

ABA Monday Phone Meeting Format

8:30pm- 9:30pm EST

The ABA Preamble for Meetings is found in the ABA basic textbook on pages 142-148. The Monday 8:30pm Phone Meeting has, by group conscience, developed some guidelines & adaptations to make the Phone Meeting run smoothly.

ABA Phone Meeting Format

Old Access Number: ~~(712) 432-3900~~ **New Dial in # 712 432-0800**

Old Access Code: ~~3800774#~~ **NEW Access Code 1039142#**

*****The Friday Morning Group*****

will continue to use the same in (518) 825-1300 & Access Code: 22657.

Welcome to the Monday night meeting of Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous.

My name is _____ and I'm in recovery from _____ and I will be chairing this evening's meeting.

This meeting begins at 8:30 p.m. and ends at 9:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

Please join me in a moment of silence to reflect on why we are here, followed by the 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.

This is an open meeting of Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous. We welcome all of you, and particularly any newcomers. In keeping with our primary purpose and our Third Tradition, which states, "The only requirement for ABA membership is a desire to stop unhealthy eating practices," we request all who participate to limit their sharing to problems related to their eating disorder. If you are here to learn more about eating disorders, you are invited to listen. We request that you stay on the line until the meeting is over to ask any questions that you may have. We will be happy to assist you in any way that we can.

Here are few guidelines to help the phone meeting run smoothly:

-If you have a two-line phone, please turn the ringer off the second line.

- **When you are not sharing please press * 6 to mute and * 6 to unmute your line. It's become clear that EVERYONE MUST MUTE THEMSELVES AT ALL TIMES IN MEETINGS WHEN NOT SPEAKING/SHARING, including the Host/Moderator.**

The new phone line uses *6 (Star Six) to BOTH MUTE AND UNMUTE individual lines.

This strategy is imperative if we are to avoid unpleasant echo effects emerging, or choppiness of overlapping voices etc. Also, cell phones, Skye Phones and speaker phones may cause problems when left unmuted.

- If you have call waiting, please disable that function by dialing * 70 before dialing in to the meeting.
 - Due to the tremendous increase in attendance at this meeting, please limit your sharing to three minutes. The chairperson will gently mention when 3 minutes has transpired.
 - After sharing you are invited to give your phone number.
 - By Group Conscience this meeting has decided to follow a rotating format. The topic varies depending on the week of the month. This will be explained more later in the meeting.
 - This format is available upon request via email or Self addressed stamped envelope. You may also download it from our website. More information will be available later on in the meeting.
 - Business meetings are held the first Monday of the month, all are welcome. The regular meeting will close early to make time.
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Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous Preamble

Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals whose primary purpose is to find and maintain sobriety in our eating practices, and to help others gain sobriety. ABA is not allied or affiliated with any other 12-step fellowship or organization. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop unhealthy eating practices that we have come to realize are progressively destroying our lives, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

In this group we discover that our insane eating, starving, exercise and purging behaviors are addictive in nature—that is, out of our own control—and that we actually use these behaviors, and the inner physical changes resulting from them, to numb our emotions and escape from ourselves. In doing so, we also fall out of touch with others and out of step with the universe of which we are a part, and we deprive ourselves of the opportunity to be fully alive in our present time and space.

Furthermore, we learn that we are carrying out these insane eating, starving, exercise, and purging practices in obedience to a deceptive immensely powerful voice within our own minds. This is the voice of a *disease* that is chronic, progressive, and potentially fatal. The first action of this cunning and baffling disease is to cast us into a state of unawareness, in which we fail to recognize that we are in mortal danger when we carry out its insane commands. We learn that the payoff we receive from this disease for our obedience to its demands is nothing more than a mirage: an *illusion of control* over our lives and our future.

We learn that the disease's principal weapon is overwhelming and paralyzing fear, and that it holds us in its lethal grip by inducing profound guilt and shame within us. The disease lies to us at every turn. It even convinces us that we are to blame for our own sick condition, that we freely choose to do the insane things we do, and that we are unlovable.

In this circle of healing we learn, one step and one moment at a time, to awaken to the truth about our disease, to recognize its lies, to see how it entraps us, to trust in a Higher Power who loves us unconditionally, and to turn our will and our lives over to this loving Power.

As we recover, we come to experience this Higher Power—the Spirit of life itself—at work within us, empowering us to live without any illusion of control. We also learn to truly own our lives and to take charge of ourselves in a way that had not been possible before.

Our program is deeply spiritual, but not allied with any religion. We have found it applicable to our healing journey regardless of our religious beliefs, for we know that our eating disorders are primarily *mental* or spiritual diseases, although they comprise a physical component. More specifically, we have

a mental obsession that compels us to restrict our food and/or to binge and purge, coupled with a physical “allergy” in our bodies that ensures we will continue restricting or bingeing and purging, once we have began.

In our healing process we use the Twelve Steps, adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous, as the foundation of our spiritual journey.

Here are the steps we take:

Would someone please volunteer to read the ABA Steps?

The Twelve Steps of Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over our insane eating practices—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 God.
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 God 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 God, praying only for knowledge of God’s 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 others suffering from eating disorders, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Chairperson:

We adhere to our adaptation of the 12 traditions developed by Alcoholics Anonymous.

Would someone please volunteer to read:
The 1st Tradition, and the Tradition of the Month?

The Twelve Traditions of Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon ABA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for ABA membership is a desire to stop unhealthy eating practices.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or ABA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the anorexic or bulimic who still suffers.
6. An ABA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the ABA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every ABA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. ABA as such ought never to be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the ABA name ought never to be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and film.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Chairperson :

We learned that it was impossible to work the Twelve Steps until we were “sober” in our eating practices. Without physical sobriety, it is impossible to recover from any addiction, including anorexia and bulimia.

Many of us puzzled over precisely what “sobriety” means. We tried various ways of changing our eating practices. We tried modifying our exercise patterns. We tried cutting down on our binges or refraining from purging afterwards. We tried eliminating the binge/ purge cycle, while simultaneously

falling into the trap of anorexic restriction of our food intake. We tried allowing ourselves to eat, while continuing to exercise, to compensate for the food we ingested. We tried many other half-measures, while still clinging to little vestiges of control to avoid that most fearsome state: getting fat! Or, if we were already “overweight,” we clung to these control measures to lose weight. Some of us appeared unconcerned about our weight and instead engaged in controlling behaviors to avoid feeling our feelings.

We learned through all this experience that the intoxicating “drug” to which we are addicted is not the act of starvation or exercise or the binge/purge cycle itself. Rather, the “drug” of anorexia and bulimia is the feeling of being in control of our food and body weight and shape. This sense of control is generated in us through restrictive eating practices, or through purging after we binge, or through exercise. Many of us learned that to become fully sober we needed to let go absolutely and surrender all control of our food, exercise, and body weight and shape to a Higher Power. In early recovery this Power worked through other human beings. Later as we are restored to sanity by following the Twelve Steps, we come to connect with this Power alive within ourselves.

SOBRIETY IS SURRENDER. And it is not a passive state of submission but rather a highly active, entirely voluntary letting go that requires intensive work on a daily basis. We learned that sobriety is experienced only one day at a time (or one meal at a time!), and that we cannot be sober through willpower. We learned that sobriety is a gift from our Higher Power and that we can ask for this gift on a day-by-day or meal-by-meal basis. We learned that when we honestly asked for the grace to surrender *for this meal*, we received it. We learned what tools of recovery worked for us in the difficult process of getting sober and staying sober. Here are some of the tools many of us have found useful:

Would someone please volunteer to please read the 8 Tools of ANOREXICS AND BULIMICS ANONYMOUS?

THE 8 TOOLS OF ANOREXICS AND BULIMICS ANONYMOUS

1. Prayer: asking a higher Power daily for the means and strength to stay sober...even though we may not yet truly believe in such a Power.
2. Quiet Time: in which we center our minds and clearly focus our energy on receiving the gift of sobriety.
3. Reaching Out: telephone contact with another recovering person before and/or after meals.
4. Meetings: both A.B.A. and other Twelve Step meetings are critically important in maintaining sobriety. Many of us in early recovery attend ninety meetings in ninety days.
5. Reading: the textbook of our Fellowship and the “Big Book” of Alcoholics Anonymous are especially useful.
6. Sponsor: we ask someone in the Fellowship with more sobriety than we have to sponsor us. This person is essential to guide us through the Twelve Steps and is often available to assist us in maintaining sobriety.
7. Journaling: periodically recording in written form what we are feeling and learning on our journey through recovery.
8. Service work: our most powerful tool. Even when all else fails, working with another anorexic or bulimic will save the day and allow a Higher Power to keep us sober!

Chairperson :

We would now like to welcome newcomers.

If you are new to ABA or to this Phone Mtg and would care to identify yourself please introduce yourself by first name only.

We as a group have a website that has lots of information, about sponsorship, there are audio speaker files, interesting links, the 12 questions frequently asked about ABA, and much much more..... Check it out:

www.abaphonemeetings.wordpress.com
<http://abaphonemeetings.wordpress.com/>

Now lets go around the virtual meeting room and have everyone else introduce themselves.

Are there any greeters who can stay after the meeting to answer questions & be available to newcomers?

Today is the _____(1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th) - Monday of the month.

The theme for this weeks' meeting is: _____.

First Monday of the Month-

Sobriety in ABA;

The process of "Getting Sober & Staying Sober"

Practical suggestion, etc.; followed by business mtg.

Second Monday of the Month -

Speaker Mtg- Guest speaker shares on the difficult process of getting sober and staying sober; followed by discussion.

Third Monday of the Month -

Read the entire step/chapter from ABA text; followed by discussion.

Fourth Monday of the Month -

Tool of Recovery for the Month –or speaker sharing on the difficult process of getting sober and staying sober; followed by discussion.

Fifth Monday of the Month -

More on steps 123;

Guest speaker will share on (3) ABA traditions & how they work in their lives; followed by discussion.

After Speaker or reading is complete - open the floor for sharing.

Chairperson:

The meeting is now open for sharing, either on this week’s topic, or any other that you need to speak about, related to your eating disorder.

I’d like to remind everyone that out of courtesy, we refrain from interrupting others as they speak. We are not here to counsel or practice therapy on anyone, but to share our personal ABA experience, strength and hope.

Please identify yourself each time you speak. After sharing, you are invited to give your phone number.

The floor is now open. Please keep your comments to 3minutes.

Who would like to begin the sharing?

At approx..9:20pm.

Chairperson:

We are nearly out of time. Does anyone have a burning desires?

There are no dues or fees for ABA membership. We are fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

Is our Treasurer on the line to give the address where donations can be sent?
(If not, the Secretary or Chairperson gives the name and address of the Treasurer).

Checks are to be written to our new group treasurer/literature person “Andrea (MA).” At address to follow:

Andrea Vallario
20 Leah Circle
Methuen, MA 01844

She can also be contacted at her email address: ablackington1983@yahoo.com
or contact her by calling 978-984-5688

Seventh tradition money received is used for administrative costs, such as literature. We also contribute to The General Service Association of ABA.

This meeting has ABA textbooks available to be purchased for our group costs plus shipping within the United States. For more information regarding cost contact Andrea.-----

This conference line is provided free of charge by www.freeconferencecall.com

To request a copy of our phone/email list, contact: Meaghan meagscully@gmail.com

If you would like to be added to the phone/email list please provide Meaghan , your first name, email, phone numbers, time zone, best time to call.

DAY COUNTS AND MILESTONES...

At this time we would like to take a few important moments to celebrate lengthens of sobriety...

Is anyone counting days, or commemorating months of sobriety, or celebrating anniversary?

REGUARDING SPONSORSHIP:

To learn more about sponsorship please see pages 157-161 in the ABA text book as well as the document on Long distance sponsorship on the phone meeting website.

An alternative to having an ABA Sponosr is working with an “ABA Buddy”. To learn more on working with an “ABA Buddy” or serving as an “ABA Buddy”, please refer to the document “Long Distance Sponsorship” on the website.

Chairperson: Are there any qualified ABA sponsors with time available?

Are there any ABA Announcements?

- CD’s from past retreats are currently available from the GSA in Canada. For information see the Phone Mtg website. Conference CD’s will be availble soon.
- The next business meeting:
(Only announce the next one) All welcome

Tentative Scheduled Business Mtg: 2009

~~Monday Jan 7, February 4, March 3, April 7, May 5, June 2,~~ July 6, August 3, September 7,
~~October 5,~~ November 2, December-7

Would someone like to read the PROMISES OF THE PROGRAM from the AA BIG BOOK, page 83?

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

In closing, we would like to say that the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the persons who shared them and are not representing this meeting or ABA as a whole.

Please take what you need and leave the rest. Let there be no gossip or criticism of one another. Instead, let the understanding, love & peace of this program fill you, one day at a time. Please let what you heard here ... stay here.

from Page xiv of the ABA Textbook

“It is critically important to be aware that our approach to recovery from anorexia & bulimia is intended to complement, not replace, treatment by professional health care providers.”

And lastly we are especially grateful for the miracles of technology that enable us to share our experience, strength and hope with each other across so many miles. Thank you all for making this a great meeting.

Would someone please volunteer to be the chairperson for next week? (if necessary)

We will now end the meeting with the Serenity Prayer. Afterwards, you will have a few minutes to get phone numbers and talk. After a moment of silence, would all who care to please join me in the 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.***

Chairperson: The meeting is over.