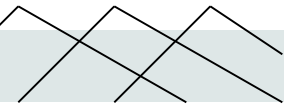


SOUND CURRENCY



Puget Sound Debtors Anonymous Newsletter

Fall Issue 2006

ON SPONSORSHIP

One of the most important tools that we have in DA is sponsorship. **There** is a special relationship between a sponsee and a sponsor. One of the first questions people ask is when are you ready to sponsor. There are no set answers to this and some feel you should wait until you have worked all 12 steps and have at least 90 days of abstinence. I agree with the 90 days requirement because you can't take someone someplace you haven't been. However, I suggest to my sponsees that they only need to be one step ahead of whoever they are sponsoring.

I want to talk about being a temporary sponsor first. What this means is that you can sponsor someone briefly to help them learn how DA works. In this role, you may go to meetings with your temporary sponsee, help them with their first PRG, make sure they get the literature that is most pertinent, and be available by phone to offer support. Then when they have a basic understanding of what DA is all about you can help them find a permanent sponsor. I have temporarily sponsored 6 people this year and helped four of them find sponsors. The other two I kept as my own because I had an opening.

The first thing a sponsor should do with a sponsee is establish what the boundaries and expectations are for each of your roles. As a sponsor I tell my sponsees when they can call and if they need to call every day in the beginning I am fine with it. For some this may only be once a week so it depends on where they are in their program. I do not normally take calls after 8:00 P.M. during the week because that is time set aside for my family. I try to return phone calls the same day or at the very latest within the next 24 hours. It is important to make yourself available to your sponsees. In terms of calling it is the responsibility of the sponsee to call me. If they want what I have, they have to demonstrate this by taking the initiative to call. Once in a while I do call them to see how they are doing.

To me the main purpose of a sponsor is to take your sponsees through the steps. There are a number of different ways to do this and I have several I use depending on what they are looking for. They are all based on the format in the Big Book. I also have them read certain DA literature that relates to the steps such as the 12 step brochure, spirituality and vision. In terms of meeting with your sponsee I try to do this in person whenever I can but I also use the phone and e-mail to maintain contact. Some of the people I sponsor are long distance and we use the phone and e-mail primarily and this works well. Helping a sponsee work the steps, use the tools in DA, and getting them more involved in service is very gratifying. It is a wonderful feeling to plant seeds in your sponsees and to see the promises fulfilled in their lives.

Willie W.

From the Co-Chairs...

It has been a very active summer for Intergroup and for DA in the Puget Sound/Washington area. The groups continue to grow with newcomers arriving all the time. There have been several new meetings that have started in the area. In terms of attendance there was some decline in numbers over the summer but not as much as in previous years.

There was a workshop on Women's Empowerment issues focusing on the steps in June which was very successful. There were about 30 participants.

Fifteen DA members started out participating in 90 meetings in 90 days and 10 were able to achieve their goal. This also included working the steps or dealing with a DA issues such as underearning or clarifying their vision. A t-shirt was given to each member which says 90 meetings in 90 days and happy, joyous and free on the back. Participants reported very powerful experiences, saying that the 90 in 90 enriched their programs immensely. Another group will have the opportunity to do this next year.

In July there was a picnic at Lincoln Park and about 15 who attended. The theme was being happy, joyous and free. There was a meeting and great fellowship. A good time was had by all. The PRG list has been updated and is available. There has been quite a bit of discussion about its format but right now there are no changes being made. It will be updated on a quarterly basis from now on.

A bright green flyer was also developed as a DA outreach tool to other 12-step fellowships and other organizations, describing the signs of a compulsive debtor with a meeting list on the back. Hundreds of these flyers have been circulated in the community as a way to carry the message. **(con't on next page)**

From the Co chairs - con't

The world service conference (WSC) in San Diego was attended by four members this year. They brought back lots of resources that will help all of our meetings. WSC reinforced the primary purpose of DA which is not to debt one day at a time. New literature is also coming out. There are a number of opportunities for anyone to do service, such as writing a daily meditation for the meditation book which will be coming out in the near future.

If you want someone to come and speak about the World Service Conference at your group just contact Willie W. and arrangements will be made.

Your trusted servants.

Willie W. and Staci S.

VISIONS EVENT SURVEY

WA Intergroup is planning a Visions Training in January '07. Please complete the following questions and e-mail them to Willie W. @ cankuluta4@aol.com. Your input is important in helping us decide on the format & location. PLEASE ANSWER CLEARLY.

1. I would be available on the following weekends
JAN. 12-14 _____ JAN. 19-21 _____ JAN. 26-28 _____

2. My first choice is _____.

3. I prefer not to come on Friday Night _____.

4. I would like a possibility of a Saturday only option _____.

5. With regards to location:

_____ I prefer to have the meeting at Daybreak Star and go home each night. (\$50.00 approximate cost, convenient to home, less comprehensive program)

_____ I prefer a retreat setting with overnight housing included (\$125.00 approximate cost with longer program and possibility for completing more complete vision)

UPCOMING DA EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Gratitude Potluck and Meeting, 11/15, 5:15 All Saints Church – 2nd & Blaine top of Queen Anne
Sponsored by Wednesday Night Visions Meeting

How to Survive the Holidays Solvently 11/18 10 am, Chapel in the Market (PIKE PLACE)
during the regular Sat am DA Meeting

Visions Retreat – January '07. Time and Location TBA The retreat will be over a weekend. If you want to get clarity about your vision or you want to find what you need to do to pursue your vision - this workshop is for you. Details and a flyer will be coming out this month.

Give your input on this workshop by filling out and e-mailing the survey questions in this newsletter.

Underearning Workshop - February '07- Details TBA. The workshop is tentatively planned for a half a day and on a Sunday. The workshop will include tools on how to deal with being an underearner, and tools for how to earn what you deserve.

Step Retreat - March '07 towards the end of the month, details TBA. This is a powerful life changing event and it will be for those who have not worked the steps in DA previously. Up to 15 will be able to participate. Location and details will be forthcoming.

PRG marathon - Jan. '07 - will be held after the first of the year. It will be sponsored by the Thursday night BDA group. Stay tuned for topics and times.

A MEMBER Talks about *SPONSORSHIP IN DA – Steps One through Three*

The following article is taken from notes on the Sponsorship Workshop from last month. There was a panel discussion and several speakers covered working the steps with their sponsees.)

We have more abundance than we know in Seattle. On October 14th at Daybreak Star Center a group of Debtors Anonymous members listened to experienced sponsors share their experience, strength and hope about sponsorship in D.A. Why was this workshop necessary? In part it is because when the meeting chairperson says, “Raise your hand if you are willing to be a sponsor” few or, more commonly, no hands are raised. In case anyone was thinking they needed guidance before they could sponsor, the workshop offered the guidance. This article attempts to give you a taste of such guidance, presented by various speakers, in hopes that you will keep coming back for more.

To preface this discussion: Since some people balk at the archaic language in the A.A. Big Book, the first speaker said that trying to re-word the language would lead to arguments and would dilute the message. Setting aside prejudice about the language allows us to recover from what can be life-threatening circumstances. So if I don't like the style of the life ring thrown to me when I'm drowning, do I insist on waiting for a more contemporary life ring?

The first speaker talked about Steps 1 through 3. She began by talking about the role of the sponsor; the sponsor is not a therapist or friend or parent and does not give advice – the sponsor takes the sponsee through the twelve steps, preferably through the A.A. Big Book which the sponsee buys with her own money. At their first meeting the sponsor finds out whether the sponsee is willing to do whatever it takes to get recovery. If they are, then she asks her to read the Doctor's Opinion, because money has an emotional trigger that is similar to the allergic reaction to alcohol – “If only I can use my credit card, I'll feel okay.” There can be a vicious cycle of overscheduling, deprivation, overspending, and debting. Over time the sponsor asks the sponsee to read from the beginning through page 88 (the end of Step 11) in the Big Book, as well as Step 1 in the A.A. 12 and 12 and underline and write about passages that have personal meaning for her.

Then when the two meet to start going through the Big Book the sponsor points out important passages and asks, “How has this happened in your life? What is your addictive pattern and what consequences have you lived through?” Find out what her bottom line behaviors are besides not debting; for example, taking a job that does not pay her bills. If the sponsee realizes that self-knowledge won't fix the problem and recognizes her powerlessness, she has a chance to get well. The sponsor will need to gauge whether or not the sponsee is ready to move on to the following steps. At any given point the sponsor may ask, “Are you willing to do whatever it takes to get recovery?”

For Step 2, the sponsor begins with the Set Aside Prayer: “God, please help me to set aside everything I think I know about myself, my disease, these steps, and especially You, for an open mind and a new experience with myself, my disease, these steps, and especially You.” Tell the sponsee that the main purpose of the Big Book is to help her find a Higher Power. Ask the sponsee to read We Agnostics and Appendix II and Step 2 in the A.A. 12 and 12 and write about her concept of a Higher Power. Then ask her, “What is your resistance? Write and pray about where you resist a Higher Power.” Page 46 mentions that we lay aside prejudice about his topic. The important question found on page 47 says, “Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?” at Step 3.

It is often helpful for the sponsor to share her experience with this (as with every) Step and to offer a ritual of some kind, such as the Reveal Prayer: “As I reveal myself to you, God, please reveal yourself to me. As I face the truth, show me the light so I may see the way.” We remember that the realm of the spirit is open to those who seek, even if they don't find specific answers right away.

For Step 3 ask the sponsee to read Step 3 in the A.A. 12 and 12. Write what you agree with, what you disagree with, what you don't understand, what you resist, and what you have to gain by taking this step. Identifying my unwillingness helps me to deal with hard times. Together the sponsor and the sponsee read page 58 How It Works through the a,b,c on page 60. Being convinced, we were at Step 3.

Sponsorship report con't on next page

Sponsorship - Our will that we turn over is our thoughts, and our life that we turn over is the sum of our actions. The sponsor and sponsee say the third step prayer (on page 63) together and read the third step promises in the first paragraph on page 63, ending with "As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow, or the hereafter. We were reborn."

- Maggie K.

**COME AND PARTICIPATE!
Puget Sound Debtors Anonymous Intergroup**

Meets on the second Saturday of each month at 10am..

Intergroup now meets at Daybreak Star Conference Center, Discovery Park, 3801 W Government Way, Seattle

All DA members are encouraged to attend

**CONTACT TELEPHONE #'s:
206-903-9463
OR
1-800-562-1240
WA ONLY**

Submission Guidelines:

Sound Currency welcomes sharing experience, strength, and hope. Our next issue due out in February and will focus on **VISIONING**

Please send submissions of up to 300 words to newsletter@dawashstate.org

Submissions must be received by January 15th. Articles may be edited to fit.

90 Meetings In 90 Days: A Member Shares How It Was

I loved, resisted, resented and finally fully appreciated going through the 90 meetings in 90 days process. As usual, at first I was enthusiastic, looking forward to accountability and moving quicker through my vagueness and confusion in my life, especially around my relationship with money. I would recommend this process to anyone who wants to get to clarity sooner rather than later on what is holding each one of back from fully enjoying our lives.

Thank goodness for the DA phone meetings, which I happily discovered in the 90 and 90. What a great group of people calling in from all over the world to declare their earnest attempts towards sobriety and their visions. I feel this is the best step I've taken in my DA recovery program. It really showed me how isolated I still was in my program now in my 7th year in recovery. Though I had been attending meetings and giving and getting PRGs, I still felt something lacking in my efforts. Since the 90 and 90, I'm in the process of going through the steps, again, have a steady PRG group that meets twice a month, and am doing more service. I still need to pick up the phone more! Ultimately, I am wanting to give back to the DA community in Seattle by helping to establish a Visions group that meets weekly. (If you have any suggestions or ideas about where we could meet in a central area, please let me know!) Thank you all for continuing to seek and enjoy an abundant relationship with your Higher Power.

- Linda J.

Lighten Up

Signs that you are really broke:

- American Express calls and says "Leave home without it."
- You're formulating a plan to rob the food bank.
- You see your roommate as a large fried chicken in tennis shoes.