

# For AA Members: Points to Consider on Reopening our Meetings

## *Using the 12 Traditions as Our Guide*

*Each AA member may consider reopening differently. Here are some topics we may want to think about reopening after the quarantine. For additional resources, see the Area 30 website at: <https://aaemass.org/area30/>.*

**In the spirit of the Traditions Checklist from the AA Grapevine, here are some questions for the individual to contemplate when considering the topic of reopening our meetings:**

**Tradition One:** Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.

1. Keeping in mind that I am a small part of a great whole (long form) am I willing to support to my group's decision to discontinue virtual meetings and return to in-person meetings? Or, to continue virtual meetings and delay returning to in-person meetings?

**Tradition Two:** For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

1. Am I listening to an individual because they are the most outspoken and not necessarily the most well informed?
2. Am I participating in my group's discussion on this topic, and sharing my experience?
3. In discussions with my group concerning reopening, am I contributing sound information or succumbing to emotionalism?
4. Do I understand what an "informed group conscience" is?
5. Am I able to support our group conscience if the majority opinion differs from mine?

**Tradition Three:** The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.

1. In my mind, do I think governmental regulations and guidelines don't apply to AA?
2. Am I willing to respect current requirements for attendance, such as wearing a mask or face covering?
3. Knowing we may refuse none who wish to recover, am I willing to surrender my seat to the newcomer if we exceed capacity in our hall?

**Tradition Four:** Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

1. Am I helping my group take into consideration concerns specific to our hall... neighbors, other tenants?
2. Does my attendance at in-person meetings potentially affect AA as a whole?
3. Do I understand that my lack of willingness to respect our landlord's guidelines for usage may affect other groups which also meet here?

**Tradition Five:** Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

1. When carrying the message with my group to another meeting or facility, am I aware of the safety guidelines at our destination?
2. Keeping in mind that alcoholics already in recovery may suffer too, am I reaching out to members who I have not seen in the virtual halls, or those may not be able to return to in-person meetings at this time?
3. Am I in favor of keeping my meetings virtual only because it works for me?

**Tradition Six:** An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

1. While attending meetings during this time, can I be materially self-sufficient, bringing my own mask, hand-sanitizer, coffee, Big Book...?
2. Is my group's landlord waiving rent while we are not meeting? Are we continuing to pay rent as a donation? Does this imply affiliation or endorsement?

**Tradition Seven:** Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

1. While we are not meeting, is my group storing supplies in our meeting place? Do we need to continue to pay rent to remain self-supporting?
2. My group member said it's ok for our group to use their personal account to hold our AA group meeting virtually; that we ought to consider this their way of putting money in the basket. Am I observing the 7th Tradition by going along with this?
3. Am I prepared to contribute in meetings which no longer physically pass the basket?

**Tradition Eight:** Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

1. Am I leaving the job of giving medical guidance to the medical professionals?
2. Is the information I'm sharing gathered from reliable sources?

**Tradition Nine:** AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

1. We ought never be organized, however we do plan. Am I taking part in my group's plan for a safe reopening?
2. Reopening may create new service positions in my group, such as greeting and managing meeting size, rearranging the hall to allow for socially distant seating, providing resources or suggestions to members arriving after our hall has reached capacity. Am I willing to take a new service position in my group?

**Tradition Ten:** Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

1. Am I mindful that sharing my opinions on matters of public health during a meeting may give the newcomer the impression I am speaking for AA?
2. Do I understand that the group ought to follow governmental and landlord requirements despite different individual opinions on "outside issues"?
3. If I disagree with government guidelines and choose not to follow them while I'm attending an AA meeting, am I potentially drawing AA into public controversy?

**Tradition Eleven:** Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

1. Is it attractive if an AA meeting I'm attending makes the news for disregarding state or local guidelines?
2. Am I remembering that AA meetings held in outdoor public spaces ought to reflect the spirit of our 11th Tradition?
3. If meeting outside, am I willing to start another meeting across the way if our first group grows too large in number?

**Tradition Twelve:** Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

1. Am I having difficulty hearing another member's input on reopening because of who they are, and not what they are saying?
2. Am I remembering that AA meetings held in outdoor public spaces ought to reflect the spirit of our 12th Tradition?

*Area 30 would like to thank the following for allowing us to leverage their experience, strength, and hope into this overall document: Area 30 Districts 15/16, Area 48 ad hoc committee, and the Area 30 Delegate.*