

Al-Anon Area 34

Southern Nevada
Al-Anon Information Service

Sponsorship Workshop
Toolkit

"Everything You Wanted to Know about
Sponsorship...
But Were Afraid to Ask"

Everything You Wanted to Know About
Sponsorship...
But Were Afraid to Ask

A workshop sponsored by Southern Nevada Al-Anon Information Service (AIS)

January 24, 2009
12:30 pm to 3:00 pm
at the
Reformation Lutheran Church
580 E. Saint Louis Avenue
Las Vegas, Nevada 89104

Fun

**Speaker Panel
& Workshops**

My sponsor is
an important
part of my
recovery!

Being a sponsor has
helped me
understand the
program so much

Fellowship

Light snacks
and water
will be
provided.



For more
information,
contact:
Donna T. at
242-6114

Logistics:

Set-up and Materials Needed

- ◆ Butcher paper for table coverings (able to write on them)
- ◆ Markers
- ◆ Facilitator Guides
- ◆ Evaluation Sheets
- ◆ Note Paper
- ◆ Pencils
- ◆ Bell
- ◆ Table Tents with Topic
- ◆ Name Tags
- ◆ Collection box for Evaluations
- ◆ *Sponsorship, What's It All About* (P-31) pamphlets – one for every participant (50)
- ◆ Handouts on sponsorship from Al-Anon Web site (pdf files: Sponsorship 1967 Conference Digest; Bill's Talk – Opening Dinner at Al-Anon WSC April 19, 1967; Sponsorship – Lois W., 1967 Conference Digest)

Refreshments

- ◆ Coffee
- ◆ Bottled Water
- ◆ Vegetable Trays with Dip
- ◆ Cheese
- ◆ Crackers
- ◆ Paper Plates
- ◆ Napkins
- ◆ Hot Beverage Cups

Cover discussion tables with butcher paper. Participants are encouraged to write down thoughts, key points, suggestions, etc. on the paper. These are collated and provided in a summary of the workshop.

Place markers, table tents and corresponding Facilitator Guide on tables.

Locate sign-in sheet, Evaluations, note paper, and pencils on a table close to entrance.

Table on side of room for food and beverages.

“Everything You Wanted to Know about Sponsorship...But Were Afraid to Ask”

AIS Sponsorship Workshop
January 24, 2009

Agenda (used by committee)

Welcome and Serenity Prayer

Overview of Workshop

Reading from *2006-2009 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* – “Sponsorship” (p 51-2)

“Sponsorship is a mutual and confidential sharing between two Al-Anon or Alateen members. A Sponsor is someone with whom a member can discuss personal problems or questions; someone who willing shares the experience, strength, and hope of the Al-Anon/Alateen program.” (From *Sponsorship, What It’s All About*, P-31)

After a period of time new members will want to choose a personal Sponsor with whom they can identify. Members can encourage newcomers to find a Sponsor by sharing that Sponsors provide guidance; however Sponsors do not direct or give advice. The new member may have discussed problems with the contact before coming to meetings. This contact may or may not be asked to continue as a Sponsor; however, neither a contact nor a newly chosen Sponsor should be used as a substitute for a meeting.”

Introduction and Sharing by Speakers (5 – 7 minutes on their experience, strength, and hope)

Roz – Being a Sponsor

Kim – Being sponsored

Logistics of Breakout Topics

- Four topics each facilitated by a member of Al-Anon
- Thirty minutes to share, discuss
- Opportunity to make notes on insights, key points by writing on paper table cover (These will be used to create a summary of the workshop)
- Warning at 25 minutes to begin to wrap up sharings
- Bell at 30 minutes
- Participants may choose to move to another topic or remain for another 30 minutes at the same topic

*Feel free to get up to get food, beverage, or use the facilities

Wrap up

- Participants will have opportunity to share if time remains
- Read from *How Al-Anon Works*, final paragraph on sponsorship:
“Sponsors cannot make the Al-Anon program work for others. Each of us, Sponsor and sponsored alike, must apply the Al-Anon Steps, principles, and practices ourselves. And even the most dedicated Sponsor cannot be available all the time. It is important to remember that a Sponsor is only one of the many voices in Al-Anon. If help is not available in the first place we look, it is our responsibility to reach out to other members. Our needs are important. It is up to us to make sure they are met.” (p 38)

Closing – Al-Anon Declaration

Brief Agenda provided to participants:

Welcome and Serenity Prayer

Overview of Workshop

Reading from Service Manual – “Sponsorship” (p 51-2)

Introduction of Speakers (5 – 7 minutes on their experience, strength, and hope)

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Logistics of Breakout Topics

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Closing – Al-Anon Declaration

Evaluation sheet used for feedback:

Everything You Wanted to Know About
Sponsorship...But Were Afraid to Ask

A workshop sponsored by Southern Nevada Al-Anon Information Service (AIS)

Please help us to present quality workshops in the future with your feedback on this event.

	Yes	No
I found the location (Reformation Lutheran Church) convenient. <i>Comment:</i>		
I found the time (12:30 pm to 3:00 pm) convenient. <i>Comment:</i>		
The workshop met my expectations. <i>Comment:</i>		
I would like to help with future workshops. <i>Contact information:</i>		

Suggestions for improvement:

Suggestions for future workshops:

Volunteers are recruited to facilitate discussion around each topic, available at different tables. If the group is large, multiple tables can be made available for the same topic. Each volunteer receives a *Facilitator Guide* for the topic.

Topics:

1. How Do I Know I'm Ready to be a Sponsor?
 2. How Do I Find and Get a Sponsor?
 3. What if I Need to End or Change the Sponsor Relationship?
 4. What are the Commitments of the Sponsor and sponsored?
-

Table Tents:

How do I know I'm
ready to be a Sponsor?

How do I know I'm
ready to be a Sponsor?

How do I find and get a
Sponsor?

How do I find and get a
Sponsor?

What if I need to end or
change the Sponsor
relationship?

What if I need to end or
change the Sponsor
relationship?

What are the
commitments of the
sponsor and sponsored?

What are the
commitments of the
sponsor and sponsored?

Facilitator Guide – How Do I Know I’m Ready to be a Sponsor?

Welcome members

Remind them they are welcome to make comments on the paper table cover for use in summary of workshop

Read highlighted section from pamphlet *Sponsorship, What It's All About* (P-31)

WHEN AM I READY TO SPONSOR?

“Whenever we are ready to give a warm welcome and an understanding heart to another, we are ready to be a Sponsor.

Many members feel it is easier to sponsor after making headway in addressing our own problems. Understanding and patience, coupled with a willingness to devote time and caring to a special relationship, are equally important.

Many of us feel ready to become Sponsors when our attitude toward the problems that brought us to Al-Anon or Alateen has changed from one of anxiety and hopelessness to one of faith and assurance.” (p 7)

Open to sharing and discussion

Facilitator Guide – How Do I Find and Get a Sponsor?

Welcome members

Remind them they are welcome to make comments on the paper table cover for use in summary of workshop

Read highlighted section from pamphlet *Sponsorship, What It's All About* (P-31)

HOW DO I CHOOSE A SPONSOR?

“Asking someone to be our Sponsor is part of our own personal recovery in Al-Anon or Alateen. Being too shy or too proud to do so could mean the difference between finding a new life in the program or returning to misery and loneliness. We look for someone who ‘has what we want’ and with whom we feel comfortable. It helps to choose someone who is committed to using the program in their own life. Ultimately, a Sponsor relationship is one of choice; we feel comfortable with a particular member, and ask that person to act as a Sponsor.

‘Until I had the guidance of a Sponsor I remained confused and forever struggling with everyday problems,’ said one member. ‘My real spiritual growth only began after I humbled myself enough to request the special help of a Sponsor.’” (p 5)

Open to sharing and discussion

Facilitator Guide – What if I Need to End or Change the Sponsor Relationship?

Welcome members

Remind them they are welcome to make comments on the paper table cover for use in summary of workshop

Read highlighted section from pamphlet *Sponsorship, What It's All About* (P-31)

WHAT IF I NEED TO END THE SPONSOR RELATIONSHIP?

“Sometimes a Sponsor may feel the need to let a member go, but if so, the situation can be approached with honesty and love. Taking full responsibility, one Sponsor put it this way, ‘I have decided that I am no longer able to help you. For your own sake as well as mine, I believe you should choose another Sponsor.’ The member was then given suggestions and encouragement in selecting a more suitable Sponsor.

Most relationships between Sponsor and sponsored turn into friendships that do not really end at any definite point. A successful sponsor relationship creates a special bond, remembered gratefully on both sides, even if the two are no longer close.” (p 11)

MAY I CHANGE SPONSORS?

“We are free to select a different Sponsor at any time, especially if we think another person may be more helpful to our growth in the program.” (p 5)

Open to sharing and discussion

Facilitator Guide – What Are the Commitments of the Sponsor and sponsored?

Welcome members

Remind them they are welcome to make comments on the paper table cover for use in summary of workshop

Read highlighted section from pamphlet *Sponsorship, What It's All About* (P-31)

WHAT DOES MY SPONSOR EXPECT OF ME?

“In addition to mutual respect and consideration, Sponsors also may ask that we:

- Attend meetings regularly.
- Study Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature.
- Ask questions when they arise.
- Be willing to work the program as far as we are able.

Most Sponsors like to hear our accomplishments and joys as well as our problems and crises. They may suggest regular phone calls, even if it is just to say, “Hi! I’m fine today.” The frequency of contact with our Sponsors is a matter of mutual choice. The important thing is not how often we are in touch but that we are.

Working with a Sponsor helps us to understand the critical importance of confidentiality in sharing within the group or member-to-member. Sponsors expect those they sponsor to respect anonymity and keep confidences too. As the Al-Anon/Alateen Suggested Welcome says: ‘Anonymity is an important principle of the Al-Anon/Alateen program. Everything that is said here, must be held in confidence. Only in this way can we feel free to say what is in our minds and hearts, for this is how we help one another in Al-Anon/Alateen.’” (p 6)

WHAT IS A SPONSOR’S COMMITMENT?

“The Sponsor’s commitment is an individual matter and varies greatly. It is humanly impossible to be available all the time. A caring Sponsor will encourage sponsees to seek out other members and to have other telephone numbers.

Most Sponsors try to let their sponsees know if they will be away for a period of time, reminding them that it is not a Sponsor but the entire program (The Twelve Steps, slogans, Serenity Prayer, a Higher Power) that gives us our serenity. There are other resources: meetings, Al-Anon and Alateen literature, telephone and personal contact with other members. No one is alone if they’ve come to believe in a Power greater than themselves.

Said one Sponsor, ‘I am not effective when I allow myself to be used by anyone I sponsor. This creates resentments within me, and my growth is hindered. It also hinders the growth of the member.’

A Sponsor is involved but not entangled with the member. The same principles we learned to use with the alcoholic can be used just as effectively in this situation: ‘Live and Let Live,’ ‘Let Go and Let God.’

If the person one sponsors rejects help, there is little to be done, except to assure the individual of a willingness to help, if and when it is desired. When we are strong in our own program, anger or rejection from a sponsee can be weathered without risk to ourselves or the relationship.” (p 10-11)

Open to sharing and discussion