

Breaking the Patterns Business Meeting Format

Welcome to this month's Breaking the Patterns business meeting. My name is _____ and I am your Secretary. Please join me in opening this meeting with 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.*

The business meeting is where we use the group conscience process in order to make changes to the meeting so that our trusted servants can better carry out our meeting's will and so that we as a meeting can better carry the message of recovery. This business meeting will end at 9:00pm, and any motions not decided will be tabled until the next business meeting. May I please have a volunteer to operate the timer? Thank you.

As a reminder, a motion for a group conscience may be made by any CoDA member during the announcements section of the regular meeting. If it is "seconded," the motion is added to the Group Conscience list to be discussed and voted on at this monthly business meeting. *Motions may not be made during the business meeting*, only "friendly amendments." If the person who originally made the motion is not present, the motion will be tabled until the next business meeting. The list is kept in the meeting binder so that it may be available for any member to view at any time.

For each motion on the Group Conscience list, I will:

1. Read the motion aloud and ask the person who made the motion to explain their reason behind the motion for no more than 1 minute.
2. Go around the room starting to the left of the person who made the motion allowing 1 minute for each person who would like to share their thoughts, questions, or concerns. Everyone who wants to speak may do so regardless of time in CoDA or service position, but no one is required to speak; you may simply state your name and say that you pass. In the interest of time, however, we do ask that you do not repeat what another person has shared. In the interest of safety, we ask that you use "I" statements to share only your opinions and refrain from attacking the opinions of others with "you" statements.

3. Occasionally, a member may engage in unsafe behavior by not respecting the boundaries of others, or someone may perceive that to happen. In such a situation, any member may call for a "thirty seconds." During the thirty seconds, everyone ceases talking and spends time seeking guidance from their Higher Power. At the end of the thirty seconds, the timer will go off, and we will end the silence with the Serenity Prayer.
4. If, during the course of discussion, a friendly amendment is offered, it must be accepted by the person who made the motion. A friendly amendment is a slight revision of or addition to the original motion.
5. The discussion will continue until everyone has had a chance to share and all clarifying questions are answered. If questions cannot be answered at this time, the motion may be tabled until the next business meeting so that more information can be gathered.
6. After everyone has had an opportunity to share, I will reread the motion as it stands and call for a vote. Everyone is entitled to one vote regardless of time in CoDA, service position, or participation in the discussion. I will ask for those in favor, those opposed, and abstentions. Anyone who does not vote will be considered an abstention.
7. I will record the votes and outcome of the motion on the Group Conscience list.

Tonight we have ____ (number) motions to consider in the order they were received. They are _____.

[Go through steps 1-6 for each motion.]

(at 9:00pm) That is all the time we have for this business meeting. Any undecided motions will be tabled until next month.

Thank you everyone for participating in this business meeting. Please join me in closing with the Serenity Prayer.