

CONSCIOUS CONTACT

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

VOL 26 NO 5



Sponsorship Reflections, Part Two

Our series on sponsorship continues with reactions to the April Issue's submissions.

A sponsor is a more experienced member who helps guide someone newer through recovery. Their role isn't formal or professional –it's a voluntary, peer-based relationship built on shared experience.

A sponsor typically:

1. Guides a sponsee through the twelve steps
2. Offers support and accountability
3. Shares lived experience
4. Encourages meeting attendance and involvement
5. Provides honest feedback
6. Models sobriety

A sponsor is not a therapist, doctor or authority figure. They don't control a sponsee's decisions –they support a sponsee in making their own decisions.

AI summary on the role of a sponsor – submitted by Karl M.

Sponsorship is important to my sobriety. The first person I asked to sponsor me said he had too many sponsees and that I should ask someone else. Being too insecure and disappointed, I failed to ask anyone else.

I did continue to attend meetings and grow in the program by being willing and attentive. A while later, I was asked to join a men's wanderers group. After attending the men's meeting, I was assigned a sponsor. Unfortunately, my assigned sponsor had a relapse; he has since rejoined A.A. and is sober. As soon as I heard of my sponsor's relapse, I asked another member of the wanderers group to sponsor me.

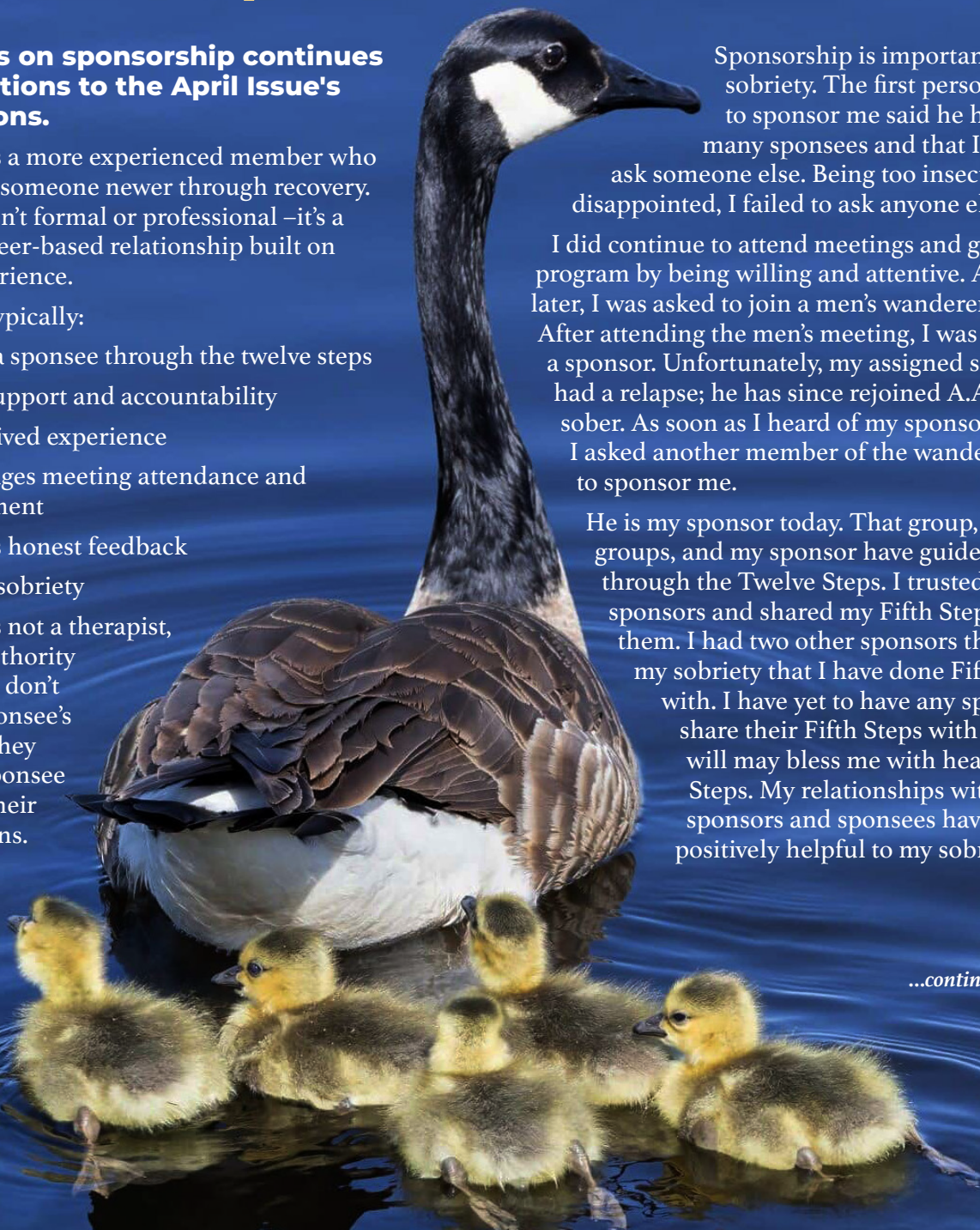
He is my sponsor today. That group, other groups, and my sponsor have guided me through the Twelve Steps. I trusted my sponsors and shared my Fifth Step with them. I had two other sponsors throughout my sobriety that I have done Fifth Steps with. I have yet to have any sponsees share their Fifth Steps with me. God's will may bless me with hearing Fifth Steps. My relationships with all sponsors and sponsees have been positively helpful to my sobriety.

-Anonymous

...continued on page 3

IN THIS ISSUE

Events	2	Treatment Meetings	2	Find Your Sponsor	3
Meeting Spotlights	2	6th Step, Tradition, & Concept	2	D10 Updates / Contacts & Info	4



Events

SATURDAY JUNE 6TH

Answering Service Workshop EDI CLUB

18 W. Streamwood Blvd., Streamwood, IL
Time 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
*Learn about Google Voice, how to answer calls,
and how to proceed after a call.*

SATURDAY, JUNE 27TH

Serenity House Summer BBQ SERENITY HOUSE

1103 Park Avenue, Libertyville, IL
Time 12:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Suggested donation \$5.00
Open to All! Bring the kids!
Raffle, music, games, karaoke!
*Sign up at Serenity House to share an appetizer,
side or dessert.*

SUNDAY, JUNE 28TH

District 12 Picnic in the Park GREEN BELT FOREST PRESERVE – SHELTER B

1110 Green Bay Road, North Chicago, IL
Time 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Bring a dish or dessert to share.

JULY 10-12TH

Beyond Awakening Retreat for people living the 12th steps

VILLA DESIDERATA

3015 N. Bayview Lane, McHenry, IL

WHO

Men & women with a year or more of sobriety,
have worked all 12 steps, open to
having a deeper spiritual experience

WHAT

3 days/2nights, 6 catered meals,
retreat journal, experiential
immersion, lifelong connections

VILLAGE DESIDERATA

Cost through May 31st \$185.00

Cost from June 1st through June 30th

(until sold out) \$225.00

Registration. www.gobeyondawakening.com



JULY 17-19TH

2026 Summer 12 Step Closed Co-Ed Retreat

BENET LAKE RETREAT CENTER

12605 224th Avenue, Benet Lake, WI

Cost...\$250.00 (includes meals)

Availability & payment info...Susan M. 630-615-0316

Other questions & partial scholarship requests...

Debbi M. 630-290-4838

Upcoming Events

DETAILS TO FOLLOW IN UPCOMING ISSUES

- D10 Summer Picnic August 9th
- 2026 Illinois
State Conference August 21st-23rd
- ARC Summer Picnic September 13th
- D10 Fall Breakfast. October 11th
- Area 20 2026
Big Book Conference October 17th
- 35th Annual We Are
Not Saints Convention January 15-18th 2027

Meeting Spotlights

Antioch Recovery Club Open Speaker Meeting

466 W. IL Rte 173, Antioch, IL

June 13th Daniel A.

Doors/Fire 6:30 p.m., Speaker 7:00 p.m.

June 27th Bonnie S.

Doors 5:30 p.m., Speaker 6:00 p.m.

6/13 7/11 8/8 9/12 10/10

Bonfire Speaker Meetings

ANTIOCH RECOVERY CLUB

466 W. IL Rte 173, Antioch, IL

Fire 6:30 p.m.

Speakers. 7:00 p.m.

Ice cream social! Bring a chair!

Treatment Meetings

Gateway – Lake Villa – Fridays

Men . . . 7:00-8:00 p.m. (MUST be on list to attend)

Women 7:00-8:00 p.m.

ATP – Waukegan – Co-ed

Mondays & Fridays 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturdays 10:00 a.m.

WRS – Vernon Hills – Women

Thursdays 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Treatment Monthly Workshop

3RD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:00 P.M.

ID 994 296 7947

Password redbook (all lowercase)

Contact Area 20 Treatment Chair

Kevin A bbkevin8@gmail.com, 224-201-8978

Step 6:

Were entirely ready
to have God remove
all these defects of
character.

Tradition 6:

An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance,
or lend the A.A. name to any related facility
or outside enterprise, lest problems of
money, property, and prestige divert us
from our primary purpose.

Concept VI:

The Conference recognizes that
the chief initiative and active
responsibility in most world service
matters should be exercised by the
trustee members of the Conference
acting as the General Service Board.

Find Your Sponsor

Finding the right sponsor is an important decision that can significantly impact your recovery experience. *While there are guidelines and suggestions, the choice ultimately depends on personal compatibility and comfort.*

QUALITIES TO LOOK FOR

- **Solid Sobriety:** Has substantial continuous sobriety (often suggested minimum of one year)
- **Active Program:** Regularly attends meetings and works their own program
- **Step Experience:** Has worked all Twelve Steps and continues to practice them
- **Availability:** Has time and willingness to commit to the relationship
- **Same Gender:** Traditionally recommended to avoid romantic complications
- **Compatibility:** Someone you feel comfortable talking with honestly
- **Program Knowledge:** Understands A.A. literature and principles well
- **Humility:** Recognizes they're still learning and growing in recovery

WHERE TO FIND SPONSORS

The best place to find a sponsor is at A.A. meetings. Listen to people share, observe who has what you want in recovery, and notice who demonstrates the principles you'd like to develop. Many meetings have sponsor lists or can connect newcomers with potential sponsors.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

Don't rush the decision. Attend meetings regularly, get to know various members, and listen to their shares. Consider asking someone to be a temporary sponsor while you decide, or request guidance from multiple people as you learn about the program. The relationship can always be changed if it's not working well.

MAKING THE ASK

When you've identified someone you'd like as a sponsor, **simply ask them privately after a meeting or call them.** Most experienced members are honored to be asked and will either accept or help you find someone else if they're not available. Remember that being turned down isn't personal—it may simply be about their current capacity.

I appreciated the honesty and humility of Elizabeth's submission in April's issue regarding why she chose her sponsor. It says a lot about where she is at and what she is willing to do to stay sober. It's these kind of decisions, strung together, that lead to a better way of living.

I often encounter others who resent the idea of having a sponsor, or resist working the steps the way they're outlined in the book. I pray they find the surrender Elizabeth found—without which, sobriety is out of reach. This illness is two-fold. We are sorely mistaken if we think we can eliminate the drink but avoid the total, mental rearrangement needed to sustain us moving forward. Remember, we will always have the allergy of the body, so we need to do something about our mind. One more thing... I hope others who are reluctant to get a sponsor will read her thoughts and think again.

-Katie D.

I enjoyed Tim's emphasis on sponsorship being about guiding someone through the Steps and into a genuine spiritual solution, not creating a system of control. The point that the Big Book is the foundation—not personal opinions, rehab culture, or unofficial “rules”—comes through clearly. A sponsor's role is to share experience, point people toward a Higher Power, and remain available as life continues, not to manage every decision a sponsee makes. I also think the warning about adding requirements that aren't in the program is important. Practices like forcing arbitrary timelines, demanding excessive reporting, or removing support over invented rules can distract from the actual purpose of recovery: spiritual growth, honesty, inventory, amends, prayer, and helping others. The reminder that “working the steps will change them, not you” is a strong and humbling perspective on what sponsorship is supposed to be.

At the same time, I can understand why some sponsors introduce structure or accountability, especially with newcomers who may be coming out of chaos and need consistency early on.

Things like regular meetings, check-ins, or avoiding major distractions can sometimes be helpful tools, even if they are not the program itself. The key distinction, though, is whether those suggestions support the Steps or replace them. When guidance turns into control, shame, or withholding help, it risks pushing people away from recovery instead of toward it. Your point about “staying in our lane” really speaks to balance: sponsors can share what worked for them, encourage discipline and honesty, and offer support, but they can't become someone's Higher Power or force transformation. The message has to stay centered on the spiritual awakening described in the Big Book and on passing that message forward with humility and care.

- Paul W.

4 The Twelve Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — 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 alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Upcoming District Meeting: Sunday, June 28th

St. Gilbert Catholic Church Grayslake, IL
5:30 p.m. Traditions MTG 6:00 p.m. Hybrid MTG

Submissions due: Friday, June 19th

1. Go to district10nia.org. 2. Click "District Services and Committees", then "Newsletter". 3. Provide name, email or phone, in case of questions. 4. Type/Paste your content. Click "Select". That's it! Any A.A. may contribute.

Websites district10nia.org aa.org aa-nia.org aagrapevine.org

District 10 P.O. Box 854, Libertyville, IL 60048

Northern Illinois Area 20 7th Traditions Contributions

Payable to: NIA Ltd. P.O. Box 95174 Palatine, IL 60095

General Service Office

James A. Farley Station, P.O. Box 2407 New York, NY 10163

aa.org/aa-contributions-self-support

Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the opinions of A.A., NIA, District 10 or Conscious Contact volunteers.

D10 Updates

There are six (6) open positions that need to be filled.

If you are interested in learning more about a position, please join us at the next D10 meeting.

Looking to serve on the

D10 committee? Information on duties and responsibilities for committees can be found here: district10nia.org/committees/

D10 contributions from 2/18/26 to 3/22/26: **\$563.98**

Looking for D10 meeting minutes?

Visit <https://district10nia.org/minutes/>

Looking for delegate and/or Area 20 committee reports, updates and agendas?

Visit aa-nia.org/delegate/ and aa-nia.org/agendas/

I AM RESPONSIBLE,

when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there. And for that:

I AM RESPONSIBLE.

Detox Facility Available

Gateway Foundation in Lake Villa

Admission hours:

Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Sat. 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

For bed availability 847-356-8205 X.3391

Publicize an Upcoming District Event:

district10nia.org/publicize-an-upcoming-district-10-event/

Heard something powerful at your last meeting?

If a share hit home and could lift others too, nudge that member to send it our way! Our newsletter thrives on the strength of your stories. **newsletter@district10nia.org**

NEW D10 Zoom Meeting

ID 861 1954 7045
PW DISTRICT10