

Writing Exercise – March 2014 Assembly - Abstinence

Q1 – Do sponsors help you with your abstinence? How?

RESPONSES

Yes – my sponsor helps me with my food, my emotions, and my action plan. I give them my food for the day and my gratitudes in the morning along with my review of the day before. By reviewing my current mental status, plan of eating for the day and character defects, I learn to better prioritize and plan my day.

Accountability – I am delusional when it comes to portions and good food choices. Specifying and reporting what, when, and how much I eat daily keeps me on the right track.

They are there when you have questions and give advice to their experience and help you work the steps and talk on the phone and witness when you do your inventory step and give advice when you have problems with other OAers.

Yes – help me sort out “what is eating me” vs. “what I’m eating”. Things I can do to work through it - use tools, 4th step inventory or 10th step, resentment prayer.

By learning to trust my sponsor, a fellow compulsive overeater, I can more easily transfer this first to God. We were not meant to recover alone. Listening, sharing what works for her helps me find new ways to stay abstinent, and like the valve in a pressure cooker, letting off steam with my sponsor keeps my problems in perspective.

Before having a sponsor I was doing what I thought was needed. Before I had a committed sponsor, I was doing what I told my original sponsor I needed. Now I have a sponsor who listens, asks questions so I can better understand the issue at hand and gives suggestions I am willing to at least consider. When I do try these suggestions, guess what – they help!

Yes sponsors help with abstinence but it took me a while to realize they cannot be responsible for my abstinence. When I was having trouble getting abstinent, I thought it was my sponsor’s fault. My sponsor keeps me accountable for my own actions.

Absolutely! They help me with my “emotional” and “spiritual” aspects of my recovery so that I don’t lose my “physical” recovery. When I was new they helped me establish my food plan and how to achieve and maintain abstinence.

Yes I worked the steps with my sponsor and she encourages me to stay abstinent.

I couldn’t recover without my sponsor. I need supervision!!! She is the one – the one I share everything with. I have had many sponsors over my 28 yrs and I am grateful to all. I show my gratitude by sponsoring others.

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Absolutely! I could NOT remain abstinent without a sponsor to guide me through the steps, the traditions, and the chaos of life. My sponsor knows me inside and out, calls me on my “stuff” and bolsters me when I’m doing well. Most of all she leads me by her example through the minefield of my addiction.

You bet they do! I get emotional reassurance from my sponsor. When I have to alter my food plan, I check in with my sponsor to discuss why. Is it necessary? More discussion. Sometimes the changes are made and sometimes they are not. But there is always a sense of peace after discussion.

Food sponsor – I call in my food every day; that helps me have an idea of what I am eating for the day. Step sponsor – helps me with working my steps and issues that I am having at that time.

They stay abstinent and are an example. They guide me with my food plan, 12 step and 12 traditions work,. She helps me to keep enhancing my spiritual life through prayer and meditation. She listens to my issues and moves me from the problem into the solution by reading the Big Book.

My sponsor’s greatest assistance with my abstinence is by allowing me to observe their abstinent lifestyle, not only be ongoing step and service work but practical application of abstinent living. They have been open, honest and generous with their time and experience, even having me at their homes for various events. I see how they interact with others and their relationships with food in recovery.

YES! When I am in my tough places, she will listen and remind me of “the solution”.

Yes! Yes! Yes! Sponsors help guide me through the steps and get to the deepest reasons I choose to pick up the fork! This intervention is life-changing and life-saving for me. They are individuals who are walking examples of 3-fold recovery. I call sponsors “spiritual guides”. They are people like me who struggle with abstinence and abstinent actions – one day at a time but put their abstinence first no matter what!

Talking to my sponsor about challenges that arise helps me resist any anger. Usually he has faced the same challenges and we can share how we deal with them. I also serve as a food sponsor which helps keep my sponsee accountable.

Yes by holding me accountable. Of course I have to be honest. I find that by giving away my food every day, I feel stronger in my abstinence. I am not bound to the foods not on my food plan and I am free of bondage.

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Before a sponsor – I had abstinence of not eating between meals. With sponsor – my abstinence got redefined and clearer – identified my trouble foods and made decision not to eat them. Also recorded food intake and realized I was eating much more than 1 serving size.

Q2 – Are you completely honest with your sponsor so they can help you? What's your experience when you've not been honest with your sponsor?

RESPONSES

Sometimes I forget to let my sponsor know of changes to my food plan or plan of action. This has resulted in new food creeping into my food plan and becoming problematic. It has also allowed me to vary my food or action plan on days I don't speak with my sponsor, something that can start me on the slippery slope to relapse.

I begin to justify more and more non-abstinent behaviors and types of food, believing I am okay all the while.

95% of the time I am honest with my sponsor. I don't tell them everything because I figure if they do not know about it, it won't hurt. When I am not totally honest my days wake me up on the wrong side of the bed and nothing will go right for me. Only when I turn all control over to my HP that life is in balance and I am at peace.

Yes I am completely honest. That is the only way they can help me. I have had other sponsors with whom I didn't open up to, which led me to believe they had all the answers. My sponsor helps me see what I can do, what's going on with me.

Not completely honest with my sponsor, which causes whatever issues are brewing to drag on for longer. Sets me up for slips.

If anything is held back, it is only that I'm not being fully honest with myself either.

I don't lie to my sponsor overtly but sometimes lie by omission. The omission isn't always intentional. Sometimes I don't know what is bothering me. I am not good at identifying emotions. I seem to only have two – happy and angry. If it doesn't fall into that category, I don't recognize it. If I don't discuss things, my sponsor cannot help me. She is not a mind-reader.

Yes, if I don't share it, I'll wear it. Once I admit something to my sponsor I've not become willing to accept it. If I'm not honest, it gets worse and worse, harder and harder to accept and move forward.

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Sometimes I am dishonest by omission. I never fail to share certain things with her. When I am not honest, I suffer.

I am a recovering liar. Sometimes it takes a while to get honest, but I get there. My sponsor knows this about me and loves me just as I am. She had helped me to learn to trust; through that growing trust with her I have learned to trust God.

Totally – she is of no value to me if I am not honest with her...even when I don't want to be. As my mother said, "Never lie to your doctor, your lawyer, your mother" and I'll add "and your sponsor!"

When I am not completely honest with my sponsor, it's usually over some emotional anxiety issue. I suffer (needlessly)! When I finally speak out loud to my sponsor, I find resolution to these issues and much emotional relief.

I sometimes change my food during the day if I am out of the office and can't get to my lunch that I brought but I will tell her the next day. I feel bad if I am not honest with my sponsor about my food.

I have been honest with my sponsor. If I am not honest with her, who would I be hurting but myself. If I was not honest with my sponsor, I would be looking for a new sponsor. Those were the first words she said to me when I called her – "Be honest with me."

I have not always been honest. That error has, without fail, led me into an even higher vulnerability in my addiction. Dishonesty leads to guilt, secrecy, and eventually a break in abstinence. I've learned that lesson the very hard way. When I AM honest, I do get the help I need without fear of judgment or reproach.

Yes I am honest – she told me she will know when I am not honest. I believe her, so why bother to be dishonest. Be as honest as I can be is part of my program.

This program has taught me to be honest in all areas of my life. I find that just the thought of lying makes me feel uncomfortable and I know I don't want to have to make an amends. If I lie, I will have a resentment against myself and holding resentments will kill me.

I work very hard at being honest with her. If I'm not I feel weighted down till I fess up.

If I am not honest with myself, I cannot be honest with my sponsor. Being honest with my sponsor opens the communication door and begins the recovery.