

Chair Chat+
Come find ways to be of service at the meeting level.

Hi everyone and welcome to Chair Chat+. Come find ways to be of service at the meeting level. Would all who care to, join us in a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer.

The “we” version of the Serenity prayer:

God, grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Thy will, not ours, be done.

Introductions:

Let’s go around the room and introduce ourselves by names and locations.

The All About Service brochure explains service as, “anything that assists and supports a fellow CPA member, a CPA group, or the fellowship as a whole. It’s a way to look outside of ourselves and our own struggles to help someone else as we carry CPA’s message of strength and hope.” It goes on to say that, “Service, a central principle of CPA recovery, is about giving and receiving, trusting, and having faith in our Higher Power. Many members find that service work helps to shift their focus towards others and away from pain and illness, helping them discover renewed purpose and meaning in their lives.”

We are here today in support of CPA’s primary purpose of carrying its message of hope and in placing our common welfare first in our

meetings. Concept Four tells us, participation is the key to harmony, and we hope Chair Chat+ makes service in meetings possible and comfortable for all who wish to! Service is empowering, a way to make connections with other members, and to feel like we belong.

There are many ways to be of service at the meeting level including staying for fellowship, exchanging numbers with a newcomer, sharing our experience, or listening to others at the meeting. Lets talk about the other roles in a meeting.

Reading of CPA literature

Most meetings have three common readings that are read, the Preamble, the Steps, and the Traditions. You can volunteer to read this literature at a meeting. You can print these documents out to have ready when needed. They are located on the CPA website at:

<https://chronicpainanonymous.org/meeting-resources/meeting-materials/>

Spiritual timekeeper:

Most meetings also have a spiritual timekeeper. The spiritual timekeeper keeps time of members shares. Each meeting has a different time limit like 2, 3, or 4 minutes. When the time is reached you unmute and say, “gentle reminder” to let the member know their time is up or say, “30 second reminder” to let the member know they have 30 seconds to wrap up.

Chairperson:

The responsibilities of the chair are to access the script, start the meeting as close to time as possible and bring a warm and welcoming attitude to the meeting! The chair is helping to hold a safe place. You're never alone when you chair. There are creative ways to chair a meeting. If you think you cannot chair the whole meeting, you can co-chair or share the role with another member. For instance, one member could open the meeting and lead the first part and the other member could call on members to share and close the meeting.

Service can be challenging when living with chronic pain and illness. CPA service is done by CPA members who are all compromised. We may work slowly; we may get confused or make mistakes. Not only is Higher Power there, but you can enlist a more experienced member to walk with you through the meeting. If you are stuck, feeling unwell or aren't sure what to do, it's always encouraged to ask for help! Compassion for ourselves and others is the proper way to handle anything that comes up in a meeting.

You may find meeting **formats** for most meetings on the XPI website at <https://www.xpintergroup.org/meetings> Feel free to print out formats or bookmark the page.

It is not the chair's duty to open waiting rooms or let people in from the waiting room or to expel intruders. This will be taken care of by the host.

Business meetings:

Ideally, each meeting will have a separate chair who leads the business meetings. It isn't your job to chair a business meeting, although you are free to should the group ask for a volunteer.

Meeting challenges:

We bring kindness and understanding to others at all times, especially during shares. It is not necessary to cut off shares if people are sharing outside the general guidelines. We encourage members to practice self-care when others share and if they become triggered to lower the volume on the share or leave and come back. If a member becomes abusive, we can trust that the host may step in and mute someone. It's important to let newcomers or people with different cognitive abilities open up to the group and find their way. We all practice principles before personalities.

Nothing that happens in a CPA meeting needs to be addressed immediately or alone! We practice compassion and tolerance for those with different struggles. Please remember there is no police force in CPA, no rules, only suggestions.

I'll list some helpful links to resources in the chat.

Meeting Challenges Finding Solutions 2019 document-

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p7y6xc3_2Z7wLAFPJG3iC67gQDNkUFxT/view?usp=sharing

Meeting Materials tab-

<https://chronicpainanonymous.org/meeting-resources/meeting-materials/>

CPA Meeting Handbook-

<https://chronicpainanonymous.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/CPA-Meeting-Handbook-2020-.pdf>

Business Tools to Support CPA Meeting Unity-

<https://chronicpainanonymous.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Business-Tools-to-Support-CPA-Meeting-Unity.pdf>

All About Service-

<https://chronicpainanonymous.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/All-About-Service-1.pdf>

Introduction to Meetings-

<https://chronicpainanonymous.org/find-meetings/introduction-to-meetings/>

XPI Resources- <https://www.xpintergroup.org/resources>

Let's start our **Q&A portion**. We are simply sharing our experience, strength, and hope with each other, so the opinions expressed here are strictly those of the person who gave them; take what you like and leave the rest. You will find ways to be of service that work best for you!

Feel free to raise your digital hand, literal hand, or if you are calling in, please press *9.

Discussion:

Does anyone have a question about service at the meeting level? Does anyone have a question about chairing meetings or have a situation that is concerning you? You can also share any comments that you may have about chairing meetings. Who would like to get us started?

****Give people a little time****

If no one has a question or comment try some of the topics below:

- **Ask members to share some of their experiences around chairing, timekeeping, or reading literature.**
 - **What was challenging?**
 - **What was easy?**
 - **How did you feel afterward?**
- **What would you tell someone who is new to giving service at a meeting?**
- **How did you start serving at meetings and what encouraged you to try it?**

Or...

How do you handle (choose any):

- **What do you do when no one will share or participate**
- **When a member private messages you, and says what you're doing is wrong.**

- **Angry outburst during a meeting**
- **Crosstalk or inappropriate teasing of members**
- **Someone who is suffering in the problem not the solution**
- **Talking about health specifics and “sickalogs”**
- **Attacks on other members, blaming others**
- **The topic of suicide coming up in a meeting**
- **People sharing about specific religions**
- **Someone brings in outside literature**

Closing:

Our time is up for today and I'd like to thank everyone for your participation and willingness to be of service to our CPA meetings! We hope you can join us again next month and let us know how your service experience is going.

(optional)

Chronic Pain Anonymous (CPA) Service Statement

It is our intention to be present to help others while honoring our own recovery. When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, we share CPA's message of hope for those living with the emotional and spiritual debilitation of chronic pain and chronic illness. We shall keep this intention on our minds and in our hearts.

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