

A BITE OF RECOVERY

*Behaviour

*Information

*Thoughts

*Emotions

The Art of Sponsorship in OA

SPONSOR

Sober Person Offering Newcomer Suggestions On Recovery

As a newly-recovered person in the program, it can be difficult to know when and how to start sponsoring. It can seem like such a responsibility, not to mention time commitment! Also, there are so many styles and beliefs around the right way to do this crucial service with other members that it can feel overwhelming. Please enjoy this collection of suggestions and thoughts about being a sponsor.

As always, be aware that the opinions expressed in this issue do not represent OA as a whole but are those of our committee members and the sources that we use. Take what you like and leave the rest.



https://annabartholomew.com/the-power-of-mentorship-how-female-leaders-can-lifteach-other-up/



Twelfth Step Prayer

Dear God.

My spiritual awakening continues to unfold.

The help I have received I shall pass on and give to others,

Both in and out of the Fellowship.

For this opportunity I am grateful.

I pray most humbly to continue walking day by day On the road of spiritual progress.

I pray for the inner strength and wisdom

To practice the principles of this way of life in all I do and say.

I need You, my friends, and the program every hour of every day.

This is a better way to live.

https://nhaa·net/new-to-aa/prayers-promises/

What a Sponsor Is and Does

- Has had a spiritual awakening: a change in their thinking, feeling and behaviours
- Has a sponsor to whom they are accountable
- Gives time to meet, return calls & work the steps
- Has completed the steps
- Shares experiences, not opinions
- Lives life based on spiritual principles
- Has a daily spiritual practice
- Has humility/knows limitations
- Is confidential and trustworthy
- Embraces anonymity; theirs and yours
- Wants you to have your own experience
- Is honest, non-judgmental, tolerant, patient, compassionate and encouraging
- Makes suggestions, not advice
- Is a role model as a healthy human being
- Enjoys their abstinence
- Encourages your growth and fosters your responsibility for your own recovery
- Helps you become more productive by your own definition
- Helps you become more loving of yourself, more autonomous, more free to become the authority of your own living
- Wants to get to know you as a rich and growing friend, yet may need to limit closeness with you if you choose not to grow
- Helps you and themselves to become what God means you all to be....mature adults. Leaving childishness forever to little children

What a Sponsor Is NOT and Does NOT Do

- Is not a healthcare practitioner, counsellor or nutritionist
- Is not your parent, judge, teacher, hotel, disciplinarian, employer/banker, lover
- Does not allow you to wallow in limbo
- Does not try to "fix" you or give you dreams, because they cannot
- Does not try to protect you from the consequences of your decisions/actions
- Cannot give you growth or grow for you
- Allows you to grow by yourself by facing reality, grim as it may seem at times
- Is not controlling, nor an enabler
- Does not guilt or shame you
- Does not make or enforce rules/or requirements
- Minimizes conversations about outside issues
- Does not take away your loneliness and pain
- Cannot sense your world for you, evaluate your goals or tell you what is best for your world.
 You have your own world
- Cannot convince you of the crucial choice of choosing the scary uncertainty of growing over the safe misery of not growing
- Does not give unconditional support; they will hang in there with you only as long as they get the slightest hints that you are trying to grow
- Does not care for you out of pity. When they lose trust in you then they are toxic, bad and inhibiting for both of you
- Is not responsible for your continued participation in the program, sponsorship or recovery

Based on: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://ad4l.info/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Profile-of-a-Sponsor.pdf
and https://www.passitonrecoveryshop.com/12-steps-of-a-sponsor-bookmark.html



Sunday Morning Coffee and Recovery

Dates: Every Sunday Morning

Time: 9-10 am Eastern Time (8-9 am CT)

Join this Zoom meeting by clicking this link:
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84229992560

To dial in audio only on your phone: 929-205-6099 Meeting ID: 842 2999 2560 Password: 23@Coffee



Humbled by Sponsoring

I first became a sponsor in 2008 as part of working the OA program of recovery. I started sponsoring after experiencing seventy days of back-to-back abstinence, working the first three Steps, following the OA-HOW structured meeting format and soaking up lots of love and physical, emotional and spiritual healing like a dry sponge.

I came to OA obese and full of ideas that led to a lack of direction in my life. Without understanding of HP, myself and others; without a spiritual backbone; and without an understanding of the flow of standing up in life to grow and change with grace, I was lost physically, emotionally, spiritually, socially and financially.

Sponsoring has shown me that sponsees are on their own paths. It's been important for me to talk with other OA members about questions, challenges and joys in sponsoring so I get perspective, clarity and suggestions for my sponsoring of others. In the OA-HOW structured meeting format, this is easy to do while respecting anonymity because we avoid sharing the names of those we sponsor with others.

When reflecting on the time, experience, and gifts sponsors have shared with me, I see that I'll never be able to repay the freely given love I've received from sponsors in OA.

I've learned that emotionally, physically and spiritually, sponsees are both strong and vulnerable, just like me. I've learned it's a privilege to assist others. I've learned I'm not always the best person to help a sponsee in specific ways with specific concerns. I've learned I must stay in shape spiritually to be of service to HP and others.

Sponsorship has humbled me by repeatedly showing my powerlessness over other people. It's helped me witness the undying desire for life, learning, honesty and growth in all compulsive overeaters and see how they are humble, able and willing enough to acknowledge their disease of food addiction and work toward physical, emotional and spiritual healing and growth. When sponsees don't follow the OA program, it reminds me of my own powerlessness and the heartbreak the disease of compulsive overeating can cause for myself and those around me.

Thank you, HP and OA, for the chance to recover and sponsor other compulsive overeaters and food addicts. HP, please help me sponsor as you will today. Thank you, sponsees for your willingness to recover and your trust. May I earn it.

- Alyson, © Overeaters Anonymous, First Posted in Lifeline on August 1, 2020



The Welcoming Prayer

Welcome, welcome, welcome.

I welcome everything that comes to me today because I know it's for my healing.

I welcome all thoughts, feelings, emotions, persons, situations and conditions.

I let go of my desire for power and control.

I let go of my desire for affection, esteem, approval and pleasure.

I let go of my desire for survival and security.

I let go of my desire to change any situation, condition, person or myself.

I open to the love and presence of God, and God's healing action within. Amen.

- https://crossministrygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/R-Group-Process-Welcoming-Prayer.pdf

Please enjoy the response from one of our long-standing members (who chooses to remain anonymous) when asked about how they sponsor:

Sponsoring:

This what I say to people who ask me to sponsor them.

I would be happy to help you however I can.

My approach to sponsoring is very hands off, so you would have to be prepared to do a lot of the work yourself. My job is to help you get a Plan of Eating, give guidance as to how to work the Steps, and clarify any issues as you work them. But it would be your responsibility to work the Steps, and I would not hold your hand. I would have contact with you through video-conferencing only when it's time to discuss the Step that you're on, and we would schedule that as you work the Steps.

From my perspective and experience, and I believe from the Big Book perspective, what an addict needs to "succeed" is a complete acceptance that they have an addiction that is beyond their control, and that this addiction is a life-or-death addiction.

From the Big Book perspective this means:

- That they cannot stop once they've started to indulge in certain foods and/or ingredients and/or mixtures of ingredients and/or eating behaviours, because they have experienced uncontrollable cravings once they started; AND
- That they cannot stop from starting, because their mind continually comes up with reasons which cause them to go back to the things that cause the uncontrollable cravings.
- A complete acceptance that this addiction is a life or death addiction, that it's the equivalent
 of needing to drink dangerous amounts of coffee during the day as opposed to needing one cup
 of coffee in the morning.
 - o Both are addictions, but only the former is a life or death addiction.
- A willingness to abstain temporarily, on a day-to-day basis, from the foods and/or ingredients and/or mixtures of ingredients and/or behaviours that have caused uncontrollable cravings.
- A willingness to work the Twelve Steps on the following bases:
 - That millions of people with dozens of addictions have found a way to stop from starting through the Twelve Steps, and thus that there is hope.
 - That their experience has universally been, despite the differences in words, that through the Twelve Steps they found, and were able to maintain, a deep and clear relationship with their deepest values and beliefs.
 - o That this deep and clear relationship has given them the kind of sanity that has cleared their minds to recoil from indulging in those things they have abstained from.
 - o In other words, that their mind no longer comes up with reasons for them to go back to the things that have caused them uncontrollable cravings.
- A decision to abstain from the things that cause uncontrollable cravings and to work the Twelve Steps.
- · Actually abstaining from those things.

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- Actually working the Twelve Steps.
- And it's guaranteed that by the end of Step Nine a person who works the Twelve Steps will have developed a deep and clear relationship with their deepest values and believe
- And that they will have the sanity to reject that which they have to abstain from
- And that working Steps Ten through Twelve will keep them sane on a day-to-day basis.

The role that I have, as prescribed by Step Twelve, is to provide you with whatever experience, strength, and hope I have accumulated over the years to help guide you on your journey through the Twelve Steps.

That experience allows me to offer to be available for:

- Clarification on the instructions for working the Steps throughout the process, which includes:
- Help in deciding whether a person has a compulsive eating addiction.
- Help in deciding whether that addiction is a life or death addiction.
- Help in developing a Plan of Eating which enables a person to abstain from the foods and/or ingredients and/or mixtures of ingredients and/or behaviours which have caused uncontrollable cravings.
- Help in translating the Big Book's directions to people who understandably have difficulty relating to the perspective from which the Big Book was written.
- Availability for saying the Step Three prayer.
- Availability for hearing the Step Five admissions.
- Availability for discussion of amends, including
 - what amends are necessary and appropriate
 - whether such amends should be done or whether more harm than good would result.
- Availability for the Step Five and Steps Eight and Nine issues that arise in Step Ten.
- Help in working with sponsees.

I think it's important to distinguish between guidance on how to work the Twelve Steps and getting support on your journey.

If you need to have support or regular contact with someone to help you keep abstinent while you work the Twelve Steps, that is not something I can provide, but that is something that's available from all kinds of people in OA, even those who have not yet recovered. It's just a matter of asking for that kind of help and support and contact.

So I'm available in ALL the ways I describe by appointment. I do not see, however, how weekly or daily meetings would be helpful in those ways. That is "support" and is different from sponsorship, in my opinion and experience, and it is often the confusing of those two things that has kept people from recovering, because it tends to take the emphasis away from the Steps and place it onto relationships with another person. So I'm available to sponsor in the many ways I have detailed above, but I cannot provide regular support.

I then talk to them about the Steps, make a first appointment to discuss a Plan of Eating, any "god" issues, say the Step Three Prayer, and get them started as quickly as possible on Step Four by making an appointment for Step Five (either with me or someone else). I emphasize that once they finish

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Step Five, Steps Six, Seven, and Eight can be done within a day or so, and I'm available to talk with them about Steps Eight and Nine, to see to whom they owe amends, what amends might be appropriate, and whether they should make them.

I then make a final appointment with them to talk about Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve. I emphasize how important it is for them to spend their time with compulsive eaters who still suffer, rather than with me—because if we spend our time talking to each other, then we won't have time to talk to those who still suffer and who need our experience, strength and hope.

I then say that I am always available to listen to the Step Five part of their Step Ten, and to review what amends they have to make, what amends might be appropriate, and whether they should make them; as well, I'm available to help them work out how to carry their message and how to sponsor.

In all cases I NEVER tell them what to do. I present alternatives and ideas and stress that what they decide to do has to seem right to them, not to me.

Living Proof

A sponsor has what a newcomer wants: abstinence! I wouldn't be able to sponsor if I was in the food. It would be like a drunk sponsoring someone in AA. We're crazy when we're in the food, whether we know it or not, and it would be a disservice to OA and the newcomer to pass on that insanity.

There is a difference between "relief" and "recovery" in OA. While it is nice to find oneself surrounded by people who understand the horrors of overeating, we are promised so much more than sharing a common problem. We are promised a common solution. We are promised freedom from compulsive overeating—recovery—instead of that temporary relief we might feel if we were to overeat. This is the message we are responsible for passing on to the person who still suffers, both the newcomer and still-in-the-food longtimer: We can put down the food and never overeat again! That's what my first meetings told me thirty-three years ago, and others and myself are living proof that this program works. Recovery without relapse is possible.

When my first sponsor went back to the food after seven years of abstinence, I did not follow her; I got a new abstinent sponsor the day I found out. If I ever went back to the food, it would be my responsibility to let my sponsees go so that they could find a replacement abstinent sponsor, someone who still has what they want, which is freedom from compulsive overeating!

This program works when we remember what the point is: abstinence.

- A.G. © Overeaters Anonymous, First Posted in Lifeline on August 1, 2020



https://x.com/box459/status/609366230676410368?mx=2



Dear Heart of Canada Fellowship,

I hope this message finds you well and on the path to and in recovery.

I am writing this message because the Heart of Canada Intergroup finds itself in need of dedicated volunteers to serve in key roles within our intergroup.

Priority Need: Group Representatives

Many groups have faced challenges in appointing a representative to attend intergroup meetings. We recognize this and sincerely hope that you consider taking on this pivotal role if your group does not have someone already. As a Group Representative, you would:

- Act as the vital link between your group and the intergroup.
- Share insights and feedback from your group during intergroup meetings.
- Report back on intergroup activities, decisions and discussions.

Additional Opportunities:

We are also seeking volunteers for the following positions:

1. Treasurer:

- Manage intergroup funds.
- Maintain financial records and reports.
- Ensure transparency and accountability in all financial matters.

2. Region Representative:

- Represent our intergroup at regional meetings.
- Facilitate communication between intergroup and regional representatives.
- Share best practices and strategies with our intergroup.

When in recovery, your service and commitment make your recovery stronger. If you are interested in volunteering or learning more about these roles, please reach out to me at chrislmiller73@gmail.com.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours in service,

Christina

Chair, Heart of Canada Intergroup





Concept Three

The right of decision, based on trust, makes effective leadership possible.

Spiritual Principle: Trust

(Step 3: Faith, Tradition 3: Identity)

Concept Three is about the ability to balance responsibility with the delegation to others. Many of us have the character defect of being either too controlling or letting others take over. In Step 3 we make the decision to turn our will and lives over to our higher power, so how can we feel that we need to control everything? Tradition 3 states that the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop eating compulsively. As a newer member, it only makes sense that I should delegate some tasks to members who have a longer period of recovery from compulsive eating than I do. As well, I need to recognize that nobody can do it all; responsibility must be shared and this means that I have to put trust in other people to do the best job that they can, plus step up to share the tasks to which I can contribute.

Learning to respect other people's competencies as well as recognizing our own can be a valuable tool in ultimately allowing our higher power to take control while we do the necessary actions. It can also help us to stop "helping" the people around us when they are not conforming to what we think is the "right way" to do things.



https://inspiringsobriety.com/products/recover y-t-shirt-inspiring-sobriety-rent-a-sponsor The following is a summary of an article from the San Diego Intergroup that gives some practical ideas about being a sponsor.

Being a Sponsor

https://oasandiego.org/sponsor/sponsor-being/

- Sponsorship strengthens the sponsor's recovery as much as the sponsee. It is an opportunity to practice humility, patience, hope and caring for a fellow compulsive eater and review your own journey as you share the literature, steps, traditions and tools.
- There are no official requirements to be a sponsor, but it is generally accepted that a sponsor should be abstinent and have completed at least the 4th step and be actively working the 12 steps with a sponsor. There is no specific length of time that a sponsor must have been abstinent.
- To determine if you are ready to sponsor, it is recommended that you have a sponsor and that you discuss your readiness with them. Ask yourself and your Higher Power "Do I have experience, strength and hope to share?"

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- OA has developed the Temporary Sponsors: Newcomers' First Twelve Days guide (https://media.oa.org/app/uploads/2022/09/10100113/temporary-sponsors-newcomers-first-twelve-days.pdf) as a template for temporary sponsorship in conjunction with the OA Pamphlet "Where Do I Start?: Everything a Newcomer Needs to Know" https://media.oa.org/app/uploads/2022/06/30133023/where-do-i-start-everything-a-newcomer-needs-to-know.pdf. This may be helpful for a new sponsor or may allow people who feel like they cannot take on new sponsees to help a newcomer get started. This plan not only explains how OA works but encourages the sponsee to begin the recovery process; to ensure that they are indeed a compulsive eater, determine a starting plan of eating, and have an introduction to the tools, traditions and literature that will be helpful on their journey.
- Focus on sharing *your* program and struggles rather than holding yourself out as an expert on OA. Recognize that you have limitations and not all your sponsees will be ready to recover or that you may not be a good fit. This does not say anything negative about either of you.
- Do not sponsor too many people. It is better to sponsor fewer in a manner that allows you to focus adequately on your sponsee(s). Some sponsors will just work the steps with their sponsees and recommend that other people be recruited to be food sponsors and recovery buddies, while other sponsors will be available for all these aspects of recovery. Be realistic and transparent with your own time and energy resources.
- Different styles of sponsorship work for different people, therefore there is no "right" style of being a sponsor. The primary goal is to help the person move through the 12 steps to become recovered in a manner that promotes autonomy and is respectful and loving. It is also important to be a positive role model of recovery.







Step 10: Quelling the Disturbance

Date: Sunday: March 23, 2025
Time: 2-3 pm EDT (1-2 pm CDT)

Zoom coordinates:

Meeting ID: 901 265 2959

Passcode: hello

No pre-registration and no maximum number of

participants.

www.oaontario.org



OA FOOTSTEPS

Come & Join the Footsteps Night Owls

Meeting ID: 98842499977 Password: 1212

7 Days a Week

10pm EST / 7pm PST

- Sun- Candlelight / Meditation
- Mon- Daily Reader / Writing
- Tue- Big Book
- Wed- 2-way Prayer
- Thu- Spiritual Principles
- Fri- Newcomer
- Sat- Emotional Recovery

Together we get better!



https://www.wildapricot.com/blog/donementorship-program

Did you know??

Region One OA Website has resources on sponsorship that can help you become a new or better sponsor. https://www.oaregion1.org/sponsorship.html

Resources include:

- A Guide for Sponsors: When and How to be an OA Sponsor ** (available for purchase as e-file or hard copy)
- Balance in the Sponsorship Relationship (free)
- Sponsorship Success Podcast Series (free)
- Sponsoring Toolbox (free)
- Sponsoring Through the 12 Steps ** (available for purchase as e-file or hard copy)
- Sponsorship Kit (includes the at-cost pamphlets listed here as well as other resources for you and your sponsor) **
 - ** Starred items are available for purchase from OA World Service or from your local Intergroup. Please check with your Literature Rep to see if they are available in your area.)

OA World Service offers many podcasts on the steps, traditions and many more topics including Sponsorship Success (https://oa.org/podcasts/sponsorship-success/) and other Virtual Workshops.

Check out the entire list at https://oa.org/podcasts/



Our thanks to Louella for the beautiful nature pictures in this issue.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR OUR NEXT CONVENTION COMMITTEE

As we start approaching warmer weather, We would like to mention that plans should be starting soon for our next in-person convention in the fall. After COVID, it was such an amazing feeling of the power of this program, when people were able to attend a convention that focused on our recovery and brought those who attended such a feeling of connection with each other. If anyone is interested in chairing, co-chairing, or serving on the committee, you can contact Pauline K. at 204-661-6212 or by email at ppkulbaba@gmail.com to ask any questions about what is required. Pauline is happy to serve on the committee again but feels that someone else should be the chair this year.

We are always looking for volunteers to serve on the Newsletter committee or to submit articles, pictures, etc. Please contact us at:

abiteofrecoverynewsletter@gmail.com for more information.

Back issues can be found at: https://oaheartofcanada.ca/abiteofrecovery-newsletter/.

Our next issue will focus on:

Setting Loving Boundaries

INTERGROUP LITERATURE REP

For all your literature needs, please contact Deb B. at <u>debabright@gmail.com</u> or call/text to 1-204-720-4053.

OA Hotline

OA Hotline: The phone number people call to inquire about the program if they looked it up online before going to the website. Please consider volunteering for the OA Hotline.

Service Position Requirements:

- 1 month of continuous abstinence the month prior to volunteering with a one month commitment of abstinence while answering the calls.
- 2. Must be attending OA Heart of Canada meetings.

Great opportunity to practise your tools & do service! If you have further questions or would like to volunteer, please contact:

Gail C. at oainquiries23@gmail.com, or by phone or text at 204-782-5087.

OA PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE

The OA Public Information (PI) Committee is the organizing body from our Intergroup that finds ways to carry the message to those who still suffer (Step 12) and also to reach out to Health Care Professionals to inform them about our program.

If you are looking for a way to do service, please consider joining the PI Committee. If you have further questions or would like to volunteer by joining our committee, please contact: Gail C. at oainquiries23@gmail.com or by phone or text at 204-782-5087.

Quick List of Meetings in our Intergroup

This list can also be found at the OA Heart of Canada webpage: https://www.oaheartofcanada.ca

SUNDAY: 11 AM - 12 NOON ZOOM Meeting

https://zoom.us/j/8637723075?pwd=QXZ4KzRrcE0rWEEybFVmV0Z6azE4dz09

Meeting ID: 863 772 3075 / Password: WpgF2F

To access the meeting by telephone: Manitoba Telephone # – 204-272-7920 (Long Distance May Apply)

Telephone Meeting ID: 863 772 3075; Password: 616534,

Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcrVWyomyE

MONDAY: 7:00 - 8:00 PM IN PERSON Only

ADDRESS: GOOD NEWS FELLOWSHIP CHURCH, 891 ST. MARY'S RD., NEAR FERMOR

TUESDAY: 7:30 - 8:30 pm ZOOM Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86213444550?pwd=UWhsRmZsVHF0d0dadkM0bXdaUGg2dz09

Meeting ID: 862 1344 4550 / Password: 279813

To access the meeting by telephone: Manitoba Telephone # – 204-272-7920 (Long Distance May Apply)

Telephone Meeting ID: 862 1344 4550; Password: 279813

Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcrVWyomyE

WEDNESDAY Morning: 7:30-8:30 AM ZOOM Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86213444550?pwd=UWhsRmZsVHF0d0dadkM0bXdaUGg2dz09

Meeting ID: 862 1344 4550 / Password: 279813

To access the meeting by telephone: Manitoba Telephone # – 204-272-7920 (Long Distance May Apply)

Telephone Meeting ID: 862 1344 4550; Password: 279813

Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcrVWyomyE

THURSDAY: 7:00 PM ZOOM Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85248968569?pwd=dWs2ZS8rU24wckJRMjBqOXk0Z25KQT09

Meeting ID: 852 4896 8569 / Password: recover

To access the meeting by telephone: Manitoba Telephone # – 204-272-7920 (Long Distance May Apply)

Telephone Meeting ID: 862 2992 6338; Password: 5671699

Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcrVWyomyE

SATURDAY: 10:30 AM HYBRID Meeting on Zoom + IN PERSON

https://zoom.us/j/8637723075?pwd=QXZ4KzRrcE0rWEEybFVmV0Z6azE4dz09

Meeting ID: 863 772 3075 / Password: WpgF2F

ADDRESS: JOHN BLACK UNITED MEMORIAL CHURCH, 898 HENDERSON HWY AT ROBERTA IN NORTH KILDONAN

To access the meeting by telephone: Manitoba Telephone # – 204-272-7920 (Long Distance May Apply)

Telephone Meeting ID: 863 772 3075; Password: 616534

Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcrVWyomyE

There are now two face-to-face meetings in Thunder Bay.

Sundays: 7-8 pm Eastern Time (Open Meeting)

&

Wednesdays: 10-11 am Eastern Time (Closed Meeting)

Please check out full information at https://oaheartofcanada.ca/oa-heart-of-canada-calendar/

HEART OF CANADA MESSAGE LINE: 204-334-9008 / EMAIL: oainquiries23@gmail.com