

CLA WEDNESDAY 9:30 pm ET “WORKING CLA 12 STEPS” Format

(As of 1/13/16) 712-432-0385 access code 457671# & remind members to Mute & unmute with *6. (NOTE: *4 will provide instructions to Moderator) **If you are on Moderator Code** – use *8 until bells are turned off. PRESS *5 till you hear “all callers are muted but can unmute themselves.” A Moderator CAN HEAR THE COUNT by Pressing *2. Check occasionally - especially if there is unmutable noise on the line. If you hear more than yourself & 1 invited assistant on the Moderator Code, please request others to hang up and call back in on regular code

Hello and welcome to this “Working CLA12 Steps” Wednesday Night Meeting. We invite Newcomers as well as Long-timers to participate, and hope you will make this a commitment and will return every 13-week quarter to share your personal Experience, Strength and Hope as we use the 12 Steps to recover from our Clutter Problem. (NOTE: there are four 13-week quarters in each year)

We invite you to be of service through reading from CLA literature found in the yellow & blue leaflets, as well as on the website, www.clutterersanonymous.org, and/or sharing.

- May I have a volunteer to read the Preamble of CLA? The 12 steps can be found in the *blue leaflet, "A Brief Guide"* as well as on the website. NOTE TO Moderator: if no one steps up please read it.

PREAMBLE

Clutterers Anonymous (CLA) is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem with clutter and help each other to recover.

We achieve this as individuals, groups, and a fellowship by practicing our 12 Steps of recovery and by being guided by our 12 Traditions. Each of them embodies a set of principles for living life effectively, inside and outside CLA.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop cluttering. There are no dues or fees for membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. Our fellowship is based on suggestion, interchange of experience, rotation of leadership, and service.

Clutterers Anonymous is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology, or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to stop cluttering one day at a time and to carry this message of recovery to clutterers who still suffer.

- May I have a volunteer to read the 12 steps of CLA? The 12 steps can be found in the *blue leaflet, "A Brief Guide"* and the *yellow leaflet "Recovery From Cluttering"* as well as on the website.
- May I have a volunteer to read the Tradition for the current month from the 12 Traditions - which can be found on the *back of the blue leaflet, as well as in the AA Big Book or the AA 12 and 12 and on the website.*

NOTE THAT THERE ARE 13 WEEKS each quarter of a year. This meeting covers one step per week for 12 weeks and the 13th week we will share on personal progress and rewards in working the CLA's 12 Steps, and our plans to make these Steps a way of living. (see page titled 13th week)

MODERATOR reads: “We in Clutterers Anonymous believe our “dis-ease” is three-fold – Physical, Emotional and Spiritual. Physical decluttering may address the Physical and some of the Emotional aspects of our “dis-ease.” However, keep in mind that the foundation of CLA and all 12-Step recovery programs is Spiritual, as seen in our 12 Steps. Recovery means a new way of thinking and acting on life, rather than reacting to it, and this takes time. The Steps embody a set of Principles, that when followed, promote Inner Change. This affects Healing on all three levels, and it is achieved through the process of surrendering to something greater than ourselves. Working the 12 Steps will grant us the Order, Serenity, and Simplicity that we have sought desperately for so long.”

Please make every effort to arrive at the meeting on time. The meeting begins promptly at 9:30 pm ET, and it depends on member participation and attendance to create an environment of security, healing and growth. This means that your promptness and presence support the group from the moment the meeting starts, so please do the best you can in this regard.

OPTIONAL: Now we can go around the virtual room and anyone who cares to may introduce oneself. I'm _____ from _____.

REMINDER: It's *6 to unmute and to mute again on this line.

MODERATOR says: At this Step Work Meeting we will read the long version of one CLA Step each week and then write or reflect for 4 minutes; and then the Meeting will be open for 3-4 minute shares on your experience or feelings with that Step only.

- **May I have a volunteer** to read the long version of this week's Step from the *yellow leaflet "Recovery From Cluttering,"* or from the website. Please read it slowly twice. (Moderator announces the Step for the week and keeps track weekly).
- **Please take 4 minutes to write or reflect** on you own experience with this Step and/or feelings when you heard it.
- **We now invite sharing** on the specific Step for this week. You may leave contact info – saying it slowly & twice. We do not permit crosstalk, so please keep the focus of your sharing on your own growth and recovery. Please adhere to our Code of Conduct, and keep your opinions and judgments about other members to yourself; and remember that “What you hear here, let it stay here.” Please time yourself and if you go over 4 minutes the Leader or a “Timer” will gently ask you to quickly wrap up your thought.

At 10:25 ET MODERATOR SAYS: That's all the time we have for sharing. Thank you to all who shared and all who did service at this meeting.

MODERATOR ANNOUNCES: Many previous meetings from 2010 through 2015 have been recorded. The number to listen to the recordings is provided by the Moderator to members on the phone meeting at this time. (**ALERT:** *Moderators will be provided with that number*) Once on the recorded line, press a number from 1 to 245 & the # sign. **SPECIAL NOTE:** once you hear the recording, you can: press 1 to REWIND 30 seconds & PRESS 2 to Fast Forward 30 seconds & you can also press “5” to pause & resume.

CLOSING: “*The Promises*” & *Serenity Prayer* (either the *Organize Life Serenity Prayer* or the *Keep and Release Serenity Prayer*)

The 12 Promises - as found on pp. 83-84 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous

We are going to know a new freedom & a new happiness.
We will not regret the past, nor wish to shut the door on it.
We will comprehend the word Serenity &
We will know peace.
No matter how far down the scale we’ve gone,
we’ll see how our experiences can benefit others.
That feeling of uselessness & self-pity will disappear.
We will lose interest in selfish things & gain interest in our fellows.
Self-seeking will slip away.
Our whole attitude & outlook on life will change.
Fear of people & economic insecurity will leave us.
We will intuitively know how to handle situations which use to baffle us.
We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.
Are these extravagant promises? We think not.
They’re being fulfilled among us - sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.
They’ll always materialize if we work for them.

MODERATOR SAYS: The seventh tradition states that every CLA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. We have no expenses for this meeting yet our World Service Organization does have expenses including those for the website, literature and our 800 number. Donations can be made on website or mailed to CLA WSO PO box 91413 Los Angeles CA 90009 – please indicate Phone Meetings in MEMO section of check. The 9 CLA Leaflets @ \$4.85 and “Newcomers’ Guide to Recovery” booklet @ \$3.20 may also be ordered by mail at same address.

Would all who care to please join in the Serenity Prayer (Leader selects from these 2)

SERENITY PRAYERS FOR CLA

ORGANIZED LIFE SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant me the Serenity of an organized life with leisure time,
The Courage to change my habits to ensure these joys, and
The Wisdom to be flexible.
And God grant me *patience* for the changes that take time,
Appreciation for all that I have,
Tolerance for those with different struggles,
And the *Strength* to get up and try again,
One moment, one hour, one day at a time.

KEEP & RELEASE SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant me the Serenity to keep the things I need to keep,
The courage to release the things I do not need,
And the wisdom to know the difference.

NOTE: The 4th week we will have a Delegate Report, and also confirm or request a Moderator and backup for the following month. Preferably a volunteer will commit for the 13 week Quarter along with a Co-Leader and/or backup.

NOTE: The 13th week we will have a very brief Business Meeting -- which will include confirmation of Leaders for the following quarter.

INVITE FELLOWSHIP AND QUESTIONS ON WORKING THE 12 STEPS

MODERATOR WILL READ THE FOLLOWING EXCERPT FROM CLA CODE OF CONDUCT: “Please be respectful of all members of the Fellowship by protecting their privacy and anonymity. This means not discussing your fellow members, in any way, with others outside of the meeting. This includes talking about any of the details of the members’ lives, what they said at the meeting, and even the fact that they attend any meetings and/or belong to the Fellowship.

This commitment to privacy and anonymity also applies to the time spent before and after the meetings and to telephone conversations.”

The Twelve Steps of CLASM

Adapted with permission from Alcoholics Anonymous®

Supplemented by excerpts from the “CLA Recovery from Cluttering: The 12 Steps of Clutterers Anonymous” leaflet (*See leaflets in our store.*) These STEPS –in full - are now posted on <http://clutterersanonymous.org/12-steps/>

- Step 1. We admitted we were powerless over clutter—that our lives had become unmanageable.
- Step 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- Step 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God.
- Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- Step 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- Step 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- Step 7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
- Step 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
- Step 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- Step 10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
- Step 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry that out.
- Step 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Detailed Descriptions of CLA 12 STEPS

Step 1. We admitted we were powerless over clutter—that our lives had become unmanageable.

To admit powerlessness over clutter, we mean that we can’t solve our clutter problem by ourselves. We begin to realize the cost of clutter: uncompleted goals; damaged relationships; a non-supportive environment; and a waste of our time, energy, talents, and money.

Step 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

This Step gives us hope: we don’t have to solve the problem alone. We can rely on a Power greater than ourselves. This Higher Power may be God, the universe—anything from which we derive strength.

Once we have come to believe in a Higher Power, the next part is accepting that this Power is ready, willing, and able to take the burden of clutter from us—to empower us.

The last part of this Step is “restore us to sanity.” Insanity is living in unhealthy places where we are unable to breathe and move freely; being ashamed to let repair persons in; having so many possessions that we can’t find vital documents, yet unable to resist bringing in even more items.

Step 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God.

Step Three is deciding to let our Higher Power come into our lives and help us with our clutter problem. By taking this Step, we show increased willingness. We let God do for us what we could not do for ourselves. We rely on our Higher Power to guide us and give us strength.

Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

This Step has a double meaning for us in CLA. The traditional meaning is to make a written inventory of ourselves to discover our assets and character defects. Here are some questions to write about:

What areas of my life are cluttered? In what way? How has it harmed my relationships? How have I tried to control my clutter, and how successful has this been?

Another meaning of Step Four is to physically sort through our stuff: What have I not used in a year? What things are broken or useless? What am I keeping for others? What things do I truly treasure? What things do I no longer love? This is a good time to total up the true cost of keeping things (extra car insurance and fees, storage space rental, lost relationships, emotional pain).

Once we increase our awareness of the impact of clutter on our lives and why we find the need to clutter, we gain insight and strength to declutter.

Step 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Step Five helps us deal with our shame about being a clutterer. By sharing our written inventory with someone we trust, we no longer have to carry the burden of our secrets.

During the process of sorting through our physical clutter, we may ask this person to be there.

By letting another person hear our story and see our “stuff,” we gain a new perspective. Once we take this Step, we may feel enormous relief.

Step 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

After taking the first five Steps, we have increased our willingness to release our character defects. These might include: people pleasing, overscheduling, hoarding, procrastination, perfectionism, and resentment. All of these may underlie our cluttering.

We have also increased our willingness to let go of the excess “stuff” that is cluttering our lives.

By taking Step Six, we affirm that we are willing to let go of anything that stands in the way of our healing.

Step 7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

Now we are asking our Higher Power to remove anything that interferes with our recovery from cluttering. We are requesting that God (or our Higher Power) remove our resentments, fears, envy, dishonesty. Once this change happens, we will feel more able to deal with our clutter.

Step 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

With this Step, we become stronger by facing our wrongs and the guilt we feel about them. The first person on our list would be ourselves. Others might be family, significant others, friends, roommates, neighbors—anyone whom we have harmed, no matter how or how much.

Step 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

This Step really refers to mending, or making something whole, rather than simply apologizing. It may mean: decluttering and cleaning our homes, respecting the space of others, reimbursing others for damage, buying only what we truly want or need (and have space for), learning to say no.

It may seem a daunting task, and may take some time, but if we are painstaking with Step Nine, we will surely see amazing results.

Step 10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

This Step maintains the progress accomplished in the earlier Steps by helping us stay in touch with ourselves and others. As challenges arise, we can return to Step Three and turn the problem over to our Higher Power. If resentments arise, we can use Step Seven and ask God to remove these shortcomings. If we become aware of more people we have harmed, we can return to Step Nine and make amends.

Step 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.

In order to maintain our progress, we need to keep in contact with our Higher Power and to call on that Power for guidance whenever needed. Step Eleven reminds us to put God first, not clutter and busyness.

The second part of this Step is “praying only for the knowledge of God’s will for us...” The problem is interpreting what that will is. We believe God wants us to live useful and joyous lives and not be burdened by clutter.

Once we understand God’s will for us, we can ask for the power to carry it out. When we are tempted to collect unneeded items, we can ask that our compulsion be removed. God’s help is always available. Our part is then to do the footwork: using the Tools and the support of our CLA group.

Step 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Upon reaching Step Twelve, we find that we have had a spiritual awakening to the possibilities within us.

The compulsion to clutter has been lifted by a power greater than ourselves. We are able to create a loving environment and an orderly life.

One of the best ways to maintain a clutter-free life is by being a good example and passing on what we’ve learned. With the experience, strength, and hope we have gained in the program, we can know the joy of helping others become clutter free.

As we practice these principles in all our affairs, we will discover the serenity, freedom, and fulfillment we have sought.

The Twelve Steps are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt this material does not mean that A.A.® is affiliated with CLA. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism only — use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in connection with these programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise.

The Twelve Traditions of CLASM

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CLASM unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as expressed through our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for CLA membership is a desire to stop cluttering.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CLA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the person who still suffers.
6. A CLA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the Clutterers AnonymousSM name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every CLA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Clutterers Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Clutterers Anonymous, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. CLA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Clutterers Anonymous name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and all other media.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The Twelve Traditions are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous® World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt this material does not mean that A.A.® is affiliated with CLA. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism only — use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in connection with this programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise.

The Twelve Rewards Of Sobriety

Originally by Ann C. (sober April 1, 1948) of Niles, Ohio and presented at
the 1985 International Convention in Montreal, Canada

These are twelve attributes of personal character that continued practice of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and our continued Spiritual Fitness will bring to us, the "Recovered" Alcoholic" ***
**** Or any addictive person such as "CLUTTERER."

1. Faith instead of despair.
2. Courage instead of fear.
3. Hope instead of desperation.
4. Peace of mind instead of confusion.
5. Real friendships instead of loneliness.
6. Self-respect instead of self-contempt.
7. Self-confidence instead of helplessness.
8. A clean conscience instead of a sense of guilt.
9. The respect of others instead of their pity and contempt.
10. A clean pattern of living instead of a hopeless existence.
11. The love and understanding of our families instead of their doubts and fears.
12. The freedom of a happy life instead of the bondage of an alcoholic obsession.