

The Service Sponsor

From *The A.A. Service Manual*, pages 9-10

The same impulse that drives some new people to try to “do A.A.” alone drives some new GSRs to try to “do general service” alone. There’s no reason to. In fact, there’s every reason not to.

As rewarding and enjoyable as general service can be, you might find yourself feeling overwhelmed at times. A service sponsor can make the difference between struggling in your service position and feeling a sense of purpose and accomplishment (and having some fun along the way!).

A service sponsor is there to answer your questions about your responsibilities, the structure of general service, the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts and how to apply them and making reports to your group. They can share experiences on managing time and expectations. Simply put, the service sponsor is there to help.

A service sponsor can be defined as one alcoholic who has made some progress in recovery and/or performance in service and who is willing to share this experience with another alcoholic who is just starting the journey.

Service sponsors often introduce newer members to the various aspects of service: setting up a meeting, working on committees, participating in conferences, etc. In this matter it is important for the service sponsor to help individuals understand the distinction between serving the needs of the Fellowship and meeting the personal needs of another group member.

The basis of all sponsorship is to lead by example. Service sponsors can impart to their sponsees the pleasure of involvement in the work of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is best done by stressing the spiritual nature of service work and by pointing out the usefulness of simple footwork and faith.

When considering potential service sponsors, experience of the Fellowship suggests looking for an A.A. member who is:

- Knowledgeable in A.A. history and the service structure
- Well acquainted with the various service positions and the principles and concepts that guide general service
- Familiar with the Twelve Traditions
- Familiar with The A.A. Service Manual and Twelve Concepts

To find someone with this kind of experience and knowledge, you might consider some of the people you meet or hear at area assemblies and service workshops. For additional information, there is a section on the service sponsor in the A.A. pamphlet “Questions & Answers on Sponsorship.”