

## For Today Meditation Meeting Group Conscience Minutes May 6, 2023

1. **Introduction:**

Welcome to the group conscience meeting of the For Today Meditation meeting of OA. My name is *Patsy*, I am powerless over food, and your chair for this meeting.

2. **Serenity Prayer:**

With lines muted, will those who wish to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer: *“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”*

3. **Tradition 4:** “Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.”

4. **Establishing Ground Rules:**

This meeting is held for one hour. The purpose of this meeting is to make decisions that affect our group. Decisions can be changed, amended, even thrown out. I encourage everyone here to participate. If a matter comes to a vote and you do not attend our meeting regularly or do not plan to, please consider whether it would be reasonable for you to vote. However, we welcome everyone’s viewpoint; we can all learn from one another. Please remember *Tradition Five: ‘Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.’ Therefore, anything we decide at this meeting must reflect that purpose. No matter what we believe as individuals, we must be united in our purpose to carry our message as best we can to the compulsive overeater who still suffers. That person is our focus. May we do our best for them.*

**Minutes from the Previous Meeting:** *Minutes Approved*

GC Secretary Kate E provided highlights of the April 2023 GC meeting citing motions that were carried and motions that failed.

**Treasurer’s Report:** *Treasurer’s Report Approved*

GC Treasurer **Christy R** presented the March 2023 report indicating \$339 income (fellow donations) which was sent as the contribution to the World Service Office. The treasury also holds \$850 in reserve broken down as follows:

Zoom annual fee	\$150
WIX Webhosting	\$350
Newcomer packets	\$216
Addtl prudent reserve	\$134

7. **Literature Report:**

GC Literature Coordinator *April* reported that she mailed out 2 newcomer packets in April 2023.

8. **Old Business:** *Karen R*

Creating a fund to send representative(s) to annual and other events and allocate monthly funds to that fund. The fund committee met and decided to consider three virtual regional groups: 1) OA Footsteps which is huge and has lots of activity. They meet on the third Sunday at 3pm; 2) 12 Steps for COES, which is a small group that meets on the first Sunday at 5pm; and 3) Better

Together which holds a call-in meeting. May 20-21 is an OA assembly meeting in Albuquerque, NM. The committee will meet again before this assembly meeting.

## 9. New Business Proposed Motions:

- **MOTION 1 (Stacy D): Motion Carried – 28 Present: Yes 21 No 3**

### **Proposed Motion:**

I would like to propose the For Today question be on the bottom of the daily reading meditation. I would be willing to enter the questions as I did for the “We are in a 5 minute...” Stacey made the motion; KarenKay seconded.

### **Discussion:**

**In favor:** Gloria said putting the question in the chat makes it too small to easily read; Ronna said that readings are sometimes difficult and the questions are helpful when you don’t know what to meditated on; KarenKay finds the chat too distracting and the question is repeated too many times; Christy feels it is more accessible but that it will be a huge task and suggests starting with June rather than January; Claudia feels similar to Christy and suggests a trial basis of one month to evaluate.

**Against:** Ann C doesn’t like being prompted; Jen M finds the question compelling and her mind goes there and feels it takes over the reading; Katherine said that it would add another service position.

**After Motion Carried:** It was agreed to put a brief inclusion in the script that the optional question could be found on the screen following the reading. The script committee agreed to revise script with this inclusion.

- **MOTION 2ab (Gloria): Motion Rescinded**

### **Proposed Motion:**

- a) Should the question prompter position be put on the SignupGenius as a position, or left as an ad hoc position the way it has been done?
- b) What should the position be called? We’ve been using QUESTION PROMPTER. (While Question Lady was cute, it was suggested that would be selective, eliminating men. One meeting that does this writing from the Voices of Recovery and For Today using the service position name WRITING PROMPTER.

**Discussion:** Gloria rescinded Motion 2ab as the previous Motion 1 carried. This motion may be proposed again at a future meeting if Motion 1 is recalled.

- **MOTION 3 (Jean): Motion Carried – 25 Present: 12 Yes 8 No**

### **Proposed Motion:**

I’m not sure how to present this topic so I’m just going to say what I’d like to discuss at the next group conscience meeting, May 6th. This is copied and pasted directly from our meeting format:

Who would like to share on what was read? MUTE YOURSELF DURING SHARES. Please simply reply “Thank you for sharing” with no feedback (crosstalk) or commentary.

There has been an increasing amount of commentary from chairpersons lately. I’d like to find a way that we could enforce the ‘no feedback (crosstalk) or commentary’. If for some reason we can’t enforce it and have chairpeople agree to follow it then, in my opinion, we need to change the script format.

I think it's important to remember that the chairperson serves as a representative of the group while they are chairing. That in mind, I think it's inappropriate for the chairperson to say such things as "That was a wonderful share" or "Thank you (mentions name), your shares are so valuable to us" to some people and then simply say "Thank you" to the next person who shares. It seems cliquish and somewhat dismissive of the person who only gets the "Thank you" from the chairperson, as if their share wasn't so great.

I do think exceptions might be made by the chairperson such as when a sharer mentions a death in their family, or they're facing a tragic health crisis but I'm not even sure what could be said appropriately. I'd love to hear suggestions about that.

Perhaps I've been to too many Al-Anon meetings, but for me, it almost feels unsafe, and I am reluctant to share when so many comments are being made about previous shares. I love this meeting; I love this group and although I'm a newcomer here I feel protective of this group and I really think we need to follow the script that was agreed upon.

I don't know if I was supposed to say all that or just make the motion.

I'm making a motion that at the sharing portion of the meeting the chairperson follows this part of the script: Please simply reply "Thank you for sharing" with no feedback (crosstalk) or commentary. Jean made the motion; Claudia seconded.

#### **Discussion:**

Mary MN said that chair's long response to shares takes time away from additional shares; Ann C agrees with Mary MN even though as a chair it is hard not to acknowledge some shares. She felt that this also places the focus on the chair rather than the person who is sharing. Cheryl felt that if the chair did not acknowledge a death or diagnosis, it would be horrible. If the chair would not be permitted to do this Cheryl would leave the meeting. Karen R said that as a chair she uses her instinct when someone needs acknowledgement, warmth and kindness. Commenting shows her empathy and compassion, however, she knows that she has broken the rule and will follow the script. Katherine mentions that there is a delicate balance re commenting on the newcomer or on a tragedy and that it was hard to make rules about this. You can't police personality, love, and warmth.

Jean responded to the comments that were made saying that crosstalk on her share would make her feel unsafe and that it is not the job of the chair to comment. If a person wants to address a tragedy or share, they can contact them directly after the meeting. She said that we should either stick to the script or change the script.

KarenKay responded that she chairs frequently. It is not easy to ignore shares that reveal a great deal of pain and think that it would be cold and callous not to acknowledge. Don't homogenize or operate under a tight regime. Also wonders how this would be policed and asked, "What are you gonna do?" She said that she felt this motion was directed at her and she was hurt.

Kathryn Louise suggested that we don't really know who is hurting more and that it is best to stick to the script. Ann C suggested that we keep the script as is and have the chair use their best judgement on whether to respond or not.

Jean said that she had never felt a part of the group. Her shares had never gotten an "atta girl," etc. She felt uninvolved and that is why it was important.

KarenKay stated that Jean was contradicting herself in that initially she said she didn't want comments and now she is saying she does want comments. She said that people had contacted

and thanked her and gave her compliments on her chairing. She said that she would not chair again as it takes the love away and she knows that she cannot follow the script 100%. The chair is judged for showing love and empathy and she felt judged.

- **MOTION 4 (Kathryn Louise): Motion Carried – 15 Present: 9 Yes 2 No**

**Proposed Motion:**

I would like a discussion about how to alert participants to avoid naming or describing specific food in their share. Today's reading (Friday, April 21) and multiple shares were a trigger for me today. This doesn't happen often, so I didn't want to call people on it in order to not discourage their share. I also worry that the script is already quite long so not sure if there are other ways to put to prevent this. Kathryn Louise made the motion; Gloria seconded.

**Discussion:**

Kathryn Louise suggested that just a brief mention in the script might work. Ann C agreed the food mention triggered some and that no red foods should be mentioned until the After Meeting where you can say anything. KarenKay asked how that could be policed. Christy suggested that newcomers could be educated on how not to mention proper nouns and food and would learn by example rather than create the burden of having someone reach out to someone about it. Kate in Texas gave the example of someone who crosstalked by directing comments to two members by name in their share. The chair simply made a general reminder announcement after that share about crosstalk.

Patsy called for a motion to extend the meeting. Gloria made the motion; Ann C seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Claudia said that if it was not mentioned in the script, then it shouldn't be policed, but if it were put in the script, we should be mindful. KarenKay felt that calling out the member would not be a good idea. If there are too many rules, it will discourage volunteers. Ann C said to put a gentle reminder in the script. Kathleen felt that if people were chastised, they would not want to share anymore. Elaine felt that were being over picky on ourselves. We have high numbers in our meetings and no one is getting hurt. She felt we were going overboard with pointing out mistakes. We are human. Let's continue to do what we have done in the past.

It was agreed to put a brief inclusion in the script about not mentioning specific food. The script committee agreed to revise script with this inclusion.

- **Do we have a motion to end this meeting? *Motion Carried -Unanimous***

Ann C made the motion; Mary MN seconded.

**10. Closing:**

*I put my hand in yours, and together we can do What we could never do alone.  
No longer is there a sense of hopelessness. No longer must we each depend Upon our own  
unsteady willpower. We are all together now, Reaching out our hands for Power & Strength  
Greater than ours, and as we join hands, We find love and understanding Beyond our wildest  
dreams!*

**Meeting ended 9:16 AM EST.**

**Respectfully submitted May 16, 2023**

***Kate Edwards (Kate in Texas)***