever it takes to stay clean and begin your life in recovery.

Your sponsor may ask you to regularly call and check in. You may feel very uncomfortable with the idea of calling your sponsor but remember they are simply another recovering addict. Your phone call will not burden them. Sponsorship is a two-way street and you are making a difference in their recovery too.

As you grow and change with the help of your sponsor you will find the acceptance and freedom for which you have been longing. Someday you will also have the opportunity to pass the gift of recovery on to someone new and truly understand that we only keep what we have by giving it away.

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