

Session 32 – Step 12 – Our Testimony

Lesson Plan

Time	Activity
0:00	Opening Prayer Plan for the session Catch-up Sharing Share Exercise 12.3, Our Testimony Assignments
0:05	Catch-up Sharing
0:15	Share Exercise S12.3, Our Testimony Ask each man to share his “elevator speech” testimony with the group Testimony should require 60-90 seconds each. If possible, do not read. Speak as if sharing with a friend or colleague on the elevator ride, over a cup of coffee. Ask for feedback and crosstalk. Repeat until everyone has had the opportunity to share. As appropriate, some men will want to refine their testimony and share again next session.
1:00	Sponsorship See Leader Notes
1:20	Assignments Refine, complete all Exercises, including testimony Come prepared to share Come prepared to share your vision and plans of Step 12 for you
1:25	Final questions or comments Closing Prayer
1:30	Adjourn – may leave meeting open for additional discussion

Leader Discussion Notes

Sponsorship

Need for sponsors

Each one lead one; help someone who entered the program after you walk/work through each step.

Alt. – One/Two lead a small group

Main requirements

Willingness and availability to serve another man needing help

Knowledge of Steps

General knowledge of sexual addiction, obsession, and compulsion

Willingness to learn more, as needed

Sources of Support

AA – Questions and Answers on Sponsorship

Twelve Step Sponsorship – How It Works – Hamilton B. – some excerpts are copied below.

Castimonia/AMR 12 Step Leaders Guide – AMR Website

Twelve Step Sponsorship - Excerpts

Many AA and other Twelve Step Fellowship members will not agree with the detailed suggestions and commentaries in this book, although I believe they will largely agree with its four major points.

Those points are as follows:

1. The primary responsibility of sponsors is to help their sponsees work the Twelve Steps.
2. A sponsor and sponsee have an obligation to discuss their mutual expectations, objectives, and requirements, if any, regarding the sponsorship relationship *before* they enter into that relationship.
3. A sponsor shares his or her experience, strength, and hope with his or her sponsee rather than trying to run the sponsee's life.
4. A sponsor must never take advantage of a sponsee in any way.

Sponsorship is intensely, wonderfully personal. Each of us brings our own ideas, strengths, and weaknesses to it as both sponsors and sponsees. No one is an "ideal" sponsor and no one is a "perfect" sponsee. Thank God. But we can all learn to be better sponsors and better sponsees. Undoubtedly, there are certain native talents to the sponsorship art, but there are also some principles that can be brought to bear. Those with a load of "talent" still need to understand the guidelines. Those with less natural "talent" can improve their effectiveness by increasing their knowledge about sponsorship. No set of rigid rules could possibly do the phenomenon of sponsorship justice, but it is my hope that the observations in this book can begin to capture its spirit.

*As with all teacher/student relationships, it is difficult to tell who learns more: the sponsor or the sponsee.*

A sponsor is someone who has been where we want to go in our Twelve Step program and knows something about how we can get there. His or her primary responsibility is to help us work the Twelve Steps by applying their principles to our lives. Sponsorship is a basic part of belonging to a Twelve Step Fellowship and potentially one of its richest experiences. Sponsorship can be, like friendship, one of life's great blessings.

*A sponsor's primary responsibility is to help a sponsee work the Twelve Steps.*

But sponsorship can also be a scary experience, at least at first. We become vulnerable whether we want to or not. We take on responsibilities and develop expectations. We take risks. We reveal who we are and unload our secrets. We let another person into our lives in an honest and intimate way.

We drop our facade. It can be frightening as well as exhilarating to trust another human being and to build a relationship with him or her.

### **A Brief History of Sponsorship**

The idea of sponsorship was born in Alcoholics Anonymous, the original Twelve Step Fellowship. *Living Sober*, an AA publication, describes how the term “sponsor” came about.

In the earliest days of A.A., the term “sponsor” was not in the A.A. jargon. Then a few hospitals in Akron, Ohio, and New York began to accept alcoholics (under that diagnosis) as patients—if a sober A.A. member would agree to “sponsor” the sick man or woman. The sponsor took the patient to the hospital, visited him or her regularly, was present when the patient was discharged, and took the patient home and then to an A.A. meeting. At the meeting, the sponsor introduced the newcomer to other happily nondrinking alcoholics. All through the early months of recovery, the sponsor stood by, ready to answer questions or to listen whenever needed. Sponsorship turned out to be such a good way to help people get established in A.A. that it has become a custom followed throughout the A.A. world, even when hospitalization is not necessary.<sup>1</sup>

Sponsorship has since become one of the foundations of the recovery programs of all Twelve Step Fellowships and one of the greatest blessings of membership.

### **What a Sponsor Does**

**A sponsor helps us work the Twelve Steps by providing explanation, guidance, and encouragement.**

**A sponsor helps us get established quickly in our Fellowship by explaining basic concepts and terminology and by introducing us to other members.**

**A sponsor is a safe person whom we can learn to trust.**

**A sponsor can answer the many questions that we have as newcomers or develop as “mid-timers.”**

**A sponsor can help us in the process of self-examination that the Steps require.**

**A sponsor encourages us to read the basis text of our Fellowship and other program literature and to engage in Fellowship activities and service work.**

**A sponsor can monitor our progress, confront us when it is appropriate, and generally help us stay on the recovery path.**

**A sponsor reminds us to apply Twelve Step principles in our lives.**

**A sponsor models the Twelve Step program of recovery.**

**Our sponsor is available in times of crisis.**

**A sponsor provides practice in building relationships.**

**What a Sponsor Does Not Do**

**A sponsor cannot keep us in recovery.**

**A sponsor is not our therapist.**

**A sponsor should not attempt to control our lives or encourage an unhealthy dependence.**

**A sponsor should not take advantage of us or exploit us in any way.**