

9.11.2010



# Sponsorship; “Carry the message”



# North End Group Workshop

- Sponsorship;
- A) The History of Sponsorship.  
Chairperson Al K
- B) What Sponsorship is and is not.  
Chairperson Donna P
- C) How to choose a Sponsor.  
Chairperson Camille K



# Roland Hazard

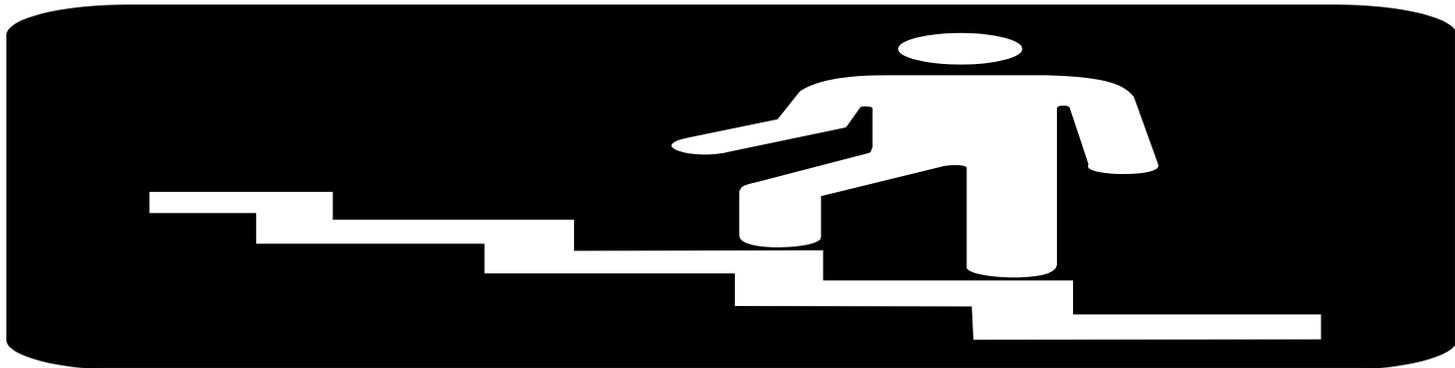
## THE MESSENGER

Rowland H. brought the message to Ebby T.  
who brought the message to Bill W

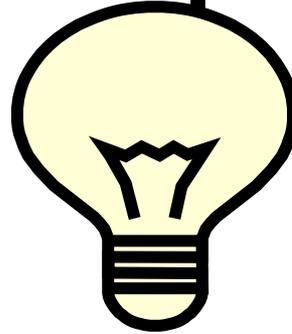


# The “Moment”

- They later sent Rowland Hazard back alone to see Ebby.
- He acted as a sort of **sponsor** and told his story. He taught Ebby the precepts he had learned from the Oxford Group.



# The “Idea” of A.A. Sponsorship:



The idea of sponsorship was born in AA, the original 12 step fellowship.

The book "Living Sober" an AA publication, describes how the term "sponsor" came about.

- “In the earliest days of AA, the term "sponsor" was not in the AA jargon. Then a few hospitals in Akron, Ohio and New York began to accept alcoholics (under that diagnosis) as patients –  
*If a sober A.A. member would agree to "sponsor" the sick man or woman.*
- The sponsor took the patient to the hospital, visited him or her regularly, was present when the patient was discharged, and took the patient home and then to the AA meeting. At the meeting, the sponsor introduced the newcomer to other happily non drinking alcoholics. All through the early months of recovery, the sponsor stood by, ready to answer questions, or to listen whenever needed. “
- <http://alcohol411.info/What%20Does%20A%20Sponsor%20Do.htm>

“ I have seen countless demonstrations of how well your ‘24-hour plan’ operates.

**The principle of working with other alcoholics has a sound psychological basis.**

All of these features of the program are extremely important.”

- **Dr. William Silkworth**



# Sister Ignatia

- Today, many of AA's practices -- including the use of tokens to mark milestones in sobriety -- find their origins with Sister Ignatia.

Sister Ignatia  
1889 - 1966

Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine  
The Drunk's "Angel of Hope"



# Sacred Heart Badge

- The telephone rang and Sister Ignatia answered it.
- "This is Bill, Sister. I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to send you back the Sacred Heart Badge. I've had a rough morning and I'm going out to get a drink.
- Sister Ignatia sighed, but said quickly: "Don't do it, Bill. Wait until you finish work at five. Then call me again. In the meantime, I'll pray for you. Whatever you do, don't send me back that badge. Keep it with you for strength and inspiration." Sister Ignatia prayed hard all afternoon and, finally the call came from Bill.
- "It's O.K., Sister, I never took the drink. I think I'm going to be all right now, thanks to the Sacred Heart and you."



## The First AA Sponsor/ Sponsee relationship?

- **William "Bill" Wilson (1895-1971) the A.A. co-founder with Edwin "Ebby" Thacher (1897-1966) in 1955.**
- **Ebby brought Bill the Oxford Group Movement message.**



# Bill W's Sponsor

- Ebby T



# The Healer- Bill Wilson

- From Time Magazine's "Heroes of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century"
- By Susan Cheever



# William G. 'Bill' Wilson

b. November 26, 1895. d. January 24, 1971  
Co-Founder of Alcoholics Anonymous



# A.A. Sponsorship's beginning?

- Five sober months later, Wilson went to Akron, Ohio, on business. The deal fell through, and he wanted a drink. He stood in the lobby of the Mayflower Hotel, entranced by the sounds of the bar across the hall.
- *Suddenly he became convinced that by helping another alcoholic, he could save himself.*



# A sponsor in more than name only.

- Dr. Bob Smith





- Veteran drinker "Dr. Bob" Smith took 12 steps to redemption
- **Alcoholics Anonymous**
- In 1898 a Dartmouth freshman named Robert Smith '02 found that drinking was the major campus activity. As a junior in the
- **Kappa Kappa Kappa fraternity, Smith won notoriety for his ability to chug a bottle of beer without any apparent movement of his Adam's apple. By the time he entered medical school at the University of Michigan, he was a serious alcoholic.**
- In May 1935 Smith and a fellow drinker, stockbroker Bill Wilson (who later became known to alcoholics worldwide as "Bill W."), formed the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. Smith's beliefs in "love and service" form the
- cornerstones of the A.A. philosophy. More than two million recovering alcoholics now belong to A.A. in 134 countries.
- The "12 steps" devised by the organization - - a path to "spiritual awakening" based on rigorous self-examination, along with an insistence on anonymity - - have been adapted by a wide variety of self-help groups, for the obese to the phobic.
- Source: Dartmouth Alumni Magazine-Special Issue, April 1994

# Cleveland AA Growth

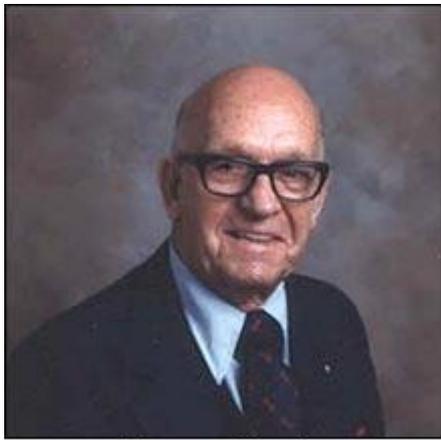
- Bill Wilson was constantly amazed at the growth and apparent success that Cleveland was having in sobering up alcoholics. He visited there every time that he went to Ohio. Bill later wrote in A.A. Comes of Age:
- “Yes, Cleveland's results were of the best. Their results were in fact so good, and A.A.'s membership elsewhere was so small, that many a Clevelander really thought A.A.'s membership had started there in the first place.
- The Cleveland pioneers had proved three essential things:
- **the value of personal sponsorship;**
- the worth of the A.A.'s Big Book in indoctrinating newcomers, and finally the tremendous fact that A.A., when the word really got around, could now soundly grow to great size”.



# February 1945

## Vol. 1 No. 9

- The Cleveland groups--there are many of them--go in for sponsorship in a big way, as evidenced by a late issue of their *Central Bulletin*: "The book on sponsorship should be studied and fully understood by every member of A.A. . .if everyone reads it and applies what he reads the prospect is successful and happy and so is the sponsor."



Clarence Snyder  
St. Paul, MN  
circa 1983

Provided By Dale and Carol Morfitt

# Clarence Snyder

**Dr. Bob Smith sponsored Clarence Snyder. Clarence met Dr. Bob in Akron City Hospital February 11, 1938, the date Clarence celebrated as his sobriety date for the next forty-six years. Clarence was among the first 40 members of AA and his story is included in the first three versions of 'the Big Book' as AA #11, "The Home Brewmeister". He was part of the counseling team that wrote the Big Book**

**Clarence passed on to his widow Grace, to his many sponsees and grand-sponsees who are alive today, and through his retreats the specific Bible, Oxford Group, and devotional ideas that enabled early AAs to succeed so well. Moreover, Clarence, like Dr. Bob, felt there was no need to stay sick. People could recover; and alcoholics who took the Steps, trusted God, and abided by the Four Absolutes (Honesty, Purity, Unselfishness and Love) did recover and stayed recovered. Bob took people through the six steps in an afternoon. Clarence took thousands through the Twelve Steps in two days. There is a lot to be learned from Clarence Snyder and early A.A..**

# Clarence Snyder

- **Clarence was a dynamo. He wanted the best for himself and "his boys" in A.A. He refined the art of A.A. sponsorship to the point that Nell Wing, Bill Wilson's secretary, commented to the author that**
- *Clarence was probably the "one man responsible for sponsorship as we know it today."*



*"This worldly lady helped to develop A.A. in Chicago and thus passed her keys to many."*

According to member list index cards kept by the Chicago group, Sylvia's date of sobriety was September 13, 1939. Sylvia was probably the first woman to achieve

permanent long term sobriety, from then until her death.

- Sylvia K.  
Chicago, Illinois
- "The Keys of the Kingdom"  
(p. 304 in 2nd and 3rd  
editions.)



# Passing the “Keys”

- **We never really know anything theoretically. We truly know only that which we have experienced. And this is why we say to the new person, "Don't take our word for it. Instead, try it for yourself. Only then can you be sure you latched on to a design for living can really work for you.**
- **My faith in our program continues to increase through my personal experience with it. The last thirteen years have found me still striving toward the shining goals laid out for me long ago. I now live in Florida with my husband, and we will soon be celebrating, most happily, our eighteenth wedding anniversary. He is an alky, too, and our lives have been enriched by our mutual faith and perseverance in the AA way of life. Through it we have found a quality of happiness and serenity that, we believe, could not have been realized in any other way. Small wonder our gratitude no bounds.**
- **S. B. S.  
Sarasota, Florida**

**Marty Mann and the Evolution of Alcoholics  
Anonymous  
Author of "Women Suffer Too"**

in the 2nd and 3rd Editions of the Big Book



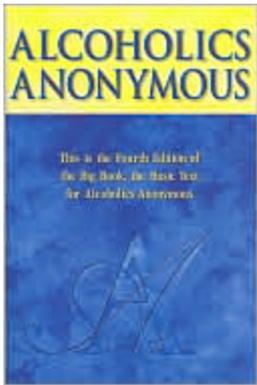
**Marty Mann**

# Attraction rather than promotion.

- Marty's legacy is sparingly reported in the histories of Alcoholics Anonymous, probably because NCA was not an arm of AA. However, AA grew enormously in the decades that Marty was active. Wherever she spoke, she generated extensive publicity, and new AA members appeared in droves. Her appearances were especially important in attracting women alcoholics. They figured that if a person as impressive and inspiring as Marty could admit that she was an alcoholic, they could too. Women like Betty Ford are direct inheritors of Marty's example.
- (Excerpted from a biography of Marty Mann, by Sally and David Brown.)

# Life Line

- The process of one alcoholic confiding in another has without a doubt saved my life. Nowhere else have I ever found such devotion and understanding as with AA sponsoring.
- Who else, other than an AA member, would accept a phone call in the middle of a busy work day to listen to: "I'm sorry to call you at work, but I'm terrified at this moment. I don't think I'll make it through the day without a drink. What should I do?"
- What is most miraculous in this scenario is the fact that this person had someone to call instead of picking up a drink, and that is how it works.
- We AAs are the best listeners in the world -- that is, when we're not talking!
- *Linda M., Maspeth, New York*

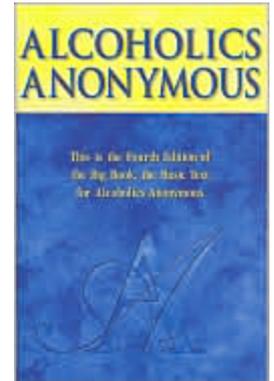


# The first 164 pages

- **Though there is no true references to the word sponsorship with in the first 164 page of the AA Big Book "Alcoholics Anonymous" it is mentioned in several of the personal stories that are contained later in the book. The early history of AA tells us that even Bill W. had a sponsor who's name was Edwin T. Thatcher who was born 1896, and died in 1966.**

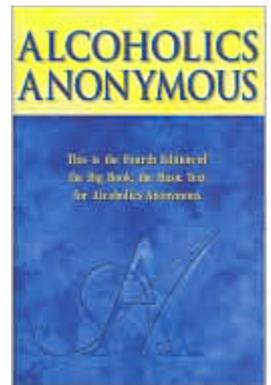
# Big Book Chapter 7

- In Alcoholics Anonymous, Chapter Seven, "Working With Others," contains specific recommendations and suggestions on how to best carry the message to wet drunks, such as:
- You will be most successful with alcoholics if you do not exhibit any passion for crusade or reform.
- Never talk down to an alcoholic from any moral or spiritual hilltop; simply lay out the kit of spiritual tools for his inspection.
- Show him how they worked for you. Offer him friendship and fellowship.
- *Tell him that if he wants to get well you will do anything to help."*



# Big Book Page 96

"We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a man who cannot, or will not, work with you. If you leave such a person alone, he may soon become convinced that cannot recover by himself."



# Grapevine May 1948

- How many prospects do you know, who got to the door of their first meeting and then turned away, terrified to face so many strangers?
- How many newcomers rush from their first meeting to a bar, because they are confused and nervous and, in spite of what has been said from the platform, friendless?
- How many questions are left unanswered by even the best meeting?
- ***Among the many true things that Bill has said, perhaps the truest is that the most important guy at any meeting is the guy who is just coming in the door for the first time. He should not be alone.***
- ***It makes little difference if the sponsor and newcomer are not acquainted, if they come from different walks of life, if they have little besides alcohol in common, or even if their contact does not ripen into companionship. The sponsor has his sobriety to offer, while the newcomer offers the opportunity of a 12th Step job. The score is even.***
- J.W., New York, New York



# April 1948

Vol. 4 No. 11

## **A.A.'s Country-wide News Circuit Knickerbocker Hospital Anniversary**



- Under the **sponsorship** of Alcoholics Anonymous, the Alcoholic Pavilion at Knickerbocker Hospital, New York City, was established in April, 1945, with the enthusiastic support of A. R. Munro, president of the Hospital Board.
- In the three years since the inception of this service, approximately 3,100 men and women have been treated. Knickerbocker Hospital officials feel that the three-year experience in caring for alcoholics justifies the following statements:
- "The alcoholic is a sick person and, in many cases, can be helped by proper medical and psychiatric treatment.
- "It is quite feasible to care for such patients in a general hospital if they are properly screened before admission.
- "Such a service need not interfere with other hospital services.
- "It poses no great nursing problem.
- "It is less expensive to operate than a general surgical or medical service.
- "It lends itself readily to inclusion as a regular medical service for teaching purpose.
- **"It is desirable to operate such a service in close cooperation with Alcoholics Anonymous.**
- "It is highly worthwhile because of the number of sick people who are restored to useful and vocational life."

# Thank you for your attention.

- The next module;
- “What Sponsorship is and is not.”
  - Donna P. Chairperson

WHAT A SPONSOR IS AND ISN'T.



**PASS IT ON**

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF AA SPONSORSHIP



- **BILL W., A FEW MONTHS SOBER, STRICKEN WITH A POWERFUL URGE TO DRINK, REALIZES HE NEEDS ANOTHER ALCOHOLIC TO TALK TO.**
- **HE FINDS DR. BOB, AND OUT OF THEIR COMMON NEED AA WAS BORN.**
- **THROUGH SHARING, BOTH OF OUR CO-FOUNDERS DISCOVERED THEIR SOBER LIVES WERE ENRICHED.**
- **A FEW HOSPITALS IN AKRON AND NEW YORK BEGAN TO ACCEPT ALCOHOLICS UNDER THAT DIAGNOSIS AS PATIENTS, AND A SOBER A.A. MEMBER WOULD AGREE TO “SPONSOR” THE SICK MAN OR WOMAN, VISITING THEM AND THEN BRINGING THEM TO AN A.A. MEETING.**

# Sponsorship is;

- A BASIC PART OF THE A.A. APPROACH TO RECOVERY
- A SPONSOR IS A GUIDE, A MENTOR
- CAN TAKE THE SPONSEE THROUGH THE TWELVE STEPS
- MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT HOW TO APPLY THE STEPS.
- OFFERS SUGGESTIONS ABOUT HOW BEST TO STAY AWAY FROM THE FIRST DRINK



# Sponsorship is not

- NOT A PROFESSIONAL CASEWORKER OR COUNSELOR.
- DOES NOT PROVIDE MARRIAGE COUNSELING, FINANCIAL ADVICE, AND LEGAL ADVICE.
- NOT A MEDICAL EXPERT, OR QUALIFIED TO GIVE RELIGIOUS OR PSYCHIATRIC ADVICE.
- **A sponsor is simply a sober alcoholic who can help solve only one problem: how to stay sober. But in staying sober, everything else has its beginnings.**

Thank you for your attention!

Next presentation is :

- “How to choose a Sponsor”

Chairperson; Camille K.

"YOU'RE NOT ALONE  
ANYMORE..."

HOW TO  
CHOOSE A  
SPONSOR

# Men with Men/Woman with Woman

- More Helpful-Men know men in program/  
Woman know women
- Will gain better understanding of self with  
same sex sponsor
- Language of recovery is the same
- Avoid thirteen steppers



The Bishop of Books



God

\$12



## ***"The Hands of A.A."***

75th A Anniversary  
Texas Int'l Conv.

LC.Y.P.A.A.

Women

Anonymity

1st U.S.A. AA Groups

4 Founding Moments

Gratitude

Oxford Group

Sponsorship

Catholics

Money

A

A



Artificial

# ***The 2010 Alcoholics Anonymous History Calendar***

Publication of this  
calendar does NOT  
imply affiliation with  
nor endorsement by  
Alcoholics Anonymous  
World Service

Man



Anyone...Anywhere...Anytime...  
A.A.



# Find someone who has what you want !

- Happy Joyous and Free
- A Sponsor who works the program; especially steps 10, 11 and twelve
- Someone that has shared similar experiences
- Someone you can trust; honors anonymity
- Someone that will walk with you through the steps..not push or avoid

# A sponsor who has a sponsor

- It is important to know your sponsor has someone to talk to.
- Experience in the steps is only part of the program.
- We all need help sometime.



# A person who has something to give

- Experience, strength and hope

- Time



- Spirituality

- Suggestions to a better way of life

Life's A Dance  
When You  
Do The Steps!

