

Advice for choosing a good sponsor?

Posted by MayEight - 18 May 2011 03:24

Hello.

I'm still quite early in my 12-step work.

It's kind of my second time around,

but this time I am more serious about really

working at the process.

Can you guys offer any advice

about how to go about choosing a good sponsor?

I don't think I should go with just anyone,

but maybe i am wrong.

Are there things worth asking prospective sponsors?

Thank you.

Daniel.

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Re: Advice for choosing a good sponsor?

Posted by silentbattle - 18 May 2011 03:30

I've never done the 12 steps, but really, the point of a sponsor is so that you have someone who's there if you need them. In that sense, as long as they're not a flake, it's good.

On the other hand, you also want someone that you connect well with, because you want someone that you'll want to stay in touch with, right?

That's how it would seem to me. I'd recommend asking Dov, though.

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Re: Advice for choosing a good sponsor?
Posted by MayEight - 18 May 2011 23:36

Anyone?

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Re: Advice for choosing a good sponsor?
Posted by lamAdam - 19 May 2011 23:36

I'm very early in as well, and I'm thankful that I got up the nerve to ask one of the guys at my meeting to sponsor me. What really helped me was when someone told me, "Every sponsor is a temporary sponsor." My current sponsor is not like me -- in fact, he's a galech (priest). I chose him largely because his "forms of acting out" sounded similar to mine. That's not necessarily the best way to choose a sponsor. I've also heard, "Choose someone who has what you want." A priest does not have a marriage, so my sponsor does not have one element of recovered life that I want desperately, so I know it's not perfect. But it's still a phone number, it's still someone who is guiding me through step one, it's still someone who tells me, "That's a fantasy, surrender it," and "That's the addiction talking. Don't fight it, surrender it," and "You're doing great. Don't forget that sobriety is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Don't forget to be aware of God," and that sort of thing.

Or the short answer: anyone who is ahead of you in the steps and who is willing to have a sponsee. Go for it! I remember I felt great just for asking my sponsor to sponsor me.

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Re: Advice for choosing a good sponsor?

Posted by Dov - 20 May 2011 01:30

My sponsor told me a simple rule: You choose a sponsor because you find ***a person who has some things that you want.***

Very simple.

My sponsor was a person who was very different than I. For one thing, he is not a Yid. And he acted out much more dramatic ways than I did. There were other differences, too.

But he was a sexaholic who really understood how insanely and absolutely *essential* my porn and my sexual escapades felt *to me* in my sickness, and understood in a *humble* way what it really is to be an addict.

No religious non-addicts I knew could do any better that show sincere, bleeding heart sympathy for me - but they all were people who saw themselves as standing above me, looking down at this pathetic man, and hoped to 'pull me out' somehow. They loved me and were truly sincere - but sincerity is not nearly enough...at least for me and for any of the other addicts I knew who were pathetic failures at living sober.

My sponsor was completely different. Here was a man who was sober for a few years, yet never once looked down on me. He could show me how stupid i was and how messed up my thinking was - yet *not once* did I ever get the impression that he felt ***any better*** than I! He knew that he did not deserve the credit for his sobriety and not himself. he was a loser at sobriety and a loser at acting out his lust - he could do neither. Boruch Hashem, *Hashem* granted him sobriety one day at a time. What *credit* is there to take for that? There is no madreiga in what you are given through a pure Chessed. Even if you have the wisdom and desperation to take hold of that Chessed with both hands - it was still a Chessed, and still is.

Here was a person who was well-adjusted to life, a job, a wife, and to his Higher Power. I had none of those.

Though I was frum, teaching mishnayos to ba'alei teshuvah, keeping Shabbos and loving learning, I was certainly not well-adjusted to **my** Higher Power! I had many problems with Him and felt certain that He had even more problems with me. The tip of that iceberg was that I was still absolutely convinced that sexually acting out was in my very best interest - that was why I felt I needed it so badly, wasn't it? Of course it was. I was truly screwed up.

I related poorly to **my** wife, because I had accumulated so many secrets from her that in my disease I have a double life, and my wife is the oblivious *evyon* at the door picking up the scraps of me I throw to her - the man she married to be her companion in this life. I kept so much truth from her because it would hurt her so much. The *guilt* is not my issue here, at all - my point is that *I just couldn't shtim*.

I related poorly to **my** job, in that I was abusing the computer at my work, came late to work because I slept late routinely to act out, and because in my gut, I resented the 'establishment' for setting limits on my pleasure by looking over my shoulder and suspecting me of being a *deviant* of some sort...heh-heh :-[

I chose a sponsor ***who had all my sickness*** - and yet ***had all the things I looked up to*** but knew in my heart I'd never ever be able to really have. To *fake* it - yes....but to really have? How could it be? I 'knew' that when I died they'd be maspid a different guy than the one on the box - the *real* me was such a deep, dark secret. So I chose a person who had all the things I didn't have, because of my disease.

Now I have no secrets, thanks to stating with my sponsor and having the love of all the other members of SA who are as sick as i am and are growing healthy one day at a time by Hashem's Chessed.

Hatzlocha! hashem will definitely help you every step of the way, and you are making real, painful efforts. Keep it going, brother!

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Re: Advice for choosing a good sponsor?

Posted by MayEight - 20 May 2011 02:52

Thank you, guys.

Today, I called a couple of AA's, who had their names on the Temporary Sponsor list at AA.

(It was either that, or go along with the cravings and urges i was having to go drink, use, look at lust-triggering images, etc.

But, I did that LAST week, last Thursday, when i was having cravings and urges...

So, I held onto the lesson I had been given then,

which was to choose recovery actions instead.)

Talking to these AA's,

being honest about what was happening in me,

and taking the responsibility to make the good choices,

at least strengthened my resolve

to make it to an SA meeting this evening,

my first in about six months.

Such is early recovery.

I state here that my goal

is to choose a sponsor,

temporary or otherwise,

AA or SA (I will eventually choose one each)

by the end of next week.

Thank you again, guys.

I wish everyone here a good and sober 24 hours.

Keep it simple, they say.

-Daniel.

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Re: Advice for choosing a good sponsor?

Posted by Dov - 20 May 2011 02:57

Dear Daniel,

You are a very, very fortunate man.

Love,

Dov

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