

Pick a Sponsor's Pocket: 12-Step Sponsorship Group Exercise

(A Guided Sponsorship Exercise for Treatment Centers and Outpatient Recovery Groups)

The Purpose:

This structured 12-Step exercise is designed for treatment centers, outpatient programs, and recovery counseling settings. It helps participants explore their internal response to sponsorship guidance—whether they tend to agree, resist, rationalize, or disengage. By practicing with these "mini-meditations," clients build the insight, humility, and teachability necessary for a successful sponsor-ponsee relationship.

The Activity:

1. **Prepare the "Pocket":** Cut an extra large pocket from a pair of old jeans or draw one on a paper bag.
2. **Setup:** Print the following pages and cut out each segment, ensuring the questionnaire stays attached to its corresponding mini-meditation. Fold and place all segments into the pocket.
3. **The Exercise:** Have each participant "Pick the Sponsor's Pocket."
4. **Group Sharing:** Participants read their selection aloud and share their honest response with the group. Do they identify with the meditation, or are they averse to it?
5. **The Lesson:** Remind the group that a real sponsor will offer suggestions they like and some they don't. This exercise allows them to "test-drive" their reactions to program guidance in a safe, therapeutic environment.

Mini Meditation:

We often hear "turn it over." This means turn over problems not under our control right now--whether they are with family, friends, work, or the law--we offer the things we cannot change to a Higher Power and LET GO.

Affirmation:

If I turn it over and don't let go, I'll be upside down!

This definitely applies to me.	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

It is very important that we listen to what we tell ourselves. What are the negatives? "This won't work; I wasn't so bad; my sponsor is sicker than me." You are the result of what you tell yourself.

Affirmation:

What picture am I painting of myself today?

This definitely applies to me.	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

Our disease had so much control over our lives, that it not only made us do things we did not want to do, but would not let us do things that we wanted to.

Affirmation:

My disease used to make my choices. Now I do.

This definitely applies to me.	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

It's a very interesting thing about human nature, when you stop treating yourself poorly, it will become unacceptable for others to do so.

Affirmation:

If I don't take care of myself, why should anyone else?

This definitely applies to me.	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

Sporadically, even with a strong program, you may feel spiritually dead or emotionally empty. We're addicts, it happens! No matter how dead or empty you sometimes feel, *this too shall pass*.

Affirmation:

It came to pass... it didn't come to stay.

This definitely applies to me.	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

Recovery is not an event; it is a process. The disease of addiction was a slow debilitating process causing self-destruction, self-absorption, and no good purpose for our behavior. Recovery is the same slow process, in reverse.

Affirmation:

I go from 'no purpose' to a higher purpose as I progress in practicing the principles.

This definitely applies to me.	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

When you continually don't like the way people treat you, it is usually because you are cooperating with the treatments.

Affirmation:

The difference between me being a victor or a victim is ability. Response ability.

This definitely applies to me	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

No matter how hard you attempt to control the people in your life, you will not find your fulfillment there. If they don't change, you will be frustrated; if they do change under your pressure, they will be frustrated

Affirmation:

If I look to others for fulfillment, I will never be fulfilled.

This definitely applies to me	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

There will be times when you stew and fret over a careless thought that someone utters. They probably didn't mean to upset you and yet they did. All people say stupid or thoughtless things at times and so we treat them the way we would want them to treat us, if we made the mistake

Affirmation:

The biggest mistake I can make is not to recognize that I make mistakes.

This definitely applies to me	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

It is a monumental task to set your world in order as you make the changes necessary for spiritual growth. Setting your world in order does not mean to "fix" everybody and take care of their affairs. It means to tend to yourself and your affairs.

Affirmation:

I do something for someone I love today; I leave them alone.

This definitely applies to me	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

Sitting at a meeting and sharing how much you love everyone in the room is meaningless if you fail to help cleanup, talk to the newcomer, inquire after the old-timer, and make sure everyone has a ride home

Affirmation:

My well done is better than my well said.

This definitely applies to me	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

Our Twelve-Step program is a program that comforts the disturbed and disturbs the comfortable. It never pays for us to get too comfortable and “rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for alcohol is a subtle foe.” (P 85, AA Big Book)

Affirmation:

I never did anything in moderation and I'm not about to start with my Steps.

This definitely applies to me	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

You will take a tremendous step toward emotional freedom when you realize you have forgiven your addiction for leaving you. Choose to forgive but never forget, your old sick friend.

Affirmation:

It's alcoholism, not alcoholwasm so I can forgive my old sick friend, but not forget.

This definitely applies to me	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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Mini Meditation:

Anger is a source of personal power for people. It is a way to try to control people, places, and things that don't behave like we think they should. Although anger is natural, we learn not to play the anger card to get our way.

Affirmation:

I don't develop a working 'relationship' with anger.

This definitely applies to me	Some of it applies to me, some not.	This mostly does not apply to me.	Nothing about this applies to me at all.
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