

Global Eye Opener

Meeting Etiquette (Long Form)

This is an organic collection of best practices that we've arrived upon through trial, error, and group conscience, much like the genesis of the traditions of AA as a whole. Much of what follows is common sense. Other items are things that have emerged through the advent of online meetings which don't yet have detailed guidelines overall. This document ought not be used as a tool for admonishment but rather a handy reference for those who might be unsure about the way we do things.

Video

We want to see your face!

Keeping your video on helps to get to know everyone and is good for security. However, we understand the considerations of attending a meeting remotely and on-the-go.

But we don't wanna see much more than your face!

In deference to those susceptible to motion sickness, it's recommended to turn off your video when moving around. It's also necessary that you disable your video if there's a chance for something indecent appearing onscreen. *Any lewd or offensive visuals, intentional or otherwise, will result in immediate action on the part of our trusted servants.*

Intense virtual backgrounds can also create a distraction in a meeting. We ask that our fellows be courteous and commonsensical in this regard.

Audio

The mute button is your friend.

Chances are, if you are unmuted, we can hear you. You might save yourself embarrassment and/or help keep from disrupting the meeting by keeping a close eye on your own mute button. If you accidentally become unmuted while not sharing, a helpful servant will eventually mute you.

Audio issues are commonplace.

If we can't hear you or if there's some feedback or distortion, members of the group will let you know and will offer some assistance where possible.

Anonymity and Self-Identification

We'd love to know your (preferred) name!

In keeping with our 12th Tradition, we want to respect the anonymity of our fellows while still being able to best address and acknowledge participants in our meetings. We suggest a naming policy in which participants give themselves the name they wish to be called in the meeting (as opposed to the sometimes inaccurate or anonymity-breaking default name created by the application). If a participant is unable to rename themselves, a host can reach out privately to offer the service of renaming them.

Names help keep us safe.

We see safety as of paramount importance in best carrying the message of A.A. Making visible the preferred name of each participant helps both to allow each fellow to have agency over their anonymity and allows the group to feel connected to the humanity of each participant. Having a vigilant awareness of each participant in our online meeting, newcomer or otherwise, is perhaps our best defense against those who wish to abuse our openness.

Fortunately for us, the Global Eye Opener online group is not the first, nor will it be the last, to face the issue of disruptive behavior in meetings. A GSO-generated document on that and some related topics can be perused here: https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/smf-209_en.pdf

Non-alcoholic observers

The Global Eye Opener is an [open meeting](#), which for us means that anyone can attend the meeting, but only those with a desire to stop drinking are welcome to share. We have found that some alcoholics, particularly those who are newer, are uncomfortable with being “observed” by those who do not have our problem. Some of us have very legitimate fears on this subject: our friends, family, and others like parole officers often want to monitor our attendance anonymously, and some of us have trouble with stalkers. As a result, after much discussion, we settled on a policy of asking all non-alcoholic observers to identify themselves as such, not speak during the sharing parts of the meeting, and to keep their video TURNED ON during the meeting.

Handling Problems

The Global Eye Opener tends to be an unusually warm and welcoming group, with good order and a safe atmosphere for everyone. But we are not saints, and as individuals we tend to be extremely sensitive to criticism. The rule-of-thumb that has worked for most of us over a long time is this: *We suggest to never take it upon yourself to criticize or try to correct the behavior of another member without checking your judgment first with one or two other trusted members.*

Sometimes we deal with problems formally, at the group level, and sometimes we deal with them less formally, in small groups who handle difficult situations under the direction of the Group Officers. Most important: if you have a problem with how someone in the group has treated you, don't let it drive you away. Stay, and tell one of our officers, a meeting chair, or another elected servant. We are here to help.