



South Central Area of Narcotics Anonymous

SCANA



Special points of interest:

- Come join us ~ the "New Beginnings" meeting has moved to the Elim church at E. 9th and Capital. (Close to the Capital area). Check it out on Fridays @ 7:30p.m.
- Convention Information on back page.
- Printing Permission slips on back page

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What Is A Sponsor About Anyway?

A sponsor is a recovering addict in the program of Narcotics Anonymous; someone we can trust to share our life experiences with (both good and bad); a person to whom we can go with our problems that may be too personal to share with the group. It is suggested that a sponsor be someone who has practice working the Twelve Steps and is involved in the program. Primarily, a sponsor is a guide through the Twelve Steps of recovery. It is our experience that most addicts need a sponsor. At times, we all find ourselves on shaky ground, confused, in emotional pain, and in need of a helping hand. Since we rarely trusted others, we attempted to go it alone in life. This became one of our problems. We are people who have never learned how to live. This is where our sponsors come in. Our sponsors help by sharing their experience, strength, and hope. To sum it up, anyone who may have the desire to stay clean and begin to recover should have a sponsor.

Communication is the key to this relationship. When we have questions about any part of our program, we know we can look to our sponsor, but it is our

responsibility to get in touch with them during these times. Whether it be by telephone or in person, we share our problems with our sponsor. Good or bad, we try to share our experiences on a daily basis. Day or night, whenever we feel the need, we contact our sponsor. It is important that we be honest with our sponsor, that we listen with an open mind to suggestions, and that we are willing to try a way other than our own. Listening is the key to finding a sponsor. The most obvious place to look for a sponsor is at NA meetings. Talk, share, and listen to members of the program; get plenty of phone numbers and use them. When you find someone with whom you can talk openly and relate, simply ask that person to be your sponsor. Chances are the answer will be "yes". Sometimes the person may be unable to sponsor you. Keep on trying! Remember that when one door closes, another will open. Continue to attend meetings, listen, and soon you will find a sponsor. It is strongly suggested that we find a sponsor of the same sex. Experience has shown us that members of the same sex better understand certain issues, such as sexuality, family or identity prob-



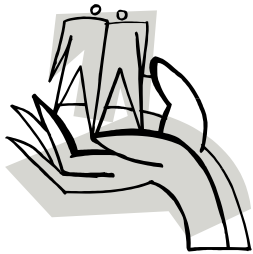
My gratitude speaks when I care and when I share with others the NA way

lems, relationship problems, etc. We are emotionally unstable and it is easy to form emotional bonds with members of the opposite sex. This detracts from our program and could spell disaster, especially for the newcomer.

Experience has shown that we should have only one sponsor, it's easier to receive direction from one individual. We find it easier to trust in one person, rather than many. With one sponsor we can learn to build a relationship based on trust and honesty. Remember, we need never be alone.

- Just An Addict





Ask Your Sponsor

Our addiction enslaved us. We were prisoners of our own mind and were condemned by our own guilt.. We gave up the hope that we would ever stop using drugs. Our attempts to stay clean always failed, causing us pain and misery.



Our addiction enslaved us.

Ask Your Sponsor...

In the beginning of my recovery, I struggled with talking to a sponsor because I had trust issues. I went to several meetings that my, (soon to be), sponsor attended to hear this man share his experience, strength and hope. At this point, I was looking for someone who had what I wanted and needed in my life.

I knew he had a lot of sponsee's with quite a few "twenty four hours" behind them, a rock solid program of recovery, a wife and a full-time job so I knew his plate was as full as mine.

When I asked him to be my sponsor and he agreed, one of the first questions he asked me made perfect sense. "Will you take suggestions, without question?" I did and with accepting this recovery

addict as my sponsor... I can honestly say that I haven't had to ask my sponsor about very much.

Today, when I go to a meeting struggling with an issue, I listen. I know that someone, whether they know it or not, will say something that will help me through it. I ask my sponsor about different things.

To me, a sponsor is a person that I can confide in and trust with my deepest, darkest issues that no one else needs to know about. By no means should you blindly, trust everyone in the fellowship.

You can't say certain things in a meeting setting and expect it to not get around the fellowship! It just doesn't work like that. People sometimes forget, (Basic Text—Pg. 72—

Tradition 12), the meaning of the word "anonymity," and at times things are repeated outside of meetings, in my opinion that's where, (in abstinence), this disease is also working.

I'm lucky; I belong to a very large sponsorship line. There's a handful of people in it that I trust, but no one as much as I do my sponsor. My sponsor has taught me about the steps, they're meaning and how to incorporate them in my daily affairs. It all stems from that first question my sponsor had for me; "Will you take suggestions without question?"

I urge you, pick a sponsor and then talk to that sponsor, get to know him or her and let them guide you! This program works!

- A Recovering Addict

I Ask My Sponsor: How, When, Where, What, and Who ?

In The Beginning: I asked my sponsor how to pray and when to pray. I asked how to get to the point where I would be comfortable when talking in meetings. I wanted to know what a G.S.R. meant and what is the responsibility of a secretary? I asked how long did it take to work the steps and what is the purpose of doing them. I wanted to know how I will know when I have a clear message of recovery and when will I be ready to sponsor. I needed to know why I had to go to so many meetings. I asked my sponsor, "What's your last name? What is the

point of last initials rather than names? Who is your sponsor and what's a grand sponsor? What's a sponsor tree? And lastly, "How much money can I borrow?" - *A Questioning Addict*

I don't ask my sponsor what I can and can't do, but I'll ask for guidance and what he thinks is best for me. My sponsor is older and more experienced than me, so I trust him.

I wouldn't ask him if I can use the bathroom, but I'd ask for the best way to wipe. I wouldn't ask to go to a meeting, but I'd ask him how to get there.

I won't ask him if I should do service, but I'd ask him what's his favorite commitment. I wouldn't ask him if I can work the steps, but I'll ask him how. I won't ask him if I can carry the message, but I'll ask him the best way to do that.

I would ask these kinds of things because he is my teacher, not my Dad. - *The end*



Upcoming Events!

March event:
St. Patty's Dance
March 18th
Elim Church 9th & Capital

April event:
Karaoke & Dance
April 22nd
Elim Church 9th & Capital
H & I Learning Day @
2p.m.—also on the 22nd

May event:
Memorial Day Picnic
May 29th
Yellow Banks Park (all the way out Vandalia Road)

June Event:
Hawaiian Dance
More will be revealed

July Event:
Ircana

October Event:
Scana Convention
Oct. 6, 7, & 8th

? Your Sponsor...

When I first came to Narcotics Anonymous I knew nothing about staying clean. As soon as I found a sponsor she made me realize that I had trust issues like everyone else. So it started out simple.

Some things were about my day,

and she even started to share about her life. Then came the suggestions. I did what she said and life became easier to deal with.

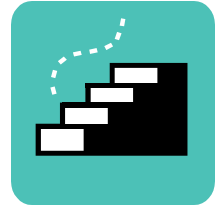
Sponsorship became a relationship not a dictatorship.

I ask my sponsor everything,

from "How was your day?", to questions about my Higher Power.

I've worked the steps with my sponsor and she has shown me how to trust another woman.

- Anonymous



We do recover to live clean and happy lives. Welcome to N.A. The steps do not end here. The steps are a new beginning!
- Basic Text page 51 "How It Works".

Sponsorship is...

This is a topic I've struggled with in the past. It was not until I read the first 103 pages of the Basic Text, (several times), that I truly began to understand the importance of having a sponsor. I figured that I could do this program on my own but, as hard as I tried, as bad as I wanted it, it just wasn't working for me.

I had to "humble" myself and ask for help. In talking to another recovering addict I realized that sponsorship plays a very important role in an addict's recovery.

My first sponsor was a person that had something I wanted. Even to this day I still listen to him and still learn something from him each time we see one another. He

told me that I'm not responsible for my disease, but the thing I am responsible for is my recovery. This was all before I had a Basic Text. I was relieved to know that I had a disease that could be arrested. Due to personal reasons I had to find another sponsor.

I've grown as close to my current sponsor as I was to my first. He has guided me through some pretty rough spots in my life, has taught me the how of this fellowship, The 12 Steps, how they work and more importantly, how to incorporate them in every aspect of my life.

My sponsor is someone whom I trust enough to share every aspect of my life. In sharing we have

become very close. I tend to treat him as the brother I never had.

He has taught me how to grow! No longer am I spiritually bankrupt. No longer do I have this empty hole inside of me. My sponsor has taught me, through sharing at meetings on a regular basis, incorporating the 12 steps in all my affairs and praying everyday, that I no longer have to have this empty void in my life "screaming" to be full.

Today, I do the things that have been taught to me by my sponsor, like service work, working the N.A. 12 steps, going to meetings on a regular basis, (even when I don't want to), and (the most important thing to me), **pray**. I was

instructed not to pray for anything specific, but, instead, for God to show his will and not to depend on my own. As we all know, our own will got us here.

Through all of this, I've got a life today, a life worth living. One of the most important things I've gotten is "peace of mind"!

If you want what we've got, go where we go and do what we do!

In finding this fellowship, I don't want for anything anymore. I have the love I'd been missing all my life. I have people that understand me and know who I am. I have all I need!

- A Grateful Recovering Addict

Getting Involved

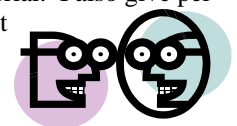
The SCASC Literature Committee and the staff of the Basic Newsletter encourage you to submit articles, poems, or drawings expressing your recovery experience, strength and hope for publication in subsequent issues of the Basic Newsletter. We do, however, request that you fill out the following release form for each contribution.

I, _____, give permission to the Basic Newsletter to print the accompanying material. I also give permission for the editing of syntax and offensive or "non-specific N.A. language." I am aware that content will not be edited. This release form is valid only for publication in the Basic Newsletter.

Signature _____

Date _____ Phone number: _____

Please deliver or mail to: Basic Newsletter to SCASO 3500 Kingman Blvd., Des Moines, IA 50311



**Dopeless
Hope fiends**

Ask Your sponsor : What do I do after a using dream? ✓ How do I stay clean?

✓ Why do I still "Jones"? ✓ How long will I have to go to these dang meetings?

I often find myself holding long and involved conversations with my sponsor that I don't include him in. What this means is, that these conversations occur in my head. I mean, I already know what my sponsor is going to say, right? My addiction tells me that, but the reality of the situation is that when I'm figuring out what my sponsor is going to tell me in any situation, I'm heading down the same path of thinking that got me to Narcotics Anonymous in the first place. There's also the consideration that if I'm thinking about what my sponsor is going to tell me, I'm probably in a situation where I need help. Despite the fact that this would be an excellent time to call and talk to my sponsor, I probably won't. I'll make the following excuses:

1. My sponsor is probably too busy to talk to me right now. Besides, it isn't bad enough to bother my sponsor with yet.
2. If I mention this problem, it's going to make me look stupid. It would be much better for me to figure this out on my own. After all, even though common knowledge says that I can't save my ass and my face at the same time, this only applies to other people and not to someone as wise as me.
3. I already know what my sponsor is going to tell me anyway.
4. My sponsor probably hasn't had any experience with a situation like this. After all, I'm unique. He wouldn't understand.
5. I've seen my sponsor make mistakes, so I most likely won't benefit from any input he has to give me in any situation, especially one as complicated as this.

This approach has caused me a great deal of pain during the course of my recovery, but for some reason, I continue to use the same approach and expect different results. (My sponsor would look at this and tell me that I needed to take a look at Step 2, and I'm pretty sure I'm right about that one.)

It seems like when I get in enough pain, that pain breeds willingness. When I become willing to include my sponsor in the conversations I'm having in my head, I'm always surprised by what my sponsor has to say about it. First off, he isn't like me when it comes to beating myself up over being stupid. Secondly, it's amazing how simple the most complex issues appear to someone outside the problem that has a working knowledge of the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts. Sometimes the answer seems so simple that I have to beat myself up over being stupid.

Now that I've been through this from a sponsee's perspective, I'll say a few words from my perspective as a sponsor. Talk to me about what's going on with you before it gets to the point where you're in such a mess that there may not be any easy answers. There isn't any problem that needs to be discussed at 3:00 am that didn't start hours or days before (but call me anyway). When you don't talk to me about things that confuse you or cause problems in your life, you're cheating both of us. They didn't just make up that idea of the therapeutic value of one addict helping another. I don't know how many times it has completely changed my entire outlook and helped me by helping a sponsee with a problem and having it become clear that what I'm telling him could be applied to my own life and recovery in another situation.

In short... ASK YOUR SPONSOR

✓ Why does this disease make me something I don't want to be?

✓ Is it really the dope I did? Or the dope I am? ✓ What can I do?



How can Narcotic's anonymous help me? ✓ Why do I have this disease? ✓ What are spiritual principles?

Why do I feel screwed up even after I've been clean for awhile? ✓ What is this "Higher Power"?

What is the outline for staying clean? Pages 52-56 (basic text) ✓ Why is life so painful?!

How do I work these steps and live inside my own head? ✓ How does an addict deal with the opposite sex ?



Twelve Steps of a Sponsor



1. I will not help you stay and wallow in limbo.
2. I will help you to grow, to become more productive by your own definition.
3. I will help you become more autonomous, more loving of yourself, more free to continue becoming the authority of your living and life.
4. I can't give you dreams, or "fix you up", simply because I can't.
5. I cannot give you growth, or grow for you; you must grow for yourself by facing reality, grim as it may be.
6. I can't take away loneliness or pain.
7. I cannot sense your world, evaluate your goals, or tell you what is best for you in your world; you have to live in your world.
8. I cannot convince you of the crucial choice of choosing the scary uncertainty of change and growing over the safe misery of saneness and not growing.
9. I want to be with you and know you as a rich and growing friend; yet cannot get close to you when you choose not to grow.
10. When I begin to care for you out of pity; when I begin to lose trust in you; then I am toxic, bad and inhibiting for you and for me.
12. You must know, my help is conditional; I will be with you, hang in there with you as long as I continue to get even the slightest hints that you are trying to grow and change. If you can accept all of this; then perhaps we can help each other to become what God meant us to be, mature adults, leaving childishness forever to the children.



I Ask

When I saw this topic for the newsletter, I wasn't quite sure how to go about it so I called my sponsor and asked her what I should write about. Her response was, "What do you ask me?" I sat and thought about it for a while and this is what I came up with.

- ♦ I call her when I'm hurting and need answers as to how to deal with the pain of living.
- ♦ I call her when I'm confused and don't know which way to turn.
- ♦ I call her when I need to know how to answer questions that baffle me when I'm working on a step.
- ♦ I call her to set up a time to work a step with her.
- ♦ I call her to ask advice on decisions I need to make no matter how big or how small.
- ♦ I call her when I'm overwhelmed with feelings I haven't experienced for awhile, if at all.
- ♦ I call her when I'm feeling guilt over something I've done to hurt another person, and want to unburden myself, and ask what the best way to make amends is.
- ♦ I call her when I'm scared or to share my innermost thoughts.
- ♦ I call her to share my hopes and dreams.
- ♦ I've called her to ask her if she thought I'd make a good sponsor to someone else, and if she thought I was ready for it.
- ♦ I've called her when my mother was ill and I just needed to know that someone out there understood what I was feeling.
- ♦ I've called her when the relationship I was in was falling apart and I wanted to run and hide.
- ♦ I've called her when I wanted to kill someone because they chose to use in my house while I was gone, and I found out.
- ♦ I've called her to ask about a service commitment I know nothing about.
- ♦ But mostly I call her just to let her know I'm doing O.K. To let her know I'm thinking about her, that I'm concerned as to how her day has gone, and that I'm praying for her daily. I let her know how important she is to me and how much I appreciate the time she takes out of her day to be there for me.

Scana Area Unity Convention I of Narcotics Anonymous

When: October 6th, 7th, and 8th, 2006 Where: Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Location: Quality Inn Suites, 929 3rd St., (Hotel is located off I-235, 3rd St. exit.)

Phone: (515) 282-5251 (Mention the NA Convention when making reservations. All rooms are doubles and cost \$86.84 tax included.)

What: Also there will be workshops, a speaker, a marathon meeting, beach ball meeting, banquet, dj dance, pool party, and lots of good old fashioned NA fellowship, unity and fun!

REGISTRATION FOR SCANA CONVENTION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

EARLY BIRD (BEFORE 9/1/06) \$15 PER PERSON QTY _____

AFTER 9/1/06 \$20 PER PERSON QTY _____

SATURDAY NIGHT BUFFET \$25 PER PERSON QTY _____

SUNDAY MORNING BRUNCH \$10 PER PERSON QTY _____

NEWCOMER FUND _____

Please make checks payable to : TOTAL _____

Mailing Address: SCANA CONVENTION ~ 3314 S.E. 22nd St., Des Moines, Iowa 50320

DID YOU KNOW

Your registration helps to pay convention costs like meeting and workshop space, speaker, travel costs, flyers, mailings, dj's, registration packets, decorations, entertainment, and much more.

Newcomer fund

The number of newcomer registrations given out will correspond to the number of donations that are received. Newcomer registrations are reserved for the newcomers with less than 90 days clean time who cannot afford the price of a registration packet and will be asked to give what they can to the newcomer fund. Registrations will be given on a "first come-first serve" basis.

Gift Items

Long Sleeve T-Shirts \$15 SM__MED__
LRG__XL__XXL__

Short Sleeve T-Shirts \$12 SM__MED__
LRG__XL__XXL__

2X and larger are an additional \$2.00 and need to be preordered
(Long and short) (Available up to 5X)

Coffee Cups \$8 QTY __

Note: All items are in limited quantity, so order early to make sure you get yours.

