



Please Note (Read This First)

Make copies of *all* of these sheets *before* you write on *any* of them. Then you will have a clean copy when officers change, etc.

You may want to use a looseleaf binder with plastic dividers or sheet protectors to hold materials for running the meeting.



Clutterers AnonymousSM

Meeting Starter Kit



March 2015



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CLA WSO Welcome Letter

Clutterers AnonymousSM World Service Organization (CLASM WSO)

Mail: CLA WSO, PO Bo 91413, Los Angeles, CA 90009

Phone: (866) 402-6685

Website: <http://www.ClutterersAnonymous.org>

Email: questions@ClutterersAnonymous.org

Dear Friend of Clutterers Anonymous:

We are happy to share this CLA Meeting Starter Kit packet with you. This should provide you with all of the materials that are needed to form your new group.

We welcome you into the Fellowship of Clutterers Anonymous. We hope that you will find in this program the friendship, encouragement, and support that you need in your recovery.

Your group is welcome to join CLA WSO and be listed in the CLA Meeting Directory and on the phone message system. The only constraint is that your meeting is conducted in keeping with the Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) 12 Steps and 12 Traditions and is, therefore, not for profit. We feel that by following them we can all achieve recovery and *finally* break the tie that binds our cluttering habits to us. Thank you for your willingness to join us on the journey!

To list your meeting in our directory, please complete and send in the "Group Registration Form," which is included in this packet. In this way, WSO can better refer and direct people to your meetings from inquiries received by phone, internet, email, postal mail, etc. We all win this way! NOTE: Only first name and phone are listed in the printed copies; the website has no contact information unless the group requests it.

We ask that you always keep your registration information current. Registrations are required on a yearly basis to remain on the meeting directory. If you have any changes to your meeting information during the year, please complete the applicable sections in the "Group Registration Form" and submit it to WSO.

We think that all of us were created with a special purpose in mind. It is our hope that, through this program, you will discover what that purpose is for you. We have found that, when using the various elements of the CLA 12-Step program—the "CLA Tools of Recovery," including the telephone, clutter buddies; and coming to meetings; 12 Steps; and various other program elements—very noticeable progress is made. Many of us have found help and positive movement by following the 12 Steps of Recovery. We hope that you will put them to use, as well.

Sincerely,

CLA WSO

Books that we have found helpful: *Alcoholics Anonymous* (the A.A. "Big Book") and *A.A. 12 Steps and 12 Traditions*



How to Start a Clutterers AnonymousSM Meeting

LEARN: Learn about the program by reading CLA literature. Try to attend CLA or other 12-Step meetings, such as open meetings of A.A. (Alcoholics Anonymous).

SUPPORT: Find someone to work with you, if possible. It is easier to start a meeting if two or three people are willing to commit to attending regularly for about six months. It is important that the founder(s) take their commitment seriously. When newcomers show up, they need to find the meeting. Putting up signs and directions at the location helps direct people to the room you use.

ATTRACTING MEMBERS:

- Make announcements at CLA meetings
- Display flyers in public places, such as libraries, churches, temples, schools, food markets and health food stores, bulletin boards, hospitals, banks, senior centers, and 12-Step meeting locations.
- Contact local media and place free announcements. Be sure to follow the guidelines of Tradition 11.
- Register with the closest self-help clearinghouse.
- Inform local intergroups of other 12-Step programs. Others to notify, if possible, are professional organizers, therapists, agencies for senior citizens, health departments, and fire departments.
- Get free listings in the small, local weekly newspapers, under “support groups”.

MEETING SPACE: Good places include churches of all denominations, temples, schools, hospitals, libraries, banks, public service and/or senior service centers, etc.—*especially ones that rent to other 12-Step groups*. Try to be listed in the organization’s bulletin. Ask what is required regarding rent, key arrangements, insurance, etc. Meetings may also be started in the home of a brave CLA member!

OFFICERS: After your meeting is underway, elect officers, such as secretary, treasurer, etc. The treasurer should report monthly on income from contributions and literature donations and expenses, such as rent. Your meeting should maintain a prudent reserve of two months’ rental fees.

7TH TRADITION: *We are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations.* After expenses and the prudent reserve, money can be given to your intergroup, if you have one, and WSO (World Service Organization). These contributions help to keep CLA in operation and to pay for the website, phone service, printing of literature and meeting lists, postage, and production of events.

SPEAKERS & LEADERS: Speakers and leaders are CLA members who share their CLA recovery

CLA WORLD SERVICE: Register with CLA WSO, and mail us any changes in your contact person or meeting information. We will make referrals to you from all newcomer inquiries from the website, phone, mail, email, etc., as well as from those who are traveling and/or seeking to start a group.

REACH OUT: If there are no other CLA meetings in your area, get in touch with other CLA groups across the country. WSO can furnish contact names and addresses.

ENJOY THE PROCESS: Share the work as much as possible. Call on WSO for help. Good luck!

Clutterers AnonymousSM World Service Organization (CLA WSO)

Mail: CLA, PO Box 91413, Los Angeles, CA 90009. Phone: (866) 402-6685; recording that lists all meetings

Website: www.ClutterersAnonymous.org

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CLASM Meeting 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. Please be aware that when a member talks with you outside of the meetings, it is considered private communication, to be kept confidential, exclusively between you and that member.

In short, as a member of the CLA Fellowship, you are required to maintain the privacy and anonymity of your fellow members, at all times, under all circumstances unless permission is given.

Please keep the focus of your sharing on your growth and recovery. Please keep your opinions or judgments about other members to yourself. This means not using up sharing time to express anger, dissatisfaction, or any negativity concerning fellow members. Additionally, our Fellowship strives to focus on positive, progress- and hope-oriented language in achieving our goals, so please be supportive of this intention.

Please make every effort to arrive at the meeting on time. The meeting begins promptly at _____, and it depends on member attendance and participation 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 that you can in this regard.

We are defined as a 12-Step recovery group, based on the principles of A.A. That means that we are not a therapy group. We do not use our meeting time to process feelings or other personal reactions regarding our members. Comments by one member about another member, other than occasional brief expressions of kindness and compassion, are not relevant to our meeting purposes.

Please be aware that violations of our privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality, as well as negative communications about or toward another member, are grounds for asking the member committing these violations to leave the group. By attending group meetings, it is understood that you are willing to respect our group code of conduct. All members are expected to do so. In our shared commitment to support this code to keep our Fellowship strong, we express gratitude and appreciation to all members.



Importance of Anonymity

In accordance with Tradition 11, Clutterers Anonymous (CLA) members have always taken care to preserve their anonymity at the public levels of press, radio, television, films, and all other media.

Since stigma is attached to the term “clutterer,” a reluctance to be identified and publicized is easy to understand. We have come to know the positive values of anonymity.

First, we know from experience that many problem clutterers might hesitate to turn to CLA for help if they thought that others might discuss their problem publicly, even inadvertently. Newcomers should be able to seek help with assurance that their identities and what they say will not be disclosed to anyone inside or outside of the Fellowship.

Then, too, we believe that the concept of personal anonymity has a spiritual significance for us. It discourages the drives for personal recognition, power, prestige, or profit that have caused difficulties in some organizations. Much of our relative effectiveness in working with clutterers might be impaired if we sought, or accepted, public recognition.

While each member of CLA is free to make his or her own interpretations of the Traditions, no individual member is ever recognized as a spokesperson for the Fellowship. Each member speaks only for himself or herself.

Any CLA member may, for various reasons, break anonymity deliberately at the public level. Since this is a matter of individual choice and conscience, the Fellowship as a whole obviously has no control over such deviations from CLA Traditions. It is clear, however, that such individuals do not have the approval of the overwhelming majority of members.

CLA is indebted to all media for their assistance in strengthening the Tradition of anonymity over the years.



MEDIA GUIDELINES

Guidelines for Dealing with the Media

In the spirit of the 12 Traditions, we ask you never to use your last name or to show your face in any way, shape or form if you choose to state that you are a member of CLASM. This helps to protect your “anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and all other media,” and your integrity, as well as that of CLA as a whole.

When sharing your “experience, strength, and hope,” please remember to state:

- “My experience is...”
- “In my opinion...,” or
- “I’ve come to believe....”

We want to make it clear to the media/press that the person speaking is a clutterer helping other clutterers and that it is that individual’s opinion and experience in recovery...not necessarily the view of Clutterers Anonymous as a whole.

Thank you for your service today in reaching out to the clutterer who still suffers

Guidelines for Contacting the Media

It is recommended that you contact the CLA World Service Organization (WSO), or an intergroup, before any encounter with the media in order to benefit from their experience.

Please make contact with CLA WSO and/or an intergroup before:

- Seeking coverage of press, radio, or television
- Contacting a newspaper to write an article about CLA
- Contacting a radio or TV station to do a story about CLA, interview members, etc.
- Giving an interview of information about CLA to the press.

When we carry the message of our program to other compulsive clutterers, they may better understand what we have come to know about cluttering and experience the relief that we have found. When we reach out to those who are still suffering, our 12 Traditions state that it is through attraction rather than promotion that we help other clutterers.

If any member has a question regarding what attraction activities are versus promotional activities, please contact an officer of WSO or of an intergroup.

Call: WSO at (866) 402-6685 or CLA East at (866) 800-3881.

Write: CLA WSO, PO Box 91413, Los Angeles, CA 90009.

Email: general@ClutterersAnonymous.org