

On-Line AA Skype Meetings Format

[This is our suggested format for the on-line Skype meetings. We are fortunate to have this option and many of us find talking on-line is the next best thing to in-person meetings. When face to face meetings are not an option, this format works well to reinforce the principles of our program. We recognize that in-person meetings are an excellent resource and should be attended when possible. We also recognize that Skype meetings can be dangerous in their anonymity (we are asked to be anonymous to the World, not to each other) and we remember that face to face meetings and 12th Step work are still important aspects of our program.]

Pre-meeting tasks for the chair person:

- Identify the readers of the Preamble, How It Works, and the Daily Reflection
- Identify a member to host the conference (call owner)
- Identify all members who would like to be called during the meeting

<Please note that the meetings may be changed by a majority Group Conscience and the following is only a suggestion.>

Meeting Outline

1. The chair person will open the meeting by introducing themselves as well as identifying who is hosting the conference call. – *“My name is _____ and I am an alcoholic. I will chair tonight and _____ is the host of the conference call. Welcome to our on-line Skype meeting. We are glad you are here. These meetings work similar to live face to face meetings and will run about 1 hour. We operate by the guidelines of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. Thanks for being a part of our group and we appreciate any input or suggestions you have after the meeting.”*
2. The chair person will outline the best practices for Skype meetings. These include:
 - a. Mute your microphone when you are not speaking
 - b. Do not engage in “cross talk” or comment during another members speaking time
 - c. Do not speak twice before everyone who would like to speak has spoken
 - d. Keep the total amount of meeting time in mind when determining how long to speak
3. Preamble
4. Seventh Tradition – *“We will now remind our members of the seventh tradition which states ‘Every AA Group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.’ We encourage those of you who wish to make contributions to make them on-line to the General Service Office or to a local AA Group in your location.”*
5. How It Works
6. Daily Reflection
7. Open Sharing - The chair person now asks if anyone has a topic related to their recovery that they would like to speak about. If no one volunteers, the Daily Reflection may be used of the chair may have something prepared before the meeting.
8. The chair will thank everyone for attending and lead the serenity prayer.

Skype Best Practices

1. All members should try to keep their computers updated with the latest version of Skype to avoid compatibility issues as well as to enable all functionality. This will also aid in allowing members to help other members with troubleshooting or technical help.
2. Always mute your microphone by selecting the appropriate button in the conversation window (right window).
3. Most Skype meetings are conducted without video to limit the bandwidth and keep everything stable. It is in everyone's best interest to select 'Answer without video' for the time being.
4. There should be a single call host who is chosen before the meeting and is not the meeting chair person. The call host will often be involved with attempting to reconnect members who have been dropped or adding late comers.
5. All members who wish to attend a meeting on a given night should use the IM feature in Skype to send note to the call host for the desired meeting. The IM should be sent at least 10 minutes ahead of meeting start time. If you miss this, please send your request anyway, we can get you in. This just helps get things started on time if we get most people in on time. Call hosts should be chosen well in advance of the meeting.
6. The call host must have all the members who wish to attend the meeting as Contacts. The best way to do this is to have new members send an IM or request to the call host well ahead of the meeting.
7. The call host will create the call by adding all members who desire to attend a meeting to a conference call. The basics of this process are to select the first person in the group, then in the conversation window (right window) select 'Add People'. A new window appears and you can hold down Control while selecting everyone for the meeting. Then you can call them all at the same time.
8. If a person neglects to answer the conference call and wants to join the conference later, they must themselves select the option to join the Conference call during the meeting. They will see the Group call but will not be in the call. They can select the Group and click to join. By neglecting to answer, they have not lost the ability to attend, but they cannot be called or added by the call host.
9. If a person would like to join a meeting and hadn't been on the original conference call, then they can still join by sending an IM in Skype to the call host at any time during the meeting.

The Alcoholics Anonymous Preamble

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Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

Chair person asks someone to read How It Works. Or alternatively read the 12 steps and 12 traditions.

Alcoholics Anonymous - How it works

RARELY HAVE we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates. They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. Their chances are less than average. There are those, too, who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided that you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it - then you are ready to take certain steps.

At some of these we balked. We thought that we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.

Remember that we deal with alcohol - cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power - that One is

God. May you find him now.

Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked His protection and care with complete abandon.

Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - 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 Him*.
4. Made a searching and 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 Him 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 Him, praying only for knowledge of His 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 alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Many of us exclaimed, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we were

willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- (a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.
- (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.
- (c) That God could and would if He were sought.

Serenity Prayer - God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference

The Promises

(properly known as the "9th Step Promises")

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