

Best Practices for CLA Groups:

These are suggestions from CLA's Public Information Committee, based on the CLA 12 Traditions.

For simplicity, singleness of purpose, and unity, it is suggested that:

- The only requirement for CLA membership is the desire to stop cluttering, and groups are encouraged to be open to all members of CLA. (Traditions 1 & 3)
Are we welcoming, inclusive and open to all who have a desire to stop cluttering?
- The focus of the group is on the message of recovery from cluttering, and the individual's focus on their own personal recovery from cluttering. (Traditions 5 & 10)
Do we talk about things other than recovery during the meeting?
Are we asking people to believe in or belong to other entities?
Do we steer the meeting into topics that digress from our primary purpose?
Do we redirect the meeting to CLA recovery when other issues are brought up?
Are our moderators/chairs able and supported to redirect the meeting when non-CLA practices, outside issues, and/or off-topic subjects are brought up?
- We refrain from talking about politics, religion, brand names of products, stores, books, social service agencies, and other 12-step programs. We read only AA and CLA approved literature, and when doing so, according to our CLA WSO guidelines, we don't change or add words. (Traditions 3, 6, & 10)
Are we reading non-CLA or non-AA approved literature?
Are we advocating non-CLA practices?
Are we discussing our personal religious practices while on CLA sponsored lines?

For orderliness, space, and openness:

- The group is where we come to recover. (Traditions 1, 5, & 12)
Are we bringing our clutter (verbal, mental, emotional, time, relationship) into the meeting?
Do we have a way to give a "gentle reminder" when attendees stray from CLA matters?
Do we have procedures in place to prevent disruptions, and protocols to follow, should such disruptions occur?

- We recommend that groups have a clear position on their meetings being open* or closed**, and to have a clear policy regarding the publication of access (phone, in-person or online) based on the group's preferences. (Traditions 1, 3, & 4)
**An "Open" meeting means that anyone may attend, including people who might not identify as clutterers, members of other 12 Step fellowships, health professionals, and family members.*
***A "Closed" meeting means that attendance is limited to people with a desire to stop cluttering.*
Do we know if our meeting(s) is(are) open or closed?
Is our group's access information being shared and our privacy being respected and maintained as we want it to be?
- We suggest having written formats to help minimize the tendency to insert personal opinions or to "dump" instead of share. (Traditions 2, 5, & 10)
Does our group have a written format?
Is our group's format accessible to its members and/or on the CLA website?
- Schedule regular group conscience business meetings to resolve concerns, respond to needs, and rotate leadership, making sure there are sufficient service positions to support the group's expressed desires. (Traditions 2, 4, 8, & 9)
When is our next group conscience business meeting?
When was the last rotation of leadership?
- We make sure to implement the business meeting's group conscience to our recovery meetings. (Traditions 2 & 4)
Do we know where our business meeting minutes are located?
Have we implemented the group conscience?

For serenity, tolerance, and harmony:

- Be aware of the "CLA Group Code of Conduct Statement" and "About Crosstalk". These documents are available on the CLA Website. (Traditions 1 & 5)
Do we discourage crosstalk?
Do we interrupt or go "off script" when moderating?
- Show respect for all CLA members and groups. (Traditions 1, 4, 10, 11, & 12)
Do we gossip or use negative language which harms or disparages other groups or members?
Do we follow the "CLA Group Code of Conduct Statement" and "About Crosstalk" guidelines?

- Consider whether you or your group’s behavior will negatively impact other groups or CLA in general. (Traditions 1, 4, 11, & 12)
Are we doing anything that greatly affects other groups?
Do we protect our fellowship and our group by respecting copyrights and trademarks?
- Be open and tolerant of all the various ways individuals and groups might practice their spirituality, or absence thereof, being mindful to avoid imposing our judgments and beliefs on others. (Traditions 3, 5, 6, 10, & 12)
Are we discussing religion or religious tenets at our meeting?
Do we accept and welcome spiritual diversity?
Is our group endorsing, directly or indirectly through its language, a specific religious tradition or belief system?
Are the spiritual language, concepts and/or prayers we use sensitive to participants’ diverse spirituality?
- Be mindful, especially in a leadership position (like meeting moderator), that personal opinion is just that, and not the “official position” of CLA. “Principles above personalities” means we don’t have experts in CLA or authorities. (Traditions 2, 8, 10, & 12)
Do our leaders appear to speak on behalf of CLA as though they are in charge?
Are we turning to humans as CLA authorities rather than as simply experienced resources?
Do moderators have guidelines and suggestions for facilitating effective meetings?
- Know that the group belongs to its members, not to any individual(s). (Traditions 2, 9, 11, & 12)
Does one person “own” the meeting, or is there space and access for others to voice their opinions and preferences?
Do we refer to our meeting and/or group by a person’s name?
Is our group being guided by program principles of service, or is it being influenced by governing individuals?

For maintenance:

- Make sure your group’s voice is heard and that your group hears CLA WSO. Send a group delegate to the monthly CLA WSO General Meeting; register your group annually with CLA WSO; make sure your group’s website listing information is accurate; use and encourage use of the www.clutterersanonymous.org website. (Traditions 1, 4, 8, & 9)
Does our group have a delegate?
Does our delegate go to the WSO monthly meeting?

Is our group's listing on the website accurate?

- Groups ought to have fiscal integrity: paying their bills, maintaining a prudent reserve of money and resources (using the rest quickly and freely), while not supporting outside entities. This may be accomplished by having a group treasurer who keeps a separate accounting and reports to the group regularly about their financial circumstances. (Traditions 6 & 7)

Do we need and have a group treasurer? If so, who is it?

What is the status of our group's finances?

Is our group fully self-supporting?

- Make sure the group protects members' personally identifiable information (e.g. full name or picture). (Traditions 11 & 12)

Are we protecting our group's members' anonymity and confidentiality online, in print, broadcast and social media at the public level?

Thanks for reading and reviewing these Best Practices in your CLA Recovery Group!

For questions, comments, or concerns regarding this information, please contact:

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