

The Meta Addiction Treatment Guide: **Finding a Recovery Sponsor**



Meta
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Thank You

Thank you for downloading this guide on finding a recovery sponsor from **Meta Addiction Treatment**. As people in recovery ourselves, we have had the privilege of serving as sponsors to members of our recovery community. We've put together this guide to help you better understand the role of a sponsor in recovery and why sponsorship can make such a positive difference.

While the recovery experience is different for everyone, we can all use extra support, guidance, and advice as we get sober, especially in our early days of recovery. That's why most addiction treatment programs, 12-step groups, and other peer support networks encourage people to find a sponsor to help them.

In this guide, we'll go over 10 key benefits of having a recovery sponsor, including positive examples, a sense of hope, support to avoid relapse, and more. Then we'll share some frequently-asked questions that we hear often about finding a sponsor.

We hope you find this guide helpful. If you're in the greater Boston area and need help and support finding a sponsor or getting started on your own recovery journey, we're here for you. Reach us anytime at (844) 909-2560 or info@metaaddictiontreatment.com.

Wishing you a strong and lasting recovery,

The team at Meta Addiction Treatment



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Why is a Sponsor So Important in Recovery?

Having a sponsor can make recovering from addiction less challenging. Even though you don't need a sponsor to obtain and maintain sobriety, research shows that people who have a sponsor and follow their advice have a greater chance of staying sober. In addition to guiding you through the difficult days of early recovery, a sponsor can

be a role model, letting you know that long-term recovery is possible. They can also help break down recovery concepts and terminology you may not understand and be there for you when you need them most. A good sponsor can be the difference between long-term recovery and continuing the cycle of addiction.

The Benefits of Having A Sponsor

Changing your life, habits, daily routines, and thought patterns can be frustrating, exhausting, and challenging. However, doing so is a key component of [addiction recovery](#). Fortunately, sponsors can help ease this process. Because they've already overcome withdrawal symptoms, participated in therapy, learned new ways to cope, and maintained their sobriety, they can help guide, encourage, and support you as you recover. Ultimately, your sponsor's goal is to reduce your risk of relapse and help prepare you for a lifetime of sobriety. But there are many reasons why sponsors benefit the recovery process.



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1. They've Been Where You Are

Sponsors are proof that addiction recovery is possible. Having a sponsor that successfully lives a sober life can help you see that addiction doesn't have to continue to control your life. While witnessing others struggling with addiction can make you feel hopeless, a sponsor is a constant reminder that conquering addiction is possible. Whenever the recovery process gets difficult and you find yourself wondering if you can go on, look to your sponsor for inspiration. Their story of how they've changed can remind you that you can also change for the better.

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3. They Can Provide You With Hope and Strength

Throughout the recovery process, you may feel [depressed and weak](#). You might even feel like a failure at times. Sponsors have experienced the same type of feelings and can help strengthen you when you're feeling weak. They can also help you realize that you're not hopeless or powerless and that setbacks don't mean you have failed. Their stories of life before and after recovery can help give you hope, boost your confidence when you're down, and teach you to approach recovery from an optimistic perspective.

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4. They Can Provide A Listening Ear

At the same time, sponsors can be a safe place to turn to when you're tired, frustrated, upset, anxious, depressed, irritable, or moody. They can comfort you and motivate you to keep going. They can express empathy toward your situation. They can be a shoulder to cry on and a friend to vent to. Having a non-judgmental person to discuss your recovery with can be difficult to find, but you can share your deepest thoughts and feelings with your sponsor without fear of judgement.

5. They Will Hold You Accountable

As supportive as sponsors can be, they will also hold you accountable. Even if you have the best intentions, you won't always hold yourself accountable. You may overlook aspects of your life that need to change. A good sponsor will notice if you're returning to old habits or [isolating yourself from others](#). They'll check in with you often and ask challenging questions. They'll remind you of the work that's required for long-term sobriety. And they'll remind you of your recovery goals. Don't be alarmed when your sponsor points out behaviors that don't support addiction recovery. They are there to guide you and help prepare you for a life of sobriety.

6. They Can Help Keep You Grounded

A sponsor can help keep you grounded. Early sobriety can be an exhilarating experience. Detoxing your body and overcoming withdrawal symptoms may even make you feel temporarily invincible. While these positive feelings can be rewarding, they can also lead to overconfidence. Feeling too confident can cause you to neglect the [12-step process](#) and other aspects of recovery, which, in turn, can lead to relapse. Luckily, a good sponsor will be able to recognize this and can help keep you in check when you're feeling too self-assured.

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7. They Can Help You Avoid (Or Support You Through) Relapse

Sponsors can help you avoid relapse by helping you see why certain behaviors, beliefs, or actions may not benefit your recovery. For example, you may want to move to a new city after completing treatment. That may seem like an attempt at a fresh start and a new life. However, moving to a new place [can be stressful](#). You may not find employment right away. You may have to leave your support system. Sponsors won't give you direct order but they can help guide you away from people, places, decisions, and choices that can lead to relapse.

Should you relapse, a sponsor can help you learn from the experience and help you get back on track. Going back to unhealthy habits can make you feel ashamed and guilty, but a good, trustworthy sponsor won't judge you. They'll encourage you to have an honest conversation about what led to your relapse and help you get back on the road to recovery.

8. They Can Connect You With Sober Resources

A sponsor can provide you with a wealth of addiction recovery and sober resources. For example, your sponsor can tell you about [peer support groups](#) that helped them or about sober activities in your area. They might connect you with aftercare support programs, employment opportunities, or help you find sober living. Some sponsors also share recovery literature, prayers, meditations, and coping strategies that helped them overcome addiction. Transitioning back into the world after recovery can be challenging, but having a sponsor share a wealth of sober resources with you can make the transition easier to handle.



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9. They Can Become a Long-Lasting Friend or Mentor

A sponsor will be there for you through some of the most challenging aspects of your life. They will also be there to witness your progress and accomplishments, as well as your setbacks and challenges. This type of bond often lasts for a lifetime. Whether your sponsor becomes a friend or a life-long mentor, they will have seen you at your best and worst and may understand you better than anyone.

10. They Can Help You Give Back One Day

Having a sponsor doesn't just help you. The experience of being mentored and guided by another person also might help you give back by becoming a sponsor yourself one day. Many people in recovery choose to become sponsors as a way of helping keep their peer support community strong and to pay others back for the kindness and attention they received.



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Frequently-Asked Questions about Sponsorship

Who is a sponsor?

A sponsor is a person who has been able to maintain an ongoing recovery from substance abuse for a period of time. They may be a member of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA), or a similar 12-step group, or they may be a sober person you know in the community. A sponsor helps a newly sober person better understand the process of long-term recovery and acts as an advisor and counselor during difficult moments. Ideally, a sponsor is available to support the person in early recovery through phone calls and check-ins on a regular basis, although everyone's relationship with their sponsor is different.

Do I need to have a sponsor to participate in 12-step groups?

There are no formal requirements for joining an AA or NA meeting, but the programs do encourage participants to select a sponsor if they are serious about long-term recovery. As [AA notes](#), "Most A.A.s feel that sponsorship is a vital part of their ongoing growth and progress in recovery, including persons who have long-term sobriety." The group notes that participants are free to choose a sponsor at any point in their recovery and that it's never too late for a person in recovery to seek a sponsor for support or help.

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How do I select the right sponsor for me?

Finding the right sponsor is like finding a good friend: start with common interests and shared values. If you work in a particular industry, for example, you may benefit from finding a sponsor who has a similar career. Sometimes a sponsor may have shared life circumstances or background or a similar path to recovery. In other cases, you may want to select a sponsor who has had long-term success managing a similar addiction. Whatever your criteria, look for a sponsor who has demonstrated a deep commitment to recovery and who regularly attends 12-step meetings. You'll also want to find a sponsor who has the time and interest to help you when you're struggling in early recovery.

Where can I find a sponsor?

Many people find their sponsor through a 12-step group like AA or NA. In many cases, these groups actively encourage participants to identify more experienced peers as sponsors. If it's difficult for you to attend 12-step groups in person, you may benefit from reaching out to your addiction treatment program for help connecting with a sponsor. Some addiction treatment programs also have regular alumni meetings, which are excellent opportunities to connect with people who are in long-term recovery and could act as sponsors.

What are the benefits of becoming a sponsor?

If you're established in your recovery and feel that you want to give back to your community, becoming a sponsor can help strengthen your peer support network. While being a sponsor entails some level of responsibility, it also brings a host of benefits. These include both the positive feeling of helping others and ongoing support for your own recovery. Many people in recovery feel that becoming a sponsor is a way of "paying it forward" and helping others who are experiencing what they went through.