

## WHAT IS A SPONSOR?

SPONSOR - "One who assumes, or one to whom is delegated, responsibility for some other person." or -

"One who at the baptism of an infant professes the Christian faith in its name, and guarantees its religious {spiritual} education."  
("We were reborn." AA, pg. 63) Webster, circa - 1936

Step Twelve reads, "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

That, of course, is what a Sponsor is. An alcoholic who has taken these Steps and had a spiritual awakening or spiritual experience or an entire psychic change. That is described on pages 83 and 84 in our Basic Text, Alcoholics Anonymous.

Let's see what that Book has to say about a Sponsor (a recovered alcoholic):

"But the ex-problem drinker who has found this solution, who is properly armed with facts about himself, can generally win the confidence of another alcoholic in a few hours. Until such an understanding is reached, little or nothing can be accomplished." (Pg. 18)

How does he do that? Well, the effective sponsor has studied Chapter Seven, "Working With Others".

1. His first job then is to see if the prospect appears to be willing to go to any length to achieve victory over alcohol, (AA, pg. 90).
2. His second job is to see if he has a REAL ALCOHOLIC to work with, (AA, pg. 92). If he is not, try to help them find the fellowship that deals with their problem.
3. His third job is to give the prospect a killer case of alcoholism so he will feel totally hopeless and helpless, (AA, pg. 92).
4. Then, his fourth job is to give the prospect hope, (AA, pg. 93).
5. His fifth job is to see if the prospect is, in fact, willing to go to any length (AA, pg. 94 - 96) to achieve victory over alcohol. (That is to see they have a copy of the Big Book and are willing to carefully read it to determine if they are willing to adopt the Program as a way of life)
6. If he is, then his sixth job is to start the protégé on his journey to sobriety by taking Steps Three, Four and Five, (AA, pg. 96).
7. His seventh job is to walk with his protégé in putting the remaining Steps to work until he is solid in living our Program, one day at a time (AA, pg. 96 - 103).
8. Once the protégé has found a newcomer and has effectively passed this on to another suffering alcoholic, you will have done your job and know joy of living, which is giving that others may live. (AA, pg. 163 - 164)
9. Continue to look for the next prospect.

Is Sponsorship important? Let's see what the Big Book reports.

"For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead", (AA, pg. 14 & 15).

"Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers, depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs." (AA, pg. 20)

"Practical experience shows nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail." (AA, pg. 89)

And as Dr. Bob reported:

"I spend a great deal of time passing on what I learned to others who want and need it badly. I do it for four reasons:

1. Sense of duty.
2. It is a pleasure.
3. Because in doing so I am paying my debt to the man who took time to pass it on to me.
4. Because every time I do it I take out a little more insurance for myself against a possible slip."  
(AA, pg. 180 - 181)

Dr. Bob did take the matter of Sponsorship very seriously. History shows that he helped approximately 5,000 alcoholics experience the Promises of the Program of Alcoholics Anonymous over a 10 year period. That turns out to average 1 1/2 new alcoholics every day over that 10 year period. That would certainly qualify as "intensive" work with other alcoholics.

So, it would appear to make sense, if we have been restored to sanity where alcohol is concerned, to follow the directions the 1st 100 laid down for us in our Basic Text, "ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS" and apply the Twelfth Step Prayer as directed, which is:

"Ask Him in you morning meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick. The answers will come, IF your own house is in order. But you obviously cannot transmit something you haven't got. See to it that your relationship with Him is right and great events will come to pass for you and countless others. This is the Great Fact for us."

(AA, pg. 164)

The Program of Alcoholics Anonymous works if we work it! We die if we don't!!  
So WORK it!!!

(But that is only a suggestion)

**We recover by the Steps we take, not the meetings we make!**