



Meeting Suggestions, Descriptions, and Officers

This document is not to be read during the meeting.

Suggestions

Feel free to adapt this format to meet your group's needs. Optional readings may be taken from any CLASM or A.A. literature but not from outside sources. If questions come up, they are answered after the meeting.

The format mentions printed phone lists. Not all meetings use this tool; mention whatever method your group uses.

The format also mentions a variable segment. If your meeting chooses not to use this feature, feel free to delete it from the format. The Variable Focus segment of the meeting can be made up of the specific meeting types listed below:

Detailed Description of Various Meeting Types

Literature Meeting: The meeting devotes its time to reading a chapter or part of a chapter (in the case of a long chapter) from a book, a booklet, or leaflet from CLA or A.A. literature. Each person can read one or two paragraphs, a page, or even pass until the end of the piece or allotted time.

Alternatively, after one paragraph or section is read, that person shares experience, strength and hope on what was just read, for up to ___ minutes. Then we ask if others would like to share, one at a time, on what was just read. When finished with the paragraph(s), we move on to the next paragraph(s) in the same manner.

Step or Tradition Study Meeting: As the name implies, the meeting devotes time to reading a Step or Tradition. The Steps and Traditions are the foundation of the CLA Fellowship and individual recovery; therefore, we have a constant need to explore our path of recovery. The amount that is read can vary greatly; the study can be a sentence, a paragraph, or a whole chapter, depending on the time allotted. Each person is welcome to read or to pass. Members share experience, strength, and hope on the Step or Tradition that was read.

Topic Meeting: The group devotes time to recovery topic(s). Using CLA-approved literature, the members can each draw from a basket with pre-selected topics or they may suggest topic(s) for the meeting. Topics like amends, powerlessness, earmarking, forgiveness, gratitude, humility, service, streamlining, and willingness can draw out a wealth of knowledge. This topic concept can be extended to any list of items in our literature. The group can use a sequential, random, or personal choice selection process. The members take turns reading until they finish or the allotted time has passed. Then members who want to can share their experience, strength, and hope about the topic. This can mean sharing as it relates to our life experience, the baggage around it, or the difficulty with changing a particular behavior. This helps other members with similar issues.

Speaker Meeting: The meeting devotes time to a speaker. A member, usually chosen in advance, will tell his or her story of cluttering and recovery. The speaker will tell what it was like when he was cluttering, what happened to get him into CLA, and what life is like now or will describe his experience, strength, and hope. Remember that people want to hear about recovery and how the speaker uses the 12-Step program. It is suggested that the speaker should be someone who has been in CLA for at least 6 months or who has worked or is working one or more of the 12 Steps. When there is a member who speaks (or qualifies) at the meeting, it can be called a qualification meeting.

Writing Meeting: The group devotes time to writing. Questions usually focus on CLA issues, Steps, Traditions, or recovery. A volunteering member usually prepares for the meeting by reading a chapter, Step, Tradition, or meditation and then formulating questions for the group. Usually a few paragraphs—but no more than a page of text—are read aloud to the group to give context for the topic before the questions are read.

Experience shows that one to three questions are about all an individual can write on in a short time.

Big Book Study: This type of meeting is devoted to the study of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, which is known as the Big Book. The amount that is read can vary greatly. The study can be a sentence, a paragraph, or a whole chapter, depending on the time allowed. Personal shares follow.

Newcomers Meeting: Newcomers meetings are separate special introductory meetings. They give newcomers an opportunity to learn more about the program, ask any questions that they have about Clutterers Anonymous, share specific concerns, or share about what brought them to CLA.

The purpose of a newcomers meeting is to acquaint newcomers with the CLA program. Newcomers will start to understand Clutterers Anonymous and how they can begin to work the program, one day at a time. Newcomers are welcome at all meetings all the time. This meeting is led by an experienced CLA member.

Meeting Officers

Clutterers Anonymous does not decide how a group will organize its business affairs. However, CLA does make suggestions on how a group may choose to organize its service work.

CLA has no regular bureaucratic business model of politics, profit, power, or prestige. However, there are jobs within each group to be done by our trusted servants if the group is to survive, thrive, and grow. Service positions and rotation of leadership help keep the meeting healthy and operating smoothly.

A typical meeting may have some combination of these service positions but is not limited to them. All of the service positions are important in establishing opportunities for many members to take part in 12-Step service work. In a meeting where several members each do a job, all of the tasks get done. Although some service positions require more experience in the Fellowship, the other jobs are equally important. Service work is best performed in a spirit of humility and is guided by the principles in the Steps and the Traditions.

Group service positions may consist of:

- Chairperson
- Greeter/Outreach Representative
- Intergroup Representative (if your area has an intergroup)
- Leader
- Literature Coordinator
- Phone List Coordinator
- Secretary
- Speaker (shares his or her personal experience, strength, and hope)
- Speaker Coordinator
- Timekeeper
- Treasurer
- WSO Delegate



Preamble of Clutterers AnonymousSM

Clutterers Anonymous (CLASM) 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.

The Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) Preamble has been adapted with the permission of the *AA Grapevine*, Inc. Permission to adapt the A.A. preamble does not mean that A.A. is affiliated with this program. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism only—use of A.A.'s Preamble or an adapted version of its Preamble in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, or use in any other non-A.A. context, does not imply otherwise.



Crosstalk

Crosstalk is discouraged during our meetings. Examples of crosstalk are:

- Advice-giving, criticizing, or making comments about what others have already shared,
- Questioning or interrupting the person speaking,
- Talking while someone is sharing, or
- Speaking directly to another person rather than to the group.

By avoiding crosstalk, we accept what others say because it is true for them. Together we create a safe environment for self-discovery. Trust, confidentiality, and honesty allow us the freedom to reveal our secrets, our fears, our deepest hurts, our worst mistakes, and admit to one another the vulnerable, undisclosed aspects of ourselves. It further encourages the individual's own ability to hear the truth as spoken to his or her heart.

Crosstalk doesn't forbid a person from speaking on a topic already mentioned during the meeting. However, there are some basic guidelines that we, as a Fellowship, have found to be helpful. First and foremost, when we speak, we share about our own experience honestly: what it was like, what happened, and what it is like for us now.

Experience has shown us that the greatest progress occurs when we each focus on our own recovery. When we focus on our own thoughts, feelings, behaviors, actions, activities, and recovery, we are taking responsibility for our own lives. Let us keep our focus on ourselves, using first-person statements like *I think*, *I feel*, and *I need* as we share our own experience, strength, and hope in CLA. Remember that you are not speaking to please other people or to fix someone else or being graded on your recovery. You are speaking to help yourself! In this way, we are better able to truly assist our fellow brothers and sisters in recovery.



Newcomer Welcome

At this time, we want to give our newcomer(s) a special welcome. Once you have made it through our doors, you no longer have to feel alone. Many of us who come into these rooms have struggled with similar experiences of being ashamed, confused, discouraged, or overwhelmed by our clutter.

We honor and applaud the courage it took for you to attend our meeting. We encourage you to attend at least six meetings before you decide whether the program of Clutterers AnonymousSM is right for you. All meetings follow similar formats, but each meeting has a different personality. Often, by attending these six meetings, you will start to identify with some of the stories of the people you see and hear at them. Our meetings are not always going to be perfect, but we can still find recovery in them, despite their imperfections.

Recovery comes with a 100% guarantee. Come and try our program. If you're not satisfied with the results, if your life doesn't get better, or if you don't like what CLASM has to offer, we'll cheerfully refund your misery at any time!

But, if you have a simple, heartfelt desire for living a full and effective life, we invite you to join us on a regular basis. We encourage you to stay until the miracle happens to you. Over time, both you and your life will change, as we give freely of what we have found. However, this program is not easy. It takes courage and strength to face our personal histories, our lives, and ourselves. If you work this program, it will give you the tools and freedom to live a self-affirming life.

We invite you to keep coming back. It works. We know that you are worth it. Do you?



What Is Clutter?

Clutter is anything we don't need, want, or use that takes our time, energy, or space and destroys our serenity. It can be outgrown clothes, obsolete papers, broken toys, disliked gifts, meaningless activity, ancient resentments, or unsatisfying relationships. We may be selective in some areas but not in others. Objects may be strewn about or wedged into drawers, neatly stacked or stowed in storage.

Our clutter seems to have a life of its own, to multiply without effort on our part. We may feel overwhelmed, controlled by our possessions, or doomed to be hopelessly disorganized. No matter how we deal with our clutter, it can be a source of pain and shame to ourselves and to those with whom we live.

Despite this pain, we fear throwing things out. We think we might need it, fix it, or wear it again. We don't want to be wasteful or ungrateful. We don't know what to keep and what to discard. We don't know how much is enough.

Decluttering is not merely eliminating but gradually transforming our space so that we surround ourselves only with things that express our purpose. It means turning something useless into something useful; creating more leisure and space; being more honest in our relationships; eliminating distractions; and simplifying our lives in order to find our spiritual roots.

Although we may cling to our clutter, what we really yearn for are surroundings of beauty, order, serenity; a balanced life; and harmonious relationships. How do we achieve this? We have found that taking the 12 Steps can help.



Am I a Clutterer?

1. Do you have more possessions than you can comfortably handle?
2. Are you embarrassed to invite family, friends, health care providers, or maintenance workers into your home because it is not presentable?
3. Do you find it easier to drop something instead of putting it away or to wedge it into an overcrowded drawer or closet rather than finding space for it?
4. Is your home, or any part of it, unusable for its intended purpose, with a bed you can't sleep in, a garage you can't park in, a kitchen you can't cook in, or a table you can't use for dining?
5. Is clutter causing problems at home, at work, or in your relationships?
6. Do you hesitate sharing about this problem because you feel embarrassment, guilt, or shame about it?
7. Do you have a weakness for discarded objects, bargain items, freebies, reading materials, or yard sales?
8. Do you use avoidance, distraction, or procrastination to escape dealing with your clutter?
9. Does your clutter create a risk of falling, fire, infestation, or eviction?
10. Do you avoid starting assignments, miss deadlines, or abandon projects because you can't find the paperwork or material you need?
11. Do you have difficulty making decisions about what to do with your possessions, daily living, or life in general?
12. Do you rent storage space to house possessions that you rarely use?
13. Do cleaning, organizing, follow through, upkeep, and maintenance all become daunting tasks, making the simplest of chores insurmountable?
14. Do you bring an item into your home without designating a place for it and releasing an equivalent one?
15. Do you believe that there is all the time in the world to clean your house, finish those projects, and read all those piles of old magazines or newspapers?
16. Are you easily sidetracked, moving from one project to another, without finishing any of them?
17. Are you constantly doing things for others while your own home is out of order?
18. Do you often replace possessions rather than find or clean those you already have?
19. Does perfectionism keep you from doing anything at all?
20. Does clutter cause you to have late charges added to your monthly financial obligations?
21. Do you feel a strong sense of emotional attachment toward your possessions, which makes it difficult to release them?
22. Do you consider all your possessions to be of equal worth, whether or not the objects have financial, functional, or sentimental value?
23. Do you waste your valuable time and talents by constantly rescuing yourself from clutter?
24. Does clutter keep you from enjoying quality leisure time?
25. Is the clutter problem growing?



Clutterers' Traits

We may identify with some, or all, of these items.

1. We have more possessions or items in our lives than we can keep track of.
2. We find it difficult to dispose of many things. Sometimes we believe that the item might be needed someday and not be available. Other times, we realize that there is no reason for keeping it, yet we still can't discard it.
3. Some of us may be neat, yet feel that we are still weighed down by clutter. We may rent additional space to store items that we know we will never use.
4. Many of us are messy. We often spend time looking for items like eyeglasses or keys. Many times, important papers may be buried in our piles. We find it easier to drop something than to put it away, or to wedge an object into an overcrowded drawer or closet than to find a space for it.
5. Clutter causes problems with relationships. Those we live with may feel threatened by our invasion of their space. We are embarrassed by visitors. We hesitate sharing about this problem because we are ashamed of our cluttering.
6. Clutter may hinder us in dealing with our obligations. We cannot recall where we put a borrowed object. We miss deadlines because we cannot find the material we need.
7. Clutter may keep us from carrying out projects. It takes so long to find materials and space to do them that we give up the attempt.
8. We cannot judge the time needed to start or complete a task. Sometimes we get buried in details, making projects take longer than is really necessary.
9. Our perfectionism causes us to procrastinate and delay getting started on a project. Sometimes our perfectionism stops us from beginning at all. This creates avoidance and may cause feelings of guilt.
10. Some of us use the scattergun approach, never taking the time to determine our goals and set our priorities. We just take care of the surface.
11. Many of us are easily sidetracked. We begin one project and soon find ourselves beginning another, and then another. We find it difficult to stay focused on a task to completion.
12. Often we value people more than we value things. This is not wrong in itself unless we find that we are constantly doing for others while our own home is out of order.
13. Many of us slip out of clock time. We think that we have all the time in the world. This is poor time management and affects our relationships with others.
14. We tell ourselves that one day we will deal with our clutter. We may have made attempts from time to time, but these work only temporarily, for we lack the strength to stick with them. The problem seems to be growing and endless; at times it appears hopeless. We want to change, but we don't know where to begin.



The Twelve Steps of Clutterers AnonymousSM

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



CLASM Tools of Recovery

In working the Clutterers Anonymous program of recovery from cluttering, we have found that there are a number of tools available to assist us. We use these tools to help us achieve and maintain physical, mental, and spiritual sobriety. Many of us have found that we cannot abstain from compulsive cluttering unless we use some, or all, of the tools. ACTION is the magic word. We have found that these actions are helpful to create an environment of harmony, order, beauty, and serenity for us.

1. **Service:** The CLA program gives us the opportunity to enhance our own progress by taking on various service responsibilities, from holding office to doing cleanup. As we serve, we risk moving out of isolation, to grow, and to practice the principles of our program within the Fellowship. Service is giving back to the Fellowship.
2. **Meetings:** We attend meetings to learn how the program works and to share our experience, strength, and hope with each other. Meetings give us an opportunity to identify with others who have our common problem and move out of isolation.
3. **Sponsorship:** Sponsorship is a personal and confidential, one-on-one relationship between two clutterers. Sponsorship helps both the sponsor and sponsee. It is customary that a sponsor have a sponsor. The CLA sponsor guides the sponsee through the program and the 12 Steps and is not necessarily a friend, but someone in whom we can confide. Sponsors share their program up to the level of their Step experience, strength, and hope. Choosing a sponsor involves going to several meetings to find someone with whom we can identify—someone who has the type of recovery that we want.
4. **Literature:** We use CLA- and AA-approved* literature. Literature is an always-available tool that helps us gain insight, as well as strength, to deal with our problem.
5. **Bookending:** We bookend when we talk to other CLA members before and after taking difficult steps in our recovery. This way we can hold ourselves accountable for completing a specific task or project.
6. **Buddies:** Buddies are CLA members and helpmates in recovery. We may call them with our daily plan or ask for help with a project. The buddy and sponsor may or may not be the same person.
7. **Daily Action:** We do something each day to further our recovery, doing what we can, no matter how small. Our goal is progress, not perfection.
8. **Earmarking:** We provide a place for our possessions and return them there. We create a home for anything before bringing it in. When we add a new item, we release an old one. For accessibility, beauty, and peace of mind, we keep some empty space.
9. **Focusing:** Our goal is to do one thing at a time.

10. **Streamlining:** We honor what we own by setting limits on our possessions. We keep only those items we use and for which we have space. We realize that the more we acquire, the less we enjoy what we already have.
11. **Telephone:** We use the phone to keep in touch with other members of the Fellowship between meetings. Talking on the phone helps both members.
12. **Trust:** We simplify our lives, believing that when we need a fact or an item, it will be available to us.



Cutting Through Denial

1. I NEVER KNOW WHEN IT MIGHT COME IN HANDY.
When was the last time you used it?
2. IF I THROW IT AWAY, I'LL JUST HAVE TO GO OUT AND BUY ANOTHER ONE.
When was the last time you used it?
3. SOMONE WOULD BE VERY GLAD TO HAVE THIS. Give it to them.
4. I GOT IT FOR PRACTICALLY NOTHING. IT WAS TOO GOOD A BARGAIN TO PASS UP.
When was the last time you used it?
5. IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO GET A COMPLETE SET. When was the last time you used it?
6. IT WILL BE WORTH A LOT SOMEDAY. In the meantime, what use is it now?
7. THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF USE LEFT IN THIS. When was the last time you used it?
8. I MIGHT WANT TO REREAD THAT BOOK SOMEDAY.
Give it to the library and borrow it someday.
9. IT WAS A GIFT FROM A FRIEND. When was the last time you used it?
10. I'M WAITING UNTIL I CAN FIT INTO IT AGAIN. How long has it been since you wore it?
11. THERE'S STILL LOTS OF WEAR IN THIS. How long has it been since you wore it?
12. I'M WAITING FOR IT TO COME BACK INTO STYLE. How long has it been since you wore it?
13. IT BELONGED TO SOMEONE WHO DIED. How long has it been since you used it?
14. IF I GAVE IT AWAY, IT WOULD BE EXPENSIVE TO REPLACE.
How long has it been since you used it?
15. THIS JUST NEEDS A PART OR TWO, AND THEN I'LL USE IT.
How long has it been lacking parts?
16. I'M SAVING IT FOR (MY GARAGE SALE, MY CHILDREN, MY TRIP TO ALASKA, ETC.)
How long have you been saving it?
17. I'M KEEPING IT FOR SENTIMENTAL REASONS. When was the last time you looked at it?
18. THIS IS QUALITY, AND IMPOSSIBLE TO REPLACE. When was the last time you used it?
19. I SPENT A LOT OF MONEY ON THAT. When was the last time you used it?
20. IF I GIVE IT AWAY, I KNOW I'LL BE SORRY. When was the last time you used it?

THE BOTTOM LINE IS:

How much time, money, and energy have you spent storing the items that you know you will *never* use? Use it or lose it.



The Twelve Traditions of Clutterers Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CLA 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 the message to the person who still suffers.
6. A CLA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the Clutterers Anonymous 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 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 Promises

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through.

We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.

We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.

We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.

No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.

That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.

We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.

Self-seeking will slip away.

Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.

Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.

We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used 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 are being fulfilled among us—sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.

They will always materialize if we work for them.



Recovery Affirmations

Many clutterers have found it helpful to replace negative self-talk with affirmations. An affirmation is a positive, present-tense statement that we choose to tell ourselves using the first-person pronoun. Often, our inner dialogue reflects negative self-scripting messages that immobilize us from taking risks in life, prevent us from wanting to make changes, and freeze our feelings into negative life patterns. We can choose to empower ourselves through nurturing our minds and spirits by stating and writing self-affirming statements.

1. As I declutter my life, I open up space to receive the support and comfort that I need.
2. As I let go of what is insignificant to me, I am better able to enjoy those things that are important to me.
3. Before I accept any new commitments, I release one that demands equivalent time and energy.
4. I accept my progress as proceeding in my Higher Power's time.
5. I acknowledge and celebrate all my victories, small and large.
6. I affirm abundance and prosperity, thus releasing my need to hoard and control things.
7. I allocate space and time for each item that I have or bring into my home and life.
8. I allot more time than I need for a task or trip, allowing a comfortable margin for the unexpected.
9. I am entitled to surroundings of beauty, harmony, order, and serenity.
10. I am ready, willing, and able to change my relationship with clutter.
11. I create at least one clutter-free zone or room in which I keep only items I use and love.
12. I actively participate in my own life.
13. I gratefully accept "what is," rather than demanding that people, places, and things be my way.
14. I guard my integrity by principles, not yielding to external pressure.
15. I live in a clutter-free environment: physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.
16. I lovingly release those items that are no longer useful, trusting that whatever I need will be provided.
17. I participate with my clutter by putting my attention and action on it in the present moment.
18. I schedule quiet time for communing with my Higher Power.
19. I set reasonable goals, remembering that my first priority is my well-being.

20. I trust my ability to make the best decisions regarding my belongings, purchases, and commitments.
21. I trust myself to know what is important vs. unimportant, sufficient vs. excessive, or necessary vs. inconsequential.
22. People and relationships are more important than my lifeless possessions.
23. Time is a precious gift, so I use it wisely.
24. With every item I release, I create space in my life for more joy and energy, as well as new insights and experiences, to come in.
25. With the help of my Higher Power, I take responsibility for manifesting my desires, wants, and dreams.



Realization Closing

In closing, the opinions expressed here were those of the person who gave them, not CLA as a whole. Take what you like and leave the rest.

The words you heard here were spoken in confidence and should be treated as confidential. Keep them within the walls of this room and the confines of your mind.

In the spirit of preserving anonymity of all CLA members, we say, “whom you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here.” “Let it stay here” is a good rule to follow in creating a safe place to share our feelings, experience, and recovery without fear of gossip, retaliation, or our anonymity being broken.

The following paragraph is reprinted from the “Finding Your Life Purpose” leaflet. “As you declutter, we hope that you will remember that you are not merely finding lost keys and bankbooks, not only discarding obsolete projects, not just making space for guests—you are finding yourself. You find that you learn to know and accept yourself as a valuable human being no matter how imperfect or perfect you once thought yourself to be. You are clearing away the wreckage of your past. You are being responsible for small things, so that you can be entrusted with larger ones. You are making room for your true purpose to emerge. Go with your Higher Power and know that you are blessed.”

Keep coming back. It works!



Announcements

1. My name is _____. I am a recovering clutterer.
2. I would like to thank _____ for leading the meeting today. (Optional)
3. Are there any newcomers who have come in since the beginning of the meeting? If so, and you have not already identified yourselves, would you like to do so now? Please say your first name. Welcome to CLASM. If you have any questions, please ask after the meeting.
4. I'd like to thank those who do service at this meeting:
(Mention only those positions applicable to your meeting.)
Treasurer _____
Literature person _____
WSO delegate/intergroup representative _____
Newcomer contact(s) _____
Timekeeper for this meeting _____
5. Are there any CLA-related announcements? (Business meetings may also be announced.)
6. A list of phone numbers is circulating. Please feel free to write down your first name, phone number, and/or email. You may write down contact information of others who have inspired you or take a printed list if there is one. The telephone is one of the tools of the CLA program.
7. Parking is available...(indicate location). Does anyone need a ride? (Optional.)
8. Thank you for allowing me to be of service.
9. Before I turn this meeting back to _____, let's thank him/her one more time! (Optional.)



Clutterers AnonymousSM Suggested Meeting Format

Please honor time and people by starting and ending on time.

(Items printed in this font are leader notes. They are not to be read aloud during the meeting but are directional. Distribute meeting documents before the meeting starts. How you distribute them is your choice. They are all separate pages in the meeting binder. Some have two readings back to back when the reader will choose to read one of the two. Meetings are forums for learning how to integrate the Steps and Traditions into our lives.)

Opening Segment

1. Open the Meeting:

“Good (morning/afternoon/evening), and welcome to the _____ meeting of Clutterers Anonymous. My name is _____. I am a recovering clutterer and your leader for this meeting. This will be a one-and-one-half-hour meeting. Please hold any questions for after the meeting. Feel free to come up and talk with anyone after the meeting.”

2. Opening Prayer:

“Understand that, even though we use prayers, we are not a religious program but a spiritual one based upon the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. All atheists, agnostics, and believers are welcome at CLASM. Please help me to open this meeting with a moment of silence for the clutterer who still suffers. Would those who wish to do so, please join me in reciting the (choose Universal, Keep & Release or Organized life) prayer together.”

3. Preamble Reading:

“Will someone please introduce yourself and read the **Preamble**.”

4. Crosstalk Reading:

“In this meeting, we want to encourage open sharing by giving our full and courteous attention to the person who is speaking, so we ask that there be no crosstalk. You are welcome to pass at any time if you would rather just sit and listen. To respect our time together, we request that all electronic devices be turned off or silenced now.”

“Will someone please introduce yourself and read ‘**Crosstalk**.’”

5. Introductions and Check-ins:

“Let’s go around the room for our voluntary introductions and recovery check-ins. Please say your first names only. If this is your first or second meeting of Clutterers Anonymous, please tell us you are a newcomer, so we can welcome you and invite you to keep coming back. If you wish, you can give a brief statement of 30 seconds or less about your previous week’s recovery commitment or pass if you choose. We encourage you to share what specific Step, Tradition, principle, or tool supported your recovery. Please do not share the “background story” or history. Let’s start with _____.”

“Welcome. If you are having problems with clutter or think you may be a clutterer, you have come to the right place; keep coming back. It works!”

6. Newcomers Welcome Reading:

(Read ONLY if newcomers are present.)

Read the **Newcomer Welcome**.

Carrying the Program's Message Segment

7. Clutter/Clutterer Reading:

"Will someone please introduce yourself and read either **What Is Clutter?** or **How Do I Know if I'm a Clutterer?**"

8. Steps Reading:

"Personal recovery in CLA is based on the 12 Steps and is strongly recommended as the program of action. Will someone please introduce yourself and read the **12 Steps.**"

9. Meeting Announcements:

(These are facility logistics and group policy announcements.)

Bathrooms are located _____. The **drinking fountain** is _____.

- A **voluntary sign-in sheet** is being passed around. Please print your first name and last initial. Your phone number and email address are optional but encouraged. If phone number is included, your name will be added to our printed phone list and made available to meeting participants to have support calls between meetings. Feel free to take a copy of the **printed phone list** (if your group has one).
- Please shred any old phone number lists in respect for the anonymity and confidentiality of all members.
- Meetings are held every _____ except on Federal holidays.
- We suggest that you have a Home Group. This is a group you attend regularly, get support from your sponsor and your 12-Step friends, serve in one of the service positions, and make a commitment to support the meeting's long-term success.
- **Literature** is _____ (location) _____. A complete set of the CLA leaflets and the Booklet "Is CLA for You?" are available for _____ suggested donation.

10. Tools/Denial Reading

"Will someone please introduce yourself and read either **Tools of Recovery** or **Cutting Through Denial.**"

11. Service Announcements and Reports:

"Our monthly Business Meeting is held on _____. Anyone who wishes to attend is welcome. Are there any CLA-related announcements or meeting officer's reports tonight?"

(Ask someone to speak about an Officer position. Positions may include: greeter, literature coordinator, phone list coordinator, public information officer, leader, secretary, speaker, time keeper, treasurer, intergroup representative, and WSO delegate)

12. Traditions Reading and Passing the Basket:

"The Traditions guide and direct the decisions and actions of each CLA group and our Fellowship. Will someone please introduce yourself and read the **12 Traditions.**"

"The 7th Tradition says that there are no dues or fees for CLA membership. However, we are self-supporting by our own contributions. Most people contribute a dollar or two. If you cannot contribute at this time, keep coming back. We need you more than your money.

"Our group and CLA service bodies do have expenses. The donation collected is used to cover the general operating expenses of the meeting, such as rent and literature. Surplus funds are used to support the services carried out by intergroups and the World Service Organization, such as office expenses, website upgrades and maintenance, administration, phone, and outreach far and wide."

Variable Focus Segment

(The Variable Focus segment usually gets between 10 and 20 minutes.)

(If options are given, it is the leader's responsibility to choose one. You can find detailed descriptions about these common meeting types used in the Variable Focus segment in the document called "Meeting Suggestions, Descriptions, and Officers.")

13. "We have reached the Variable Focus segment of the meeting."

(In this sample, the group has elected to have a different meeting type each week of the month. Choose between reading all the weeks or only the current week's statement.)

Week 1 is a Step Study; we read and share on the Step corresponding to the month we are in.

Week 2 is a Literature Meeting; we read and share from CLA literature. (Choose tonight's reading.)

Week 3 is a Tradition Study; we read and share on the Tradition corresponding to the month we are in.

Week 4 is a Speaker Meeting; we encourage a person to take 5-15 minutes to share what it was like when they were cluttering, what happened to get them into CLA, and what life is like now from working the program. It is suggested that anyone who has been in CLA for at least six months and/or is working or has worked the Steps can volunteer to speak

Week 5 is a Topic Meeting; we read and share from a grab bag or meditation books

Personal Sharing Segment

(The Personal Sharing segment is allotted the largest amount of time.)

14. Open Personal Sharing:

"As we open our meeting to the personal sharing segment, remember that there is a difference between dumping, reporting, and sharing. *Dumping* means describing all of the awful things that happened during the week or it is a long, detailed description of what others have done to you. *Reporting* is a blow-by-blow description of facts, conversations, events, and day-to-day happenings. *Sharing* involves the willingness to share our thoughts, our feelings, and our selves with others unselfishly, focusing on our own experience, strength, and hope in CLA.

"Clutterers Anonymous has brought recovery to many people who had lost hope; therefore, we want to hear how we each practice the CLA program of recovery. We all honor the 10th Tradition by refraining from using meeting time to discuss other 12-Step/recovery programs, or outside enterprises, such as commercial books, tapes, workshops, and websites. Please limit your share to 3-5 minutes to provide everyone with the opportunity to share. If you do not wish to share, simply say, 'Pass.' Personal sharing is now open. Who would like to start?"

(Leave the last 10-12 minutes for all the remaining items)

15. Inviting Newcomer Personal Sharing:

"Our group likes to save the last few minutes of the meeting for the newcomer(s) to share, if they have not shared and would like to, or they may pass."

16. End Personal Sharing:

"Thank you, that's all the time we have for open sharing. If there wasn't an opportunity for you to speak and you would like to or you have questions that went unanswered, please talk to someone after the meeting."

Closing Segment

17. Commitments:

“Now let us go around the room for us each to share our recovery commitment for the coming week. Each person is welcome to give a brief statement for 30 seconds or less, or pass if you choose. We are encouraged to practice the principles embodied in the Steps and Traditions, to use the tools, and to take action on a daily basis. Please do not share the “back-story” or history. Who would like to start?”

18. Promises/Affirmations Reading:

“Will someone please introduce yourself and read either the **Promises of Recovery** or the **Recovery Affirmations**.”

19. Realization Closing Reading:

“Will someone please introduce yourself and read the **Realization Closing**.”
(If closing prayers are not distributed, do so now.)

16. Close the Meeting:

“Thank you for allowing me to be your leader tonight. I will need people to help me clean up after the meeting by gathering readings together, packing up the literature, and rearranging the tables and chairs so we leave the room as it was found.

“You are welcome to stay and socialize after the meeting, but if you happen to be the last person in the room, please shut off the lights and close the door. Before we close the meeting, we will now share a moment of silent meditation for the person who still suffers.”

“Will all who care to join me in reciting the (choose one by name) prayer together, please stand and join hands.”

Keep coming back. It works if you work it, so work it; you're worth it!



Clutterers AnonymousSM Suggested Meeting Format (for Shorter Meetings)

Please honor time and people by starting and ending on time.

(Items printed in this font are leader notes. They are not to be read aloud during the meeting but are directional. Distribute meeting documents before the meeting starts. How you distribute them is your choice. They are all separate pages in the meeting binder. Some have two readings back to back when the reader will choose to read one of the two. Meetings are forums for learning how to integrate the Steps and Traditions into our lives.)

Opening Segment

1. Open the Meeting:

“Good (morning/afternoon/evening), and welcome to the _____ meeting of Clutterers Anonymous. My name is _____. I am a recovering clutterer and your leader for this meeting. This will be a one-and-one-half-hour meeting. Please hold any questions for after the meeting. Feel free to come up and talk with anyone after the meeting.”

2. Opening Prayer:

“Understand that, even though we use prayers, we are not a religious program but a spiritual one based upon the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. All atheists, agnostics, and believers are welcome at CLASM. Please help me to open this meeting with a moment of silence for the clutterer who still suffers. Would those who wish to do so, please join me in reciting the (choose Universal, Keep & Release or Organized life) prayer together.”

3. Preamble Reading:

“Will someone please introduce yourself and read the **Preamble**.”

4. Crosstalk Reading:

“In this meeting, we want to encourage open sharing by giving our full and courteous attention to the person who is speaking, so we ask that there be no crosstalk. You are welcome to pass at any time if you would rather just sit and listen. To respect our time together, we request that all electronic devices be turned off or silenced now.”

“Will someone please introduce yourself and read ‘**Crosstalk**.’”

5. Introductions:

We will now go around the room and introduce ourselves by first names only. Please tell us if this is your first or second meeting of Clutterers Anonymous so we can welcome you and invite you to keep coming back. Let's start with _____.”

Carrying the Program's Message Segment

6. Steps Reading:

“Personal recovery in CLA is based on the 12 Steps and is strongly recommended as the program of action. Will someone please introduce yourself and read the **12 Steps**.”

7. Optional Reading:

“Will someone please introduce yourself and read _____.”

8. Meeting Announcements:

(These are facility logistics and group policy announcements.)

Bathrooms are located _____. The **drinking fountain** is _____.

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- Please shred any old phone number lists in respect for the anonymity and confidentiality of all members.
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