



MM Meeting Materials & Guidelines

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1. MM Meeting Format

1. Welcome all participants.
2. Ask if there are any:
 - Newcomers
 - Therapist, students, or other observers (if there are, see below for how to respond)
3. Read the Opening Statement:
 - You can read it yourself, or
 - Ask someone to read it (the Zoom Instructions will explain how to share your screen)
4. Share any Announcements: (this can also be done end of the meeting)
Examples of announcements:
 - New meetings
 - Upcoming Kickstart programs or special events
 - Media coverage of MM
5. If the Virtual meeting group is large, you may want to divide the groups.
 - Zoom Instructions explain how to setup Breakout Rooms
 - Be certain to assign a facilitator for each room.
6. The meeting facilitator may suggest a discussion topic or ask if someone has an idea for a topic they would like to discuss. If you need some ideas, our Meeting Coordinators can provide you with some popular discussion topics. You can also use the “Suggested Readings” below to start off the conversation.
7. Try to monitor time so everyone who wants to talk gets a chance. It is not necessary to call on everyone in the meeting to share. Some people are uncomfortable at first but do encourage newcomers to introduce themselves at least and tell the group a bit about why they joined the meeting.
8. If anyone is disruptive, you may ask them to leave the meeting. You may want to warn them using the Chat function in Zoom first, and you can refer to the MM Meeting Ground Rules as the basis for your decision to remove someone from a meeting.
9. If someone appears to be in crisis, you can alert someone at operations@moderation.org to ask for assistance. Some of our operations staff have attended a Mental Health First Aid course and can provide resources and support.
10. Ending the meeting:
 - If you have created Breakout Rooms in your Virtual meeting, bring all participants back to the “main” room for debriefing. Each Breakout Room facilitator can share a few words about the discussion that took place in each room.
 - Read the Closing Statement, including requests for donations and volunteers.



2. Opening Statement

"My name is _____ and I'm the discussion leader for this Moderation Management meeting.

We are a support group concerned about our drinking, and we welcome anyone who shares this concern. The purpose of Moderation Management is to provide a supportive environment for healthy decision-making about drinking and lifestyle, which includes the elimination of any harm related to alcohol use. MM support groups are not treatment or therapy. We endorse research-based guidelines for moderate drinking which emphasize good health and safety, including no drinking and driving.

MM meetings are safe, confidential, and non-judgmental. Understanding that individuals' goals and progress vary, we offer support but do not give advice. We share our experiences and strategies for moderation and balance, including techniques for behavior change and managing negative emotions.

We suggest that members refrain from using alcohol or other substances prior to meetings, so that you may be fully present for yourself and the other meeting participants.

In order to protect the privacy of our members, we ask that anyone attending for reasons other than this concern, or as a student or professional, please notify me either verbally or by using the Zoom chat function at the bottom of your screen."

(NOTE: If a visitor does identify themselves, you can ask that anyone who is uncomfortable with having them there to please notify you verbally or via private chat. If so, you can politely ask the visitor (either privately or verbally) to please excuse themselves and suggest they attend the next Newcomer's meeting (on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month).

[OPTIONAL: We encourage everyone to share a few words about their moderation journey, and if you are a newcomer, please feel free to introduce yourself and let us know what brings you here. However, you are also welcome to listen to what the others have to say until you are comfortable enough to share your own thoughts. We welcome you all and are honored to have you with us.]

3. Closing Statement

"Thank you for attending this meeting of Moderation Management. Once again, in order to protect the privacy of our members, we ask that "what you hear here, and who you see here, stays here". Remember, moderation is the avoidance of extremes, and management is the art of self-control. These two powerful skills can help you achieve balance in your life and face the challenges of everyday living.

If you have found this and other MM meetings to be helpful for you, we encourage you to visit our website and click on the "Donate" button. As we are almost entirely self-funded, every little bit helps us create more awareness and help more people every day.

And if you feel so inclined, we are always looking for volunteers to help us spread awareness about MM. Feel free to fill out the Volunteer form on our website if you have a few hours per week or month to help us grow."

4. MM Meeting Ground Rules

1. An MM meeting is a safe, protected, and confidential space. If you are concerned about your drinking, you are welcome here.
2. We are here to help each other. The appropriate attitude is one of mutual respect and tolerance.
3. People should not come to MM meetings intoxicated and we suggest abstaining from drinking altogether on meeting days.
4. We discourage our members from socializing together in drinking situations, and alcohol is never allowed at meetings or official MM-related activities.
5. We share our experiences and our knowledge; we do not stand in judgment of others, and we try to avoid giving personal advice.
6. We understand that individuals may choose paths other than ours; they are welcome if they are concerned about their drinking.

5. An Effective Meeting Facilitator

1. Acknowledges each person's contribution but does not dominate the conversation with their personal stories.
2. Encourages other participants to respond to what others have to say and share their own experiences.
3. Ensures everyone who wants to speak gets a chance to speak.
4. Ensures the fundamental concepts of MM are discussed at each meeting including:
 - Counting
 - Measuring
 - Planning
 - Accountability
 - How to deal with setbacks
5. Positively reinforces all progress or challenges shared by meeting participants.
6. Ensures even the smallest of victories is celebrated.
7. Remember we are each on our own moderation journey, we celebrate Harm Reduction.
8. Carefully manages their time to ensure those who want to share have an opportunity to do so within the meeting timeframe.
9. As facilitators, we are human, not perfect. If you are struggling with your moderation program, please reach out to one of us to talk. Don't be afraid to admit your own struggles when facilitating. Remember it is Moderation Management not Perfection Management.
10. Facilitators should also be prepared to find coverage for any meeting they can't facilitate, if you don't have a consistent co-facilitator, or if your co-facilitator is also unavailable. You can reach out to meetings@moderation.org and ask for assistance in finding coverage.

6. MM Response to Therapists, Students, and other Observers

Generally, meetings are reserved for those looking for support for their own drinking problem, who expect to engage in private conversation with a collection of people with similar concerns. Sometimes, however, we encounter students working on a class project, or therapists/counsellors seeking to understand more about what MM has to offer their clients who wish to join our meetings.

Sometimes the students or professionals give us the courtesy of asking in advance if it is OK to attend the meeting, and sometimes they just show up.

Here is a suggested response by email:

“You are welcome to attend the meeting but ask that you abide by the following guidelines:”

- Be on the call on time, and please introduce yourself to the Facilitator. You can mute yourself; no participant needs to talk if they choose not to.
- We will start the meeting and read the Opening Statement.
- Before or after the Opening Statement, I will introduce you to the attendees. I will ask for any objections to you being on the call. If anyone is uncomfortable with your attendance, I will discretely ask you to leave.
- People come into the meeting at different times. After each person arrives, at the appropriate time I will repeat your introduction and again request any objections. Again, if anyone objects at that time you will be asked to leave.
- You are a human being. As with any human being that is at one of our meetings, you can choose to speak about your experiences with alcohol- or not; speaking is not a requirement.
- When you write this up, please do not use any "real names" that may appear or any personal identifying information. 7) I must ask you to not make a recording of this call, written notes only. Assuming you agree to these ground rules, send back a reply saying that and some text to use as an introduction. I assume your classmate has the same issues. I expect that they would have the ability and will to introduce themselves as well.
- There is also now a newcomers Open meeting on the second and Fourth Thursday of the month which is an open meeting and provides an excellent overview of our program and resources.

Here is a suggested method for dealing with students/therapists showing up unannounced at a meeting:

- At each meeting, ask if there is anyone who is not there because they are concerned about their own drinking, or who is a therapist or student just wishing to observe. If anyone identifies themselves, you can provide the following response:

“Thank you for letting us know, and we’re glad that you are interested in what our MM meetings have to offer. Since this is a safe and confidential place for everyone to share their personal journey, I ask that if anyone is uncomfortable with having XX observing our meeting tonight, please let me know, either by show of hand or through a private chat. If anyone is not completely comfortable with your attendance, we will ask you to join one of our Newcomer’s meetings on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month, where anyone who is interested in MM is welcome to attend.”

- Wait 30 seconds or so to see if anyone responds, and you can ask the observer to leave via private chat to not draw too much attention to the situation.

7. A Moderate Drinker

When you have made the healthy decision to drink less, and you stay within moderate limits, you should not experience any health, personal, family, social, job-related, financial, or legal problems due to alcohol. The suggested guidelines below allow for a degree of individual interpretation because moderation is a flexible principle and is not the same for everyone. The suggested limits, however, are more definite.

A Moderate Drinker

1. considers an occasional drink to be a small, though enjoyable, part of life.
2. has hobbies, interests, and other ways to relax and enjoy life that do not involve alcohol.
3. usually has friends who are moderate drinkers or nondrinkers.
4. generally, has something to eat before, during, or soon after drinking.
5. usually does not drink for longer than an hour or two on any particular occasion.
6. usually does not drink faster than one drink per half-hour.
7. usually does not exceed the .055% BAC moderate drinking limit. (see Note 1 below)
8. feels comfortable with his or her use of alcohol (never drinks secretly and does not spend a lot of time thinking about drinking or planning to drink).

Drinking Guidelines

Men: No more than 14 drinks per week, and not more than 4 per occasion.

Women: No more than 9 drinks per week, and not more than 3 per occasion.

Both Men & Women: Do not drink on more than 3-4 days per week.

Measurements

- Beer: one twelve-ounce bottle of regular (5% alcohol) beer
- Wine: 5 ounces of wine (12%)
- Liquor: 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor (40%)

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) charts are available at [BAC Table Link](#)

These “number of drinks” limits are LIMITS and not TARGETS. Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) charts are more accurate than the number of drink limits because they take into account weight, sex, and rate of drinking. If you are very light in weight use the BAC upper limit of .055%. Some researchers advise a limit of one drink per day for older adults (55+).

The limits used by MM are based on research published in 1995 in the American Journal of Public Health, by Dr. Martha Sanchez-Craig, Addiction Research Foundation, Toronto, Canada, and other published limits.

8. Nine Steps Toward Moderation and Positive Lifestyle Changes

1. Attend meetings or on-line groups and learn about the program of Moderation Management.
2. Abstain from alcoholic beverages for 30 days and complete steps three through six during this time.
3. Examine how drinking has affected your life.
4. Write down your life priorities.
5. Look at how much, how often, and under what circumstances you had been drinking.
6. Learn the MM guidelines and limits for moderate drinking.
7. Set moderate drinking limits and start weekly “small steps” toward balance and moderation in other areas of your life.
8. Review your progress and update your goals.
9. Continue to make positive lifestyle changes and attend meetings whenever you need ongoing support or would like to help newcomers.