

CLA SKYPE MEETING FORMAT (last modified Dec 27, 2018)

(Honour people and time by starting and ending on time)

Welcome: Welcome to the Thursday 7.30pm UK-time Skype meeting of Clutterers Anonymous. This is a one-hour meeting with a focus on [only read one of the following]

1. (Week 1) Literature
2. (Week 2) Step of corresponding month and Group Conscience
3. (Week 3) Tools of Recovery
4. (Week 4) Revisit Step 1 if newcomers, or step of month
5. (Week 5) To be decided at the time

My name is _____ and I am a {recovering} clutterer and your Leader for this meeting.

Serenity Prayer: After a moment of silence, will those of you who wish to, please join me in saying the CLA Keep and Release Serenity Prayer? **God, grant me the serenity to keep the things I need to keep, the courage to release the things I do not need, and the wisdom to know the difference.**

The Preamble: Clutterers 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 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.

Introductions: Let's go around the group introducing ourselves. (Start with yourself) I'm _____, a {recovering} clutterer from _____

Thank you. Welcome everyone! If you are having problems with clutter, you are in the right place. Keep coming back. It works!

From this point on, may I ask everyone to mute their computer or phone unless speaking? Remember to unmute again when you wish to speak. Thank you.

The Problem: EITHER:

May I ask a member to read, "What is Clutter?"

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, 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 we live with.

Despite this pain, we fear throwing things out. We think we might need it, fix it, repair 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, and serenity; a balanced life; and harmonious relationships. How do we achieve this? We have found that following the 12 steps of Clutterers Anonymous can help.

OR ALTERNATIVELY:

Turning to the blue leaflet, may I ask a member to read any two questions from How do I know if I m a Clutterer?

The 12 Steps: May I ask a member to read the 12 steps? Thank you.

The 12 Traditions: May I ask a member to read the 12 traditions? Thank you.

Then continue:

The solution offered by CLA: Turning to the green leaflet (**Declutter your Mind**) may I ask a member to read one item from the recovery behaviours in the section, **Toward Healing**
Thanks

Giving Service: The CLA programme gives us the opportunity to enhance our own progress by taking on various service responsibilities, from holding office to doing clean-up. As we serve, we risk moving out of isolation, to grow, and to practise the principles of our programme within the fellowship. Service is giving back to the Fellowship.

Announcements: Are there any CLA-related announcements?

The next regular group conscience will be on the 2nd week of the month, at the end of the meeting time. If anyone has a topic to be discussed then, please mention it now?

Topic study time: The focus of today's study time is [read only one]

1. Week 1 Literature
2. Step of corresponding month followed by Group Conscience
3. Tools of Recovery
4. Revisit Step 1 if newcomers, or step of month
5. To be decided at the time

Today's study time is from now to 8.05pm (or 8pm on group conscience nights, 2nd week of month.)

There is usually only time to read two or three paragraphs from a leaflet. May I suggest/ May I have suggestions which we should read this week? Thank you. Is someone willing to read?
Thanks.

For our sharing tonight, **is anyone willing to be a timer?** Thank you. Please let us know if you are unable to be timer for the whole meeting. For two minute shares, please say **Time's up** at the end. Members are then requested to finish their share in one or two sentences only. Members who desire it may request a 1-minute warning. Please acknowledge the timekeeper when he or she says "**one minute left!**"

At the end of study time

We now read any 5 of the Recovery Affirmations. Everyone present is invited to choose one and read it. There are 25; if you haven't got them, pick a number 1-25 and I'll read it out for you.

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 that I need for a task or trip, allowing a comfortable margin for the unexpected.
9. I am entitled to surrounding 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 wellbeing.
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 versus unimportant, sufficient versus excessive, or necessary versus 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

The Promises:

May I ask a member to read, AA's promises? They can be found on page 83-84 of AA's Big Book.

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.

Open Personal Sharing Time

(This lasts until 8:20pm or 8:10 on Group conscience nights. In a small group, there may be time for more than 2 minutes.)

Now is time for members to check in. We take up to 2 minutes each to share how we are feeling, how we are practicing the principles of CLA in our lives, and what step, tradition, principle or tool most supported our recovery this week.

If you are a newcomer, or attending your first, second or third meeting, please let us know so that we can welcome you.

At the two minutes mark, the **Timekeeper** will say **Time's up**. Members are then requested to finish their share in one or two sentences only. Members who desire it may request a 1-minute warning.

At the end of personal sharing:

Closure: * Is anybody willing to stay on the line today to be available to newcomers or for questions, for a few minutes? Thank you. Members who need to share more are also encouraged to stay and make arrangements with other CLA members for an outreach call or an extended after-meeting, if others are available.

*Is anybody willing to generate the Skype call at 7.30 pm next Thursday? Thank you.

*Is anybody willing to be the meeting Leader like I've been doing today, for next week's meeting?

*Do we have any apologies from landline users for next week's call? Thank you.

*Those who do not have access to the Skype chatroom for announcements please speak up so that a member may assist you in receiving announcements through another means.

Commitments for the Coming Week: Let's go around the group to share our recovery commitment for the coming week. Members are encouraged to practise the principles set out in the steps and traditions, using the tools, combined with taking action on a daily basis. Each of who wishes to may share for up to 30 seconds. Please state your commitment without going into the reasons for it. It's ok to pass. Thank you.

Seventh Tradition: This meeting's expenses include paying for the Skype account to fund phone callers and the buying and sending out of the CLA leaflets to newcomers. Any spare funds will go to CLA World. Please speak to the Treasurer to arrange how you can donate to our Tradition 7 fund. Members willing to make a donation to help CLA World carry the message may also do so directly via the CLA website.

Group resources: Between meetings, members of the CLA Skype group keep in touch, check in and bookend via the CLA recovery chatroom. If you wish to be added to the chatroom, please speak up now and the meeting host will add you right away.

This group also has a website, where you can find the meeting formats, some readings and other resources. The address is cla-uk.org. The password to the member-only area is _____.

ON GROUP CONSCIENCE NIGHTS ONLY:

Group Conscience: We now have ___ minutes before 8.30pm. Are we willing for the meeting to overrun by up to 10 minutes, or should we end at 8.30? Ok. **Timekeeper**, five minutes before the end, say **5 minutes to go**, then two minutes later, say **Time's up**. This gives us a couple of minutes to close the meeting. Thanks

- May I ask the Group Conscience secretary what is on the agenda?
- Any reports?
- Any new business?

Deal with these as you are guided and ask for input as necessary. Postpone topics if necessary

In closing, I'd like to say thank you to everyone who came, read, listened, shared and did service today.

In the spirit of anonymity, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here. [hear hear!]

Thank you for the opportunity to do service today. Would all who wish to, please join in saying the regular 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.**

Thank you