

Suggested Group Guidelines

Singleness of Purpose

A Clutterers Anonymous (CLA) group is formed for the primary purpose of carrying the CLA message of 12-Step recovery. All of the group's activities should reflect that single purpose. The group is CLA's most powerful vehicle for carrying the message of recovery. Members are encouraged to focus their personal shares on how they work the CLA program of recovery in their lives.

The primary purpose of each meeting is to carry the message of recovery to both old and new members. At every meeting, the group introduces Clutterers Anonymous to each member, often by reading meeting resource documents. Some of these documents are known as the Core Meeting Documents described in a later section.

In order to put the CLA program into practice, members need to be exposed to the CLA message of recovery. The Core Meeting Documents are one way the CLA program carries this message at each meeting.

Defining a Clutterers Anonymous Group

The Group is the basic unit in Clutterers Anonymous. A meeting is formed when

- two or more clutterers gather together to share their experience, strength, and hope, so that they may solve their common problem and help each other to recover from cluttering, using the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of CLA,
- the group meets regularly for the purpose of recovering from their addictive cluttering behavior, and
- the group is willing to follow the guidelines as set forth in this document.

A meeting may call itself a Clutterers Anonymous group when it

- meets to observe, advocate, practice, and espouse the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of CLA;
- welcomes all people who have a desire to stop cluttering;
- has no affiliation other than with Clutterers Anonymous;
- is fully self-supporting through member contributions—which means paying the group expenses, as well as supporting the service boards and committees that serve it;
- has the primary purpose of carrying the CLA message of recovery to those who still suffer;
- has a public relations policy based upon attraction rather than promotion;
- maintains personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and all other media;
- has no opinion on outside issues;
- provides meetings that are chaired and led/run by CLA members; and
- uses the Core Meeting Documents and CLA Fellowship-approved literature and that of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Electronic Media or Virtual Groups

Phone groups (which are groups that replicate face-to-face recovery meetings through electronic media) may be considered Clutterers Anonymous groups if they otherwise meet the definition of a CLA group above and meet in real time.

Core Meeting Documents

CLA meeting resource documents are Fellowship-approved for use in our meetings. The Core Meeting Documents identified below are the foundation upon which CLA meetings are built. Our collective experience has shown that the Preamble, the 12 Steps, and the 12 Traditions of CLA must be a part of every meeting in order to give it a stronger foundation. Many other readings identified below are available to enhance and support a recovery meeting.

Essential readings at every meeting

- Preamble of Clutterers Anonymous
- 12 Steps of Clutterers Anonymous
- 12 Traditions of Clutterers Anonymous, and a
- 7th Tradition statement.

Readings that may be combined and interchanged at meetings

- Am I a Clutterer?
- Closing Prayers
- Clutterer's Traits
- Crosstalk Statement
- Cutting Through Denial
- Newcomer Welcome
- Promises of Recovery
- Realization Closing
- Recovery Affirmations
- Serenity Prayers
- Tools of CLA
- What is Clutter?

A Checklist for Building a Strong Meeting

For CLA to continue to grow and thrive and be there for those who need it in the future, meetings must be strong and function effectively for people to stay around for the miracle. A CLA group that opens its doors takes on some of these typical functions during each meeting:

- welcoming and helping the newcomer
- using a meeting format that contains readings from the Core Meeting Documents
- using CLA Fellowship-approved literature and that of Alcoholics Anonymous
- encouraging members to study, discuss, and practice the 12 Steps and the 12 Traditions
- carrying the message that we care and that there is hope and recovery in our Fellowship
- focusing on CLA recovery through the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions
- sharing the solution we have found in CLA, so that the newcomer and the old-timer keep coming back
- collecting the 7th Tradition funds (self-supporting)
- distributing 7th Tradition funds to support the service boards and committees that serve it

- informing members about the service structure of CLA
- encouraging members to fill and rotate trusted servant positions at their Home Groups
- practicing and encouraging the principle of service
- maintaining communication with all the service bodies
- keeping the group's annual registration up to date with all service bodies.

Group Autonomy

These guidelines reflect the traditions and purposes of Clutterers Anonymous and express the group conscience of all CLA groups. Each group makes its own policy decisions, abiding by all of the Traditions. The Traditions provide guidelines for the group's conduct, just as the Steps provide guidelines for individual recovery.

Group autonomy cannot be used to justify violations which break the principle of unity for CLA as a whole. Group autonomy stops when a group's action affects other groups and/or CLA as whole. In other words, Tradition 4's freedom of autonomy is limited by Tradition 1's need for common welfare and unity.

All members share the responsibility by acting as guardians of our valued Traditions and making group decisions by the principle of informed group conscience.