

## FINDING A SPONSOR IN SAA

Working with a sponsor is a vital aspect of SAA recovery. About 60% of SAA members found a sponsor within the first 90 days (2019 Membership Survey). Especially since many addicts may live in areas where there are few face-to-face meetings, or they are not able to attend for other reasons, how can a person go about finding a sponsor? And what about women, who make up just less than 10% of our fellowship? Finding a sponsor can be a real challenge. The same holds true for those who may be members of the LGBT community, and who wish to find someone who can relate to their particular life experience. These are all real challenges, but not barriers to recovery!

### Attend Face-to-Face Groups

Face-to-face groups offer a powerful way to break down our isolation and find acceptance and support. Finding a group nearby can be as easy as looking on the SAA website, [SAA-Recovery.org](https://SAA-Recovery.org), under “[Find a Meeting](#)” in the menu. Doing a web search for SAA in your area may also reveal an active Intergroup with local information on groups and events. When you come to a group, be sure to introduce yourself as a newcomer, and make it known you are looking for a sponsor. Reaching out to a group contact member beforehand may be helpful in this. Stick around for fellowship and get to know people there. Ask about their recovery and how long they have been in the program. Recovery comes in lots of different shapes and sizes. The path is wide enough for everyone, so resist the temptation to only connect with someone who is just like you or has the same behaviors. We benefit from our diversity and our strength of unit comes from the 12 steps and 12 traditions: from spiritual principles, not from individual personalities.

### Try Telemeetings

Especially since the global pandemic response, telemeetings have become vital to the recovery of many. The value of telemeetings should not be easily dismissed just because we prefer face-to-face contact. For many, this mode of fellowship is the only option! Deep and meaningful connections can be developed over the phone, and it has always been a key part of 12-step recovery. Having meetings over the phone, while it may take some getting used to, is a logical and practical means of staying connected to our SAA community of support. Use the “Find a Meeting” feature on [SAA-Recovery.org](https://SAA-Recovery.org) and filter by telemeetings, or go to the website maintained by the SAA Telemeeting Intergroup, [SAATalk.Info](https://SAATalk.Info). Telemeetings are widely available, and focus on different areas – men only, women only, open meetings, LGBT, intimacy and sexual avoidants, sex and love addiction, and more! Try different meetings and be sure to identify yourself as new and looking for a sponsor. Ask questions, get numbers and follow up with those who are demonstrating experience and success in recovery. While only 15% of those who responded to the 2019 survey said they sponsored long distance, this is a form of sponsorship that can be remarkably effective and rewarding to both the sponsor and the sponsee.

### What Do I Look for In a Sponsor?

“A sponsor is an SAA member who is sexually sober. A sponsor is experienced in service, attends meetings regularly, and also works with a sponsor. A sponsor has worked through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions sufficiently to be able to help another addict along the way... A sponsor is a member just like you – a sex addict who knows what addictive sexual behavior is and can speak to another addict with the authenticity of experience. A sponsor can level with you. A sponsor can listen to you with understanding and neutrality. A sponsor knows that sex addiction is a chronic condition that needs the

daily remedy of a program and wants to offer it to you – regardless of what your behaviors have been.” – [SAA booklet, Getting a Sponsor](#)

Women can find support from the ISO Women’s Outreach Committee by emailing [Grace@saa-recovery.org](mailto:Grace@saa-recovery.org). Learn more at [SAA-Recovery.org](#) under the menu item “Women.” Attending women-only meetings, telemeetings or face-to-face is a good way to make known you are looking for a sponsor. Gay men with good recovery experience can also make “safe” sponsor alternatives.

For those in the LGBT community, finding a sponsor may mean reaching out to allies. The ISO of SAA also has an LGBT Outreach committee which maintains a list of LGBT-friendly sponsors. You can contact them for more information on LGBT meetings and ask about sponsors at [LGBT@SAA-Recovery.org](mailto:LGBT@SAA-Recovery.org).

### **What If I Cannot Find a Sponsor Right Away?**

Nothing prevents you from beginning your journey in recovery TODAY! Use the avenues above to find someone who is willing to get started with you – a temporary sponsor. Maybe that person has only worked some of the steps so far, or just one, but begin with defining your circles with someone who has done this before with a sponsor and start working on your first step. Read all the SAA program literature you can and make meetings regularly. Often, finding a sponsor is a matter of making opportunities for your Higher Power to put someone in your path.

It is our hope and intention that whenever anyone reaches out for help, the hand of SAA will always be there. Keep coming back, work the steps with a sponsor, and you can find relief from addictive behaviors and a life worth living – because you are worth it!