

June 30th, 2020 Discussion Notes Reopening - Service Piece

The purpose of this document is to provide information for groups to CONSIDER as they move towards reopening in-person meetings after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the dynamics of the current situation, it is extremely important to have a group conscience meeting to plan & decide how reopening a meeting is to happen in a safe and spiritual way.

This service piece can be used for home groups, District meetings, Area meetings, Intergroup/Central Offices, and meetings brought into facilities such as treatment or correctional facilities. Groups may want to share their reopening plans within their Districts.

What You Will Find in This Document:

1. Getting Started
2. Suggested Topics for Discussion as You Plan for Reopening
3. What to Do if an AA Member Tests Positive for COVID-19 & Attended Your Meeting
4. Consider New or Revised Service Opportunities
5. Our Traditions
6. Resources

1. Getting Started

- It is suggested that each group be prepared in advance for reopening. Group members are encouraged to meet virtually & create their own reopening plan.
- Discuss with your landlord or facility contact:
 - If the facility is ready for meetings to return. Having a key does not automatically mean that meetings can resume, even if your group has a reopening plan.
 - Be prepared to consider other options if the group will not be able to return to the space
 - Ask if there are facility-specific procedures
 - Let them know the group's safety procedures (sanitizing, social distancing, masks, etc.)
- Check city, regional, provincial and Canada-wide guidelines: *"The law of the land does not stop at the door of A.A."*
- Refer to guidance from Area / GSO / etc. & reach out to District & Area with questions
- Do a walk-through to create a checklist of surfaces to disinfect & other safety procedures

2. Suggested Topics for Discussion as You Plan for Reopening

Meeting Procedures

- Safety protocols if someone comes to the meeting & is sick:
 - It is strongly encouraged that sick individuals do not attend meetings, to protect the well-being of other attendees, their families, the meeting space, etc.
 - All in agreement
 - Provide them with phone numbers, Zoom meeting info, & other resources in a

Breakout Room 5

plastic baggie to take home with them

- Announce anonymously at the meeting & inform GSR / District that the group may have been exposed
- Consider collecting email addresses to alert members
 - This cannot be optional. Contact tracing is a public health MUST Breakout Room 7
- Consider contact tracing
 - This cannot be optional. Contact tracing is a public health MUST Breakout Room 7
- Some Churches may want EVERY person screened. Look at church population – Rep from individual group. Greeters?? New service position
- What if someone refuses?? As per church/municipal guidelines...Mandatory masks in Toronto
- Who supplies the masks??
- Over fill – meet outside? Have more than one meeting?
- Handout to meeting attendees

- In the baggie they are talking about giving out, include the District and Area websites and information about meetings cancelled due to COVID-19. It makes most sense to send everyone to a common site – it will be hard to start but easiest to maintain.
- Discussed “strongly encouraged that sick individuals do not attend”. As individuals, we would be more comfortable with “thou shall not” which is in line with the rest of Ontario but we cannot do this in AA. We do not have the right to dictate or tell someone they can’t come to AA. When we encourage or suggest, that does not mean the person has to follow our suggestion.
- A friend from Washington got authorization to list Washington as an essential service which meant temperature checks were required. It was mentioned that this affects AA as a whole.
- If we have to limit the number of people attending, how do we turn away the member who shows up after the maximum? It was mentioned this would be brought up later on
- The other issue with contact tracing is anonymity. Would be required to do this? How do we do this? It was mentioned you don’t have to say why you where you were and you could simply say it was a social gathering, etc. Even if we do this, however, in a small town, everyone will know where you were. Would we have to gather the names and phone numbers and hand that information in? We would need to advise the public health authorities. Any other meetings which had affected members would also be impacted by the contact tracing/anonymity breach.
- Would the halls be open to all groups or just AA? This could have implications with the spread going through multiple people and could affect AA as a whole. If we don’t share the information, it could be equally devastating.

Our breakout room further added:

- Post screening questions of local public health unit outside entrance of meeting
- Greeter, taking temperatures and screening people
- Who is going to do this.....?
- What if people are asymptomatic?
- Can we not leave this up to the individual? Some groups may choose this option
- Frankly, we shouldn’t be opening just yet
- Insurance won’t cover any cases if someone gets sick or worse...we have to be responsible
- Who is going to take care of the cleaning up?
- We are going to have an influx of newcomers; having them come in with masks and prepared to follow these guidelines might be a bit much to expect from some new members
- Alcoholics have such a struggle not to hug...
- Masks should be required

- Masks should be required
- We will surely have requirements from the facility (like the church) that we will minimally have to implement.
- Who is going to collect email addresses of attendees?
- Mask requirement and hand sanitizer
- Greeter(s) at the door
- No contact (hugs, shake hands, etc.)
- Post a pre-establish question board
- Initially for first 1-2 months of reopening apply the AA slogan KIS (eliminate any potential source of cross contamination of room and meeting items (ie. ziplock bag literature but only put out 1 of each on display), eliminate head table covering, collect boxes/bags, bells, no wall hangings. Just set up room with the bare minimal to have the meeting.
- meeting safety starts **outside** the meeting room door. Greeters must (1) ask if the person has any covid symptoms (as is done today upon entering many offices/closed area places - SICK INDIVIDUALS will not be allowed to enter but advised to seek medical care ASAP, (2) say a face covering is required for all & provide a disposable mask for those that don't have one (members will be encouraged/told to bring their own face coverings, (3) spray or ask person to use the provided hand sanitizer before entering, (4) require newcomers, visitors, guests (eg. persons not known to the group) to provide first name, tel # or email address for potential public health contact tracing (otherwise cannot enter room, a member could chat with the newcomer outside). THEN person can enter the room.
- Greeters must "control" entrance to the physical meeting room given ALL must feel safe, we owe our first responsibility to the greater society, then to our group members, AA and ourselves. An AA meeting covid outbreak could be a public media disaster hence strict meeting entrance requirements needed.
- SIGN on meeting room outside door and inner door indicating FACE COVERING IS A MUST or no entrance.
- Before reopening, group meeting lists must be up to date to allow for accurate contact tracing should an attendee later test +ve for COVID.
- Meeting scripts can be adjusted to include:
 - AT every meeting after the meeting opening (eg. serenity prayer) a statement that public health authorities will be provided Contact Tracing information on all attendees if an attendee tests covid +ve must be read underscoring that its for the safety of all and the groups survival. If anyone doesnt agree then they are welcomed to leave the meeting.
- Group & facility safety guidelines - explain that these are for everyone's safety
- Our breakout room felt:
 - Such an announcement would be good at the beginning of the meeting, perhaps just before serenity prayer; refer to traditions, especially tradition 1, our common welfare
 - Post on website guidelines. If individual groups want, they can post link on intergroup if they have special requirements, unique to their group
 - Handing out something at the meeting about the guidelines is not such a good idea (something to have to pick up, for those who leave it behind, not to mention possible transmission by passing out paper
- How to stay connected if not able to come to in-person meetings
 - Some groups are keeping their zoom account, after in-person meetings come back.
 - Have at least a few zoom meetings going forward as part of the weekly meeting offerings in a district
 - GTA will keep zoom meetings going after in person meetings start
 - Stay connected as sponsor-sponsee; call people on meeting list who you haven't seen in a while.

- Where group members can find GSO, Area, District and Intergroup guidelines
 - o How many groups are going to be willing to add this to secretary's already long announcements?
 - o Maybe better to post the contact details for GSO, Area, District and Intergroup where suggested guidelines for reopening can be found...

Breakout Room 5

- An explanation of contact tracing if your group decides to implement it

- o Collect first name and phone...safety of all
- o There should be NO option re contact tracing. If a member will not agree to be traced anonymously (ie. not identified as an AA member then they cannot attend the meeting). Such members will be encouraged to attend ZOOM meetings or adhere to groups NEW SAFETY FOR ALL requirements.

Breakout Room 1

Breakout Room 7

- o I am not sure how many are going to want to leave personal details for contact tracing
- o Leaving personal contact details with a member of the group might be a shock the first couple of times, but just like lining up to go into the grocery store, it might become the new norm.
- o This will definitely put more work on members of the group
- o We are going to find some people who attend meetings will not have contact info (such as email and address)
- o Give out masks at the meeting for those who do not have them
- o We supply boot covers already, supplying masks would come out of our 7th

Breakout Room 5

(Possibly the one of the Greeters, One person be assigned to collect name and contact info and will be destroyed after X days

Breakout Room 9

- Not sure about the "if" for contact tracing. What is the authority's stance/requirements on this? Public health? Provincial government?
- Include something about if the meeting has to close due to COVID – what happens then? What would this look like?
- District could have a list of groups – this way meeting lists could be updated efficiently and this could be easily distributed to people.

Breakout Room 3

▪ Coffee / snacks:

- Consider suspending hospitality for the time being
- Consider a BYOB policy - "Bring your Own Beverage"
 - o 10 say YES, and 2 say NO
- Consider having one person handle all hospitality while wearing PPE (face mask & gloves)
 - o IF THERE IS GOING TO BE SOMETHING SERVED (better be for special occasions only, 8 participants said YES PPE must be worn and 3 did not answer.

Breakout Room 5

Breakout Room 5

- Bringing your own beverage makes sense. If providing beverages, provide wrapped stir sticks, sugars, milks, etc. and have the hospitality person hand them out.
- Ensure the hospitality person has gloves, etc.
- Some places already have that in place – BYOB meetings already exist and do fine.
- Keep it simple!
- Birthday celebrations might be another kettle of fish – we may have to adjust how these are done. If serving cake, again consider having one person who is handling food, utensils, etc.
- Stick to our primary purpose – staying sober, not celebrating.

Breakout Room 3

- Celebrations are important, particularly for those celebrating their first year and the newcomers who have yet to get there. Anniversaries are something different and there is an excitement.
- Right now, some groups are holding off on celebrations with Zoom meetings and are surviving fine. Others are doing celebrations on Zoom without any cake, which is also working.
 - Eliminate totally or BYOBev or for meetings that cater to a large street population, prepare pre-bagged snacks. Breakout Room 7
- Literature:
 - Consider a BYOB policy - "Bring your own Book"
 - AGREE Breakout Room 5
 - Change format from passing book to one person reading
 - SUSPEND THIS PRACTICE! Breakout Room 5
 - Disinfect shared literature before / after the meeting
 - Put a binder at the podium that only the chair flips the pages
 - Put hand sanitizer everywhere in the meeting spaces, even at the podium Breakout Room 5
 - Consider alternatives to sharing copies of Grapevine / La Viña (or have at least a 72-hour quarantine period for pre-owned or donated literature)
 - Projector! Large TV, laptops on tables, etc Breakout Room 1
 - We do collect this literature for our newcomers, I guess we will have to bag it before putting it back into circulation Breakout Room 5
 - Church wifi/own data/power point with screen/tv/etc for reading/etc
 - Copies of all literature for newcomers (kit) Breakout Room 9
 - 12 steps and 12 traditions posters
- Like the first two points – BYOB and don't pass. This limits the number of people sharing the same thing.
- Readings might be trickier. They are all in the literature which could be read from, if people are bringing their own. You could have a sheet which lists the pages in the 'COVID' package. Have a greeter handing them out. Breakout Room 3
- Some groups already use recordings (i.e. CD) of AA literature. This could be used in more meetings which would limit people touching the books, is less porous and easier to clean, etc.
 - use laminated reading cards, 1 per reading (i.e. not passed to another person to continue a reading) , place "dirty" laminated cards in an envelope to later wipe down and place in clean manila envelop or ziplock for following week meeting Breakout Room 7
- Newcomers:
 - Pre-printed sheet of group members & phone numbers
 - This breakout room does not agree in handing out group lists. Let members meeting and exchange #s with individuals Breakout Room 5
 - Literature, phone numbers, pamphlets, & other resources in a plastic baggie
 - Suggest that newcomers can also download pamphlets Breakout Room 5
 - New Comer Kit in plastic baggie Breakout Room 9
 - Temporary Sponsors list Breakout Room 9
 - make a group NEWCOMER package (ziplock bag) Breakout Room 7
- See earlier discussion notes.
- We might have to put more effort into getting newcomer phone numbers, rather than just handing out ours. This way we can contact them when we are not able to meet or to check in with other meeting closures. Breakout Room 5

- If there is a maximum number of participants allowed, newcomers should always be allowed in. One group also suggested it is possible to have a second group distanced in the parking lot, if they need to.
- Each group could have a risk assessment to see what they are comfortable with. For example, rural meetings may not be able to have as many options available to them. If they are higher risk or have family members who are higher risk, they might prefer to keep the virtual meetings going. It would be ideal to be able to have 2 people show up to the physical location if in person gatherings are allowed again, to make sure the hand of AA is there if a newcomer shows up. This is also important from a service perspective – what good is voting to reopen if nobody shows up to open the door or greet the newcomer? Each group will be different, based on its members.

■ **Anniversaries:**

- Consider how to handle coins, cake, cards, etc.
 - DON'T PASS birthday CARD AROUND
 - Coins can be passed from the sponsor to the sponsee
 - Continue doing chips, but maybe while the chip person is running though the script “... This is neither a prize nor a reward...”, they could be sanitizing their hands
 - Maybe, put the chip on the table to be picked up by newcomer, rather than putting it in their hands; no shaking hands, and no hugging.
 - reduce items to a bare minimum ie individual chips can be placed in tiny ziplock bags

Breakout Room 5

Breakout Room 7

- Medallions could be given in a baggie. It was noted this would be a lot of baggies – chips, medallions, packages being given out, etc.
- People were less comfortable with cards which would have to be passed around.
- Maybe they could just have one person put a chip in a bag to hand out.
- Use hand sanitizer before/after handling anything.
- We could do chips the same we are on the internet – recognize people who have these milestones rather than giving the chip. We don't necessarily need to have the chips, cards, cake, etc. – people have gotten sober without them. Some feel cake is not required.
- We also have to honour facilities rules – each group may look different.

Breakout Room 3

■ **Finances:**

- Some of the items that the group discusses & determines to be requirements for reopening may require money (for example, the purchase of cleaning products or hand sanitizer). Ensure the group members and treasurer are informed of this.
 - Masks?
 - This should be discussed at business meeting. If a group suspends the usual hospitality items, resources can be shunted to cover extra cost to opening up under pandemic restrictions (PPE, sanitizer, cleaning wipes, signage and any incidentals required to contact trace attendees).
- Setup e-transfer etc.
- Terminal at meeting (somebody's phone) in a plastic/baggie/etc. with sanitizer spray

Breakout Room 1

Breakout Room 5

Breakout Room 9

■ **Accessibility:**

- Virtual option to increase accessibility
 - Have a computer in the meeting to offer zoom access to in-person meeting (be clear for those who do not want to be captured on the zoom camera, WHERE they can sit and be outside of camera view).
- Small in-person meetings for homebound individuals & how to do so safely

Breakout Room 5

- Meetings to go...continue with Zoom meetings Breakout Room 1
- Need to be mindful of provincial and municipal guidelines Breakout Room 5
 - o Meeting for shutins- what did we do before? Exactly, starting doing it again.
 - o Take meetings to shutins, but hold it outside.
 - o Use zoom or facetime

Meeting Delivery Format

- Discuss whether your meeting will continue as an online meeting, have a hybrid meeting, or meet in person only Breakout Room 5
 - o Hybrid meeting is the best thing for those who are concerned about attending in person meeting.
- Consider offering an online meeting at a day/time that does not conflict with other meetings Breakout Room 5
 - o Most are doing that already Breakout Room 9
 - Not in conflict with your groups meeting
- Consider adding a service position for chairing online meeting(s) Breakout Room 5
 - o Most are doing that already
- Update your meeting information with the Intergroup, District & Area Records in order to be listed accurately Breakout Room 1
 - For a hybrid meeting, turn cameras off! Need to protect anonymity Breakout Room 5
 - o Very important, so there are no surprises to those coming to the meeting

Accessibility - In-person Meetings with Virtual (online) Component

- Consider costs & availability of technology, wifi, tech knowledge, etc.
- Consider whether the group will purchase their own account / technology or use a group member's.
- Consider the anonymity of those attending the in-person meeting
- Consider adding service position(s), e.g. virtual meeting host(s), "spiritual bouncer" for Zoom bombers, and/or technology chair Breakout Room 1
 - Must insure that security is on – passwords, waiting rooms, lock meeting Breakout Room 9
 - Outdoor/park/meetings (service?) Breakout Room 7
 - o Gatekeeping.....if room capacity is reached and a newcomer arrives, a member might volunteer to give up their seat to the newcomer
 - o Hybrid meetings with ipad or laptop only showing the head table with Chair/secretary/speaker +/- half of the room with attendees knowing that if they choose to sit on a certain side of the room they will be seen on the streamed meeting
 - o Few people are willing to fill current service roles but a few techy members should be approached to help but not permanently as others will then not volunteer

7th Tradition - How to Pass the Basket:

- Consider having one group member carry the basket around

- Provide gloves to the Chair / Treasurer (or whoever handles the money)
- Consider digital options of contributing - hand out cards with digital basket info
 - - E-transfer – Interac & PayPal Breakout Room 1
 - Square – tap debt
- put a box with slit at the door, people put 7th in after entering (as churches have implemented). Person who counts the 7th after meeting will wear gloves. Breakout Room 7

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

- Canada’s Chief Medical Officer guidelines are that when physical distancing cannot be maintained, consider wearing a non-medical mask. In Canada see: [About non-medical masks or face coverings](#) and in New York State see: [face covering in public](#)
 - as we cannot leave it to the individual we must insist that if you wish to enter the rooms you MUST without doubt wear a face covering for the duration of the meeting until outside once again. Breakout Room 7
 - They will be offered a face covering (supplied by group) or asked gently to leave the meeting.
- If someone does not wish to comply with wearing a mask, they could be brought outside the meeting space by two homegroup members to talk or given a list of phone numbers & virtual meetings
- Meetings could provide masks - purchased or made by group members - for free or at cost
- Make hand sanitizer available to attendees (alcohol-free suggested)
- Provide gloves to trusted servants who handle meeting materials, 7th tradition, etc.
- Sanitizing station set up? Breakout Room 1
- How do we apply/enforce this? Do we require people to purchase their own, which may impose a price tag to attend AA that some cannot afford? Do we provide it and what happens if the 7th runs out? Do we require reusable PPE (less expensive but more likely to have issues such as not being sanitized properly) or disposable PPE (better protection but more expensive) Breakout Room 3
- If requiring members to have it and they don’t, what happens? We could ask them to meet with someone (ideally 2 people) outside.

Social Distancing

- Maximum number of meeting attendees:
 - Check [Reopening our province - stage 2](#) and New York State guidelines on sizes of gatherings
 - Consider overflow space if too many people show up
 - Parking lot, or another room in facility Breakout Room 1
 - Have 2 homegroup members go to overflow space with attendees
 - Check with facility on whether this is an option – communicate! Breakout Room 1
 - Check with facility on whether this is an option
- Seating arranged 6 feet/2 meters apart
 - how many can fit in the room safely? Breakout Room 1

- Greeters: no handshakes or hugs
- Consider how to end meeting with a socially distant circle
- Consider fellowshiping before / after meeting in parking lot outside of meeting space

Contact Tracing

- What is it? *Trace & monitor everyone who came into contact with someone who is ill. Notify them of their exposure. Support the quarantine of contacts. Help ensure the safe, sustainable & effective quarantine of contacts to prevent additional transmission.*
- Consider how your group would inform other members and attendees if someone attended and tested positive for COVID-19
- Consider if / how your group will participate in contact tracing
- Consider how your group will handle confidentiality / anonymity
- Consider adding information in the meeting script to explain contact tracing
- when arrive at a meeting, specific questions are asked at other places, non-AA such as have you experience symptoms, traveled, and form a list,
- from that type of protocol at other gathering and club places, to follow and make a list
- such as do we contact

Breakout
Room 2

On the subject of contact tracking:

- Our group felt that this would be very hard to enforce depending on the questions which we would be required to ask each person since some of them would affect anonymity. Most groups do not have group lists or lists with very little personal information so getting in touch with group members would be a problem. It was agreed that this would go against our spiritual principals.
- Our group also feels re-opening will be many months away since most meetings are in churches that currently have 24 rules they have to follow in order to even re-open their churches and they do not have the money to follow those guidelines and if some of those costs were passed on to the groups, most groups would not be able to handle the extra costs. It was also brought forward that dialogue with the church and any other group meetings so everyone is aware of their responsibilities.
- There was also some concern over open meetings since anyone can attend those and how we would be able to trace the visitors if there was a positive case or how we would be informed is the visitor later tested positive.
- Our group felt it was too early to come up with concrete solutions as of right now since opening seems to be a long way off and the regulations will certainly change as we get closer to a time when we can re-open however everyone felt it was important to take this information back to their groups and start the dialogue and perhaps get people thinking about how to proceed.

Breakout Room 8

3. What to Do if an AA Member Tests Positive for COVID-19 & Attended Your Meeting

- Contact your local Public Health Office / Department of Health for guidance
 - Note: You do not have to disclose it is an AA meeting - you can simply say "community organization"
- If the group has maintained a list of attendees & their contact information for the date(s) the positive-tested person attended the meeting, notify other attendees anonymously
 - The notification can be as simple as "A person who attended the meeting on <date>

has tested positive for COVID-19 & you may wish to contact your physician for additional guidance”

- Direct attendees to their local public health COVID website & suggest 14-day self-isolation as recommended

- BIG question are we required to turn this information over to the Health Dept. are we required to do this
- Heads up would need to be given to people at the beginning of the meeting that we are doing some kind of tracking
- while each group is autonomous we could make recommendations, from the Area, as example, that if someone tests positive at the meeting we will be turning over that information to Public Health
- at start of meeting they give info, such as name, phone number and email, and if not provided, not allow at meeting
- give choice, in person meeting requires this and if not comfortable doing so, there still are Zoom meetings
- Question: is this the law to do?
- Our understanding is if someone tests positive, it is them that contact trace back to us ---
- and then it is up to us to pass on to our members.
- Concern, people are disregard the PH recommendations, disregarding social distancing as example.
- Concern we need PH to give us the ok,
- Concern some people are hosting private meetings, outside of our fellowship
- concern that we should not come up with the answers, but wait until we are told the parameters
 - Consider suspending face-to-face meetings for a period of time
 - Consult local, regional, provincial public health offices / governments
 - Provide basic, anonymous information about the incident to Intergroup or
 - District or Intergroup webmaster who can then post information on their website / update online meeting lists for member awareness. Please include:
 - Group Name
 - Group Location
 - Date(s) that the individual attended the meeting
 - And update Meeting Guide App to also indicate new group 'protocols'
 - Groups make use of their own members knowledge, ie, at least one member is most likely dealing with COVID-19 procedures and protocols, run our GC past them, check in with them for feasibility and feedback, if you do not know find a person who does.
- Have group Secretary notify its group members of potential COVID positive test of an attendee.
- Have Secretary hold the list of attendee records, announce at beginning of meeting that they will be destroyed at a specific time (time frame to be determined)
- Attendees may be hesitant to give last name, but perhaps first name & phone number would be sufficient (would need Health Unit confirmation)
- Big responsibility level of the group to be taking attendance records, and reporting.
- Create a standard questionnaire / get attendees to fill it out with their name/phone number. Question, would Area/District create their own form, or would each group create their own?
- Our health units would take care of the contact tracing.
- Group will have control? Public Health interference??
- Churches allowed to have 30% capacity for services
- Some churches might require attendance
- We need to follow the rule of law

Breakout Room 2

Breakout Room 2

Breakout Room 4

Breakout Room 6

- Keep District and Area websites up to date with link to Ontario regulations
- Rights and Freedoms??
- Don't tarnish the name of AA
- Group conscience based on meeting place / government regulations
- Important that meetings without GSRs have a contact name for tracing
- Bring your own coffee
- Do not leave any garbage behind
- Cupcakes instead of cake for birthdays

4. Consider New or Revised Service Opportunities

- Spiritual Sanitizer / Safety Person: wipe down contact surfaces such as chairs, tables, door knobs, etc. prior to & immediately after the meeting
- Revised Greeter Duties: hands out 7th Tradition card with online giving options, take-home meeting lists / literature / new meeting protocols / group member phone numbers
- Designated 7th Tradition Basket Collector: collects & handles money
- Coffee server: if group is still providing coffee, consider appointing one person to handle all coffee service
- Each group would need to form group conscience on what these duties would be, and how to introduce each meetings 'Safety Protocols'
- do we have to come up with creative ways to solve coffee and such, ie, individual creamers. Regulations would dictate how to serve beverages if allowed
- Give members and visitors to choice to leave name and contact in case there is a contact tracing safety risk associated – I want to know
- Revised Secretary Duties: appoint notification duties (see above)
- GSR / Group Contact: if group does not have a GSR or group contact on file with Area / District, appoint one to stay abreast of changes / updates related to the Area & District
- Technology Person: maintain virtual component to meetings; host virtual meetings & oversee technical component; "spiritual bouncer" for meeting interruptions
- Because each group is autonomous
- Social and economic situations allow affect how much people can equip themselves with safety gear
- that some folk will may be upset with changes, ie not serving beverages
- we decide what to do if someone shows up without a mask, do we provide? Do we take some of our 7th to buy some
- what if someone refuses, GC says must wear a mask, someone refuses, now what? Ask to leave.
- What do we do if we work with at risk people? That may cause difficulty with the GC if we disallow folk to attend who have been exposed
- As well, what about our landlords/facility, they may not allow us to make beverages/
- if is on us to protect everyone
- the safety of the membership is all our
- follow whatever the requirements of the area's gov are and the landlords requirements
- Maybe have coffee servers. Ie mask and gloves as per requirements
- but we never know if ever that person is safe
- how are we going to accept the 7th?
- Maybe create e-transfer opportunities for the HG

- groups are doing this now, taking etransfer, actually younger members (people) do not take cash any how
- biology says that germs do not jump off surfaces, virus can not leave surfaces,
- KNOWLEDGE is going to be KEY: how transmission occurs, will inform our group activities.
- We are getting used to the ritual of hand washing, most of us are taking this as our usual practice.
- We also give out medallions, and other manipulative, how do we modify this practice?
- What about using the media, do we tell them a member is positive, akin to how the media currently reports if an outbreak occurs at a retail store/grocery store, then a person who felt at risk would go get test?
- Use our website as well, if we had a person test positive, don't we want people to know about it and they make the decision to go get tested themselves.
- This will be our new reality moving forward, communicating with our members clearly all these additional services that will need to be filled in order to resume face to face meetings. There's a lot of responsibility that is being added to the plate that wasn't there before.
- Bring your own chair, using a larger facility within the building to facilitate the social distancing.
- Hybrid meetings can pose challenges – technically whose WiFi, cost associated with that? Suggest having a second meeting on another night that is a Zoom meeting and then the regular in person meeting.
- Cleaning can create other issues, damaging furniture from cleaning. Some may not want to wear a mask, but may have to do come into the meeting.
- Mindful of what cleaning products we use as some sanitizers contain alcohol
- No full time custodian working if the Churches haven't started their services; there's the washrooms, door knobs not just the rooms we are using.
- If the Churches insist on a contact/attendance list, then we have a way around that and would be helpful for us.
- For 7th tradition, if the Group Treasurer is comfortable, can give out their home address to mail member's 7th cheques for those who may not be comfortable with electronically contributing.
- Do we have members who will be willing to step in and fulfill these extra service roles – are we having issues filling service positions pre-COVID?
- While some members may meet in a public place, how is the newcomer to find out about that? Perhaps while Zoom is going, a new position might be a Zoom greeter that can ask Zoom attendees if they are new to AA.
- Do we know that most meeting are listed on Intergroup websites? Are they being directed to these?
- In one District, the number of twelve step phone calls has gone down, and the process has been adjusted accordingly. Giving out many more big books in the area.
- Is there a sense of Zoom fatigue, and we need to get back to face to face when we can.

5. Our Traditions

Above all, each group is asked to consider the AA Principles as the guiding force to a group conscience &, in particular, to pay close attention to the following Traditions:

- Tradition 1 Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
- Tradition 4 Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups, or A.A. as a whole. Tradition 5 Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
- Tradition 7 Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
- Tradition 10 Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues, hence the A.A. name ought never

be drawn into public controversy.

- Tradition 11 Our public relations policy is based upon attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio & films.
- Tradition 12 Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

6. Resources:

General Service Office (GSO): https://aa.org/pages/en_US/update-on-covid-19-coronavirus

Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

Province of Ontario: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/framework-reopening-our-province-stage-2#section-1>

Ontario Public Health: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>

Centre for Disease Control (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Contact Tracing

In the **U.S.** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/open-america/contact-tracing.html>

In **Ontario:** <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/contact-tracing-initiative>

Guidance on Gatherings

In the **U.S.** [Travel, Large Gatherings & Quarantines | Department of Health](#)

In **Canada:** <https://www.ontario.ca/page/framework-reopening-our-province-stage-2#section-1>

GSO: Safety in AA https://www.aa.org/assets/en_us/smf-209_en.pdf

GSO: Safety Card https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/f-211_SafetyCardforAAGroups.pdf

GSO: COVID Guidance https://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/update-on-covid-19-coronavirus

Grapevine: <https://www.aagrapevine.org>

Practicing the 7th Tradition in a Virtual Environment - https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/SMF-223-FAQonVirtualBasket_en.pdf

- Options for Virtual Baskets & How to Set Them Up:
 - PayPal: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wlAo43FEj-l>
 - Square: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqnKxrMo_uQ
 - Stripe: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxJB0QPtcnk>
 - DonorBox: <https://donorbox.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360020293192-How-To-Create-a-Donorbox-Org-Account>