

## Guidelines for Chairpersons of Back Porch Meetings

Thank-you for your service. To ensure a positive, group-conscience approved meeting please read and adhere to the following:

### **MEETING CHAIRING INSTRUCTIONS (In blue/italicized)**

- Read the format as it is. Do not add or skip things.
- Do not comment on people's shares except to say thank you.
- Do not give advice
- When we chair, it is about recovery through AA and the solution found in AA
- Do not use "WE" unless explicitly stated in the format, speak from the "I" perspective and encourage others to do the same.
- Plan to stay on the meeting for an extra 15 minutes to support anyone who needs it
- Be 5-10 minutes early to log into the meeting and get organized
- Bring in AA conference approved literature only; this is where our solution is found. Do not use non-AA approved literature. This is an AA meeting. The way to know if it's AA approved literature, it says "This is AA General Service Conference-approved literature". Newcomers need the foundation and solution found in Alcoholics Anonymous.

**Prior to the start of the meeting:** (this is usually done about 10 minutes before the meeting starts with whoever is regular and shows up)

- Select your topic and reading from AA literature. Be prepared to share it in the chat in the meeting; page number, source, topic. For example; "Freedom from the Bondage of Self. p63. *Alcoholics Anonymous* book" If you can copy and paste the whole paragraph you use that's great too and list the source.
- Ask or arrange for someone to Co-Host with you to help keep out Zoom bombers and to help mute people who forget to mute

- Have two other members who can read for you: “How it Works” from p58 in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the 12 Traditions that can be found in the back of the 4th edition or online.
- Ask someone to close out with a prayer like the Serenity or 3rd step prayer too.
- It is the Chairperson’s job to keep the meeting on track. If someone starts talking about outside issues, you must gently remind them that this is an AA meeting and we don’t bring in outside issues. Also if someone is going far over time of 3 minutes, you may gently interrupt and say “Gentle reminder, please wrap up.” You can use your discretion here, but this serves the whole group.
- You or your co-host may place these links in the chat for members:  
<https://backporchmeetings.com/>  
The primary texts used in AA can be found online for free here:  
[https://www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/read-the-big-book-and-twelve-steps-and-twelve-traditions](https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/read-the-big-book-and-twelve-steps-and-twelve-traditions)

Remember you are doing the group and your recovery a service by following the format and chairing. Thank you for following the format as it is laid out here.

If you have ANY questions about how to chair effectively and in keeping with AA traditions, please reach out to Andrea. You can reach her by emailing [info@backporchmeetings.com](mailto:info@backporchmeetings.com).