



**Sexaholics
Anonymous**

**SA
Sponsorship**

Sexaholics Anonymous
Statement of Principle

We have a solution. We don't claim it's for everybody, but for us, it works. If you identify with us and think you may share our problem, we'd like to share our solution with you (SA 2).

In defining sobriety, we do not speak for those outside Sexaholics Anonymous. We can only speak for ourselves. Thus, for the married sexaholic, sexual sobriety means having no form of sex with self or with persons other than the spouse. In SA's sobriety definition, the term "spouse" refers to one's partner in a marriage between a man and a woman. For the unmarried sexaholic, sexual sobriety means freedom from sex of any kind. And for all of us, single and married alike, sexual sobriety also includes progressive victory over lust (SA 191-192).

*Passed by the General Delegate Assembly
February 2010*

The only requirement for SA membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober according to the SA sobriety definition.

Any two or more sexaholics gathered together for SA sobriety according to the SA sobriety definition may call themselves an SA group.

Meetings that do not adhere to and follow Sexaholics Anonymous' sobriety statement as set forth in the foregoing Statement of Principle adopted by the General Delegate Assembly in 2010 are not SA meetings and shall not call themselves SA meetings.

*Addendum to the Statement of Principle passed by
the General Delegate Assembly on July 2016.*

Good sponsorship, which should be made a way of life in the group, is most important for group recovery. We dedicate ourselves to the newcomers, but they should be willing to take direction. Having 'our way' is what got us to where we are. Our best thinking is what brought us to where we were when we came in. We who are sober should give the newcomers solid, specific direction as to how to get out of their feelings and into the security and safety of sober support by working the Steps with them (*Practical Guidelines for Group Recovery 7*).

Introduction

For most members of Sexaholics Anonymous, regardless of our length of sobriety, sponsorship is a cornerstone of our recovery program. Sponsorship, as understood in all Twelve Step fellowships, is practiced in two ways. First, we seek a fellow member who is farther along in recovery than we are and ask that person to be our sponsor. Then we, in turn, give freely of our time to members who are looking for a sponsor.

Sponsorship is the practice of taking direction in working the Steps and, in turn, helping others to work the Steps. Relying on the guidance of a sponsor relieves us of the burden of trying to figure things out alone. Sponsorship is spiritual fellowship in action. In working with a sponsor, we find relief from loneliness, doubt and indecision; in sponsoring others, we share the joy of seeing others

recover. In addition, the practical experience we gain in taking direction from another member helps us to find the courage, when the time comes, to carry out the will of our Higher Power when our Step Eleven prayers give us that knowledge.

Taking Direction from a Sponsor

I needed someone who could see me better than I could, even though he might have had some problems of his own. (Everyone I used as a sponsor had imperfections big enough to turn me away if I wanted such an excuse.) It was my reaching out and taking direction that worked. I made regular contact and followed directions. It helped make me teachable and saved me a lot of grief and time (SA 162).

Many of us come into Sexaholics Anonymous with multiple character defects, which we encounter as we work the Steps. One of those defects is a problem with authority. We often have difficulty surrendering to a Higher Power. The idea of surrendering our will and our lives to someone or something other than ourselves brings back memories of conflicts with parents, bosses, and other authority figures. Words such as “obedience” or “yielding” or “submission” were fighting words for us – ideas we thought we needed to resist if we were to be whole persons.

The idea of submitting to sponsorship reopens all those authority conflict issues from our past. We wonder at the outset, “Will this person try to tell me what to do in my life? What if he asks me to do something I feel would be detrimental to me or my family, such

as abstaining from sex in my marriage or attending a meeting every night of the week, or giving up my free time to do Step work with others in the fellowship?”

We knew that for sponsorship to work, it would mean developing the ability to take simple direction. We came to believe that having ourselves for a sponsor was a symptom of the insanity we brought with us to the SA program. Our first step, therefore, was to “fire” ourselves and seek someone more mature in sobriety and recovery than we were.

Does My Sponsor Have to Be a member of SA?

Many early members of SA had no choice but to seek sponsors in other Twelve Step fellowships for guidance in working the Steps. Fortunately, today we have a broad base of members who are qualified to be sponsors and who welcome the prospect of sponsoring newcomers. In addition to finding sponsors at local SA groups, members find sponsors at SA international conventions, regional conventions, day-long meeting marathons, and through phone contact. In seeking a sponsor, newcomers are encouraged to look primarily for someone to direct them in working the Steps from an SA perspective, and in carrying the SA message of recovery to others. For their part, SA members who sponsor others should be willing to impress upon newcomers the importance of studying SA literature, because that is what describes SA sobriety and recovery, and distinguishes SA from other fellowships offering recovery from sex addiction.

Member Share: I Can't Do it Alone

“Anyone who defends himself has a fool for a client.” This aptly describes my experience with sponsorship. Although I often forget, I cannot get or stay sober alone. I have heard many times in the fellowship that there is power in the group that goes beyond the power of individuals. I have also found that this is true when I meet with my sponsor. When we are together, something happens that goes beyond rational explanation. There is a Power there that is not in evidence when each of us is alone.

My sponsor has helped me to see things I might otherwise have never seen. His advice is often so right on target that I think he can read my very soul. I have had the same experience with my sponsees. They come with a problem or they need help working the Steps, and I find myself offering feedback or direction that I have never heard of or even thought of before. My Higher Power is present in both cases and takes over if I am willing.

My sponsor also helps me see the insanity of my thinking that I miss when I try to go it alone. Part of sponsorship is having someone to share ideas with, to check in with, so that I can avoid the craziness. My best ideas got me to where I needed SA. I need a sponsor to help me stay in the solution. I cannot achieve or keep sobriety and recovery alone. See also, “Getting an SA Sponsor” (SA 72.)

Taking Direction from a Higher Power

We have found another great benefit of sponsorship. We discovered over time that following a sponsor's direction is good practice for following the direction of our Higher

Power, especially for those of us who do not easily take direction. We know this is a spiritual program and that we must pray “only for knowledge of God’s will and the power to carry that out.” But how will we know God’s will for us and be able to carry it out if we won’t take direction from a sponsor? How can we turn our will and our life over to the care of God – as suggested by our Third Step – if we can’t take direction from someone in the fellowship who has taken the path before us? God’s will for us so often is spoken through human beings – especially through our fellow SA members – that we need to learn to listen to others and carefully consider their input. It is also clear from the multiple references to the words “sponsor” and “sponsorship” in both the SA White Book and the AA Big Book that sponsorship was originally envisioned as the norm and not the exception in our program of recovery.

Member Share: Sponsorship Helps Me Be Obedient to God

I was rebellious over authority by the age of six. When my father told me he was going to send me to a military academy where they whipped disobedient boys like me into shape, I protested that if he did, I would run away. This was so distasteful to me that when I grew up, I chose a course of study that exempted me from military service, even when all my friends were being drafted.

Meanwhile I thought I had a better way to deal with authority figures. If I could use my mind to master much of their expertise, I could earn their respect to the point where they would relate to me as a peer rather than as someone subordinate to them. This strategy worked

well in college and graduate school, where professors would ask me to assist them with projects rather than criticize my work as inferior to theirs. Later I noticed this strategy worked with therapists who assumed that I merely needed reminding, encouragement, and support rather than confrontation, intervention, and a refusal on their part to cooperate any longer in my pretended willingness to grow.

Now, in SA recovery, I have an opportunity to deal with this problem as I work under a sponsor and sponsor others. I am convinced some of us never get a sponsor because, like me, we rebelled against authority.

Until and unless my sponsor asks me to do something unreasonable, shaming, humiliating, illegal, dishonest, or harmful to myself or others, I believe that I should follow his direction as a means of growing in obedience to God. If my sponsor's life needs correction, that is the responsibility of his Higher Power and his sponsor, not me. I have only to take my own inventory and humbly learn to submit to someone with greater knowledge of how the SA program works than I have. I get angry and resentful at times, even spiteful that I cannot claim "higher authority" through some grievance procedure. But when I surrender that anger and resentment, perhaps a thousand times before I give it up, I regain my serenity and set out to learn what

*I am responsible.
When anyone, anywhere
reaches out for help,
I want the hand of SA
always to be there.
And for that: I am responsible*

The Twelve Steps of Sexaholics Anonymous

1. We admitted that we were powerless over lust—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to sexaholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Steps and Traditions are adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. ("AAWS"). Permission to adapt and reprint the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions does not mean that AAWS has approved the contents, of this publication, nor that AAWS agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in connection with programs which are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, or in any other non-AA context, does not imply otherwise.

The Twelve Traditions of Sexaholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on SA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or Sexaholics Anonymous as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers.
6. An SA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every SA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Sexaholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. SA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Sexaholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and TV.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Alcoholics Anonymous, on whose principles of recovery the fellowship of Sexaholics Anonymous is based, has published a comprehensive pamphlet on Sponsorship that has proven invaluable for many in SA. This pamphlet is highly recommended for SA individuals and groups. Complete order forms for AA Publications are available from General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

SA adaptation © 1982, 1984, 1989, 2001 SA Literature. Reprinted with permission of SA Literature.

Quotes from *Sexaholics Anonymous* are acknowledged by the use of the initials SA and the page number. Copyright 1982, 1984, 1989, 2001 by SA Literature. Used with permission of SA Literature.

This pamphlet includes material adapted from an article on sponsorship published in *Essay*, March 1994.

If you think you may have problems with sex or lust addiction, we invite you to join us at an SA meeting. Look for Sexaholics Anonymous in your local phone directory, call SA International Central Office toll free (in the USA) at 866-424-8777, or visit our web site at www.sa.org. Online meetings and remote contacts are also available.



Additional copies of this pamphlet and a literature list can be ordered from:

SAICO
P.O. Box 3565
Brentwood, TN 37024-3565

Phone: 615-370-6062
Fax: 615-370-0882
E-mail: saico@sa.org
Website: <http://www.sa.org>