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## CHAT

### Regarding the use of Chat

If the Chat function is on in your Zoom meeting, ALL comments are saved and viewable by *anyone* who saves the Chat. This includes Privately sent messages of all participants.

It does not include links and PDF documents.

When Poll questions are finished, each participant can close the small window displaying the results.

Below, I have sanitized and organized the Chat from the October 22, 2020 Town Hall #2.

### To quote a participant

**I came to AA to get over a fatal disease, not get one.  
Wear your mask, wash your hands and social distance!  
Thanks everyone!**

### Upcoming Town Hall Events

Oahu Town Hall on Reaching Out in the Time of COVID-19, 6:30 PM Hawaii Time 10/28/2020  
You will have register with an email address (Requirement of the intergroup) - Notes will be posted at <https://oahucentraloffice.com/event/town-hall-4th-edition-reaching-out-in-the-time-of-covid-19/>

**November 21, 2020** - Oahu Intergroup Traditions Jeopardy. Send a message to [area8contact@gmail.com](mailto:area8contact@gmail.com) for more info. It will be fun!

#### Future Research:

Marty~ he's secretary of Pacific Group- they're getting a thousand people! from Dean Apple

### Info on Zoom Meetings

flying-sober.com is another great resource for finding zoom meetings

9am PST Daily, 7 days a week  
594 424 398  
Password 714803

(IAG - IntoActionGroup.org) : Into Action Group meets on Tuesday and Friday @ 6 pm PT | 8 pm CT | 9 pm ET on Zoom ID 901 336 4499 (No Password) - Tuesday is a 10-15 lead/discussion and Friday is a speaker meeting. <https://intoactiongroup.org/group-conscience>

319 international 24/7 meeting : 840-5355-4493 passcode: 435735

Technology contact: [319freedom@gmail.com](mailto:319freedom@gmail.com), [319techsec@gmail.com](mailto:319techsec@gmail.com),  
[319zoom919@gmail.com](mailto:319zoom919@gmail.com), [shaunmrust@gmail.com](mailto:shaunmrust@gmail.com), [shan.greenlee@gmail.com](mailto:shan.greenlee@gmail.com) You can dial  
in to Zoom without using any version of Zoom. You can dial in from your cell or LAN line phone.

JUNTA DE MUJERES TODOS LOS DÍAS 10:00-11:30 am (pst)  
Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/642819351>  
ID 642 819 351  
Contraseña: Tolerancia password: Tolerancia

Three Legacies Study Group Zoom ID 861 1562 6182 password ConCepts20  
Tuesday 6:30 PM - 8 PM (PST)

## Resources

7th Tradition: Cash.app (International use)

Free digital AA literature for new people <http://aasandiego.org/newcomer.html>

[https://www.aa.org/assets/en\\_US/e\\_group.pdf](https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/e_group.pdf)

You can dial in to Zoom without using any version of Zoom. You can dial in from your cell or  
LAN line phone.

San Diego AA Intergroup and area meetings are held on Zoom

For the future and insuring all groups can access information on what is going on in locally and  
in AA as a whole, make sure your group is listed with GSO and has a group number. Indicate  
on the Group Information Form is the meeting is online only (if that applies). Listing meetings as  
well as their type will become important in the future for service conference polling as well as  
allowing central offices a view of the services they need to offer to groups.

San Diego Intergroup can list a group in the category of 'non-publish'.

Connecting the Meeting Guide: <https://meetingguide.aa.org/>

Technology in AA (online) Forum  
TIAA Forum for tech issue involving AA.  
<https://naatw.org/tiaa-forum/>

## Contact Info

Chip (from Louisiana) offers instructions for using line of defense against Zoom bombers -  
901-338-9448

Jane G, Three Legacies Study: [area8contact@gmail.com](mailto:area8contact@gmail.com)

## RESULTS FOR POLL QUESTIONS

POLL QUESTIONS			
QUESTION	RESPONSE OPTIONS	RESPONSE COUNTS	% OF TOTAL RESPONSES
<b>Will you continue to attend AA meetings on Zoom after COVID is no longer a threat to your health and safety?</b>	Yes	29	88%
	No	4	12%
<b>How has reopening during the pandemic affected your in-person meeting format?</b>	Our format is the same	3	18%
	Our format is very different now	5	29%
	Our format is the same except for social distancing and masks	9	53%
<b>Do you want more Town Hall meetings?</b>	Yes	25	96%
	No	1	4%

## OPENING REMARKS

This is the second Town Hall conducted by our 3 Legacies Study Group. Our meeting is devoted to the discussion of applying all Three Legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous to expand our personal spiritual growth. All AA members are welcome to attend. The Zoom information for our weekly meeting will be posted in the Chat. All AA members are welcome.

We held our first Town Hall because most of us held the idea we would simply return to our regular meetings after an interruption of only a few short months. That idea has been replaced with the vision that this pandemic will continue indefinitely. The Fellowship has responded well to keeping AA meetings available with the widespread use of internet meetings, taking in-person meetings outdoors, setting up social distancing safety measures, and offering meetings that are held in-person and simultaneously allowing participation via ZOOM. It is clear AA members and newcomers have a variety of needs for meetings. Some want or even need in-person meetings, and there are others who cannot even consider attending an in-person meeting. At this point, the Fellowship has been facing this pandemic long enough for

us to have newcomers with 6 months of sobriety who have never been to an in-person meeting. Our responsibility remains to be focused on the needs of the newcomer.

We know that just as the world in which AA exists has changed, the Fellowship itself is required to change its 12-Step work. Our Fellowship is fortunate to have the tried and true guidance held in our Traditions and Concepts. All we need to do is pick up the kit of tools to guide our conduct. Our work in these sharing sessions is to exchange ideas and practices that help us successfully maintain our common solution. Remember, in our conduct, each person and meeting carries a responsibility to maintaining our primary purpose. Each person and each meeting may be the only Big Book someone reads.

We are in communication with more and more AA members who are conducting Town Halls in their local geographic area. We are finding common trends and are exchanging ideas for better communication to help our groups continue to extend the hand of AA.

Here are a few points of information on groups:

- Intergroups across the country report that their meetings are experiencing zoom bombers. All Zoom meetings are traceable on the internet. Search software can find any zoom meeting whether or not it is listed in a central office directory.
- Google and Zoom are collaborating to mediate this vulnerability but the development date remains far in the future.
- Frequent bombings have caused some Zoom meetings to withdraw their Central Office website listing.
- Some in-person meetings don't want to be listed because decreased room capacities make it hard to accept newcomers. One group has decided that if a newcomer shows up that an old timer gives up their chair in the meeting to meet maximum capacity requirements.
- We are facing new questions regarding our Tradition of Anonymity. A couple examples are: The distribution of phone lists in the Zoom Chat. With hybrid meetings, there is often the online display of the faces of people who are seated in the room.

## Meeting Statistics

- The number of Zoom meetings remains fairly unchanged.
- The number of in-room meetings has increased.
- The number of outdoor meetings has increased. (Daylight savings time and winter will likely change this.)

We hope you will find some useful information in tonight's discussion. A Survey Monkey link to 4-questions will be placed in the Chat. It will take approximately 2 minutes to complete, The questions work to learn more about the services and information that will be helpful to your group. There is also a question to gather topic ideas for future Town Halls. We hope you will participate.

## Panel One

DATE OF MEETING (10/22/2020) Second Town Hall Pandemic

JANE: Hi everybody. I'm Jane. I'm an alcoholic. This is our second town hall conducted by our three legacies group. One second. I've got to get back to my notes. Okay. Our meeting is devoted to the discussion of applying three legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous to continuously allowing participation via Zoom. It is clear AA members and newcomers have a variety of needs for meetings.

Groups across the country report that their meetings are experiencing Zoom bombers. All Zoom meetings are traceable on the internet. Search software can find any Zoom meeting whether or not it is listed in a central office directory. Google and Zoom are collaborating to mediate this vulnerability, but the development date remains far in the future. Frequent bombings have caused some Zoom meetings to withdraw their central office website listing. Some in-person meetings don't want to be listed because decreased room capacity makes it hard to accept newcomers. One group has decided that if a newcomer shows up, an old-timer gives up their chair in the meeting to meet the maximum capacity requirement.

We are also facing new questions regarding our traditions of anonymity. A couple examples are the distribution of phone lists in the Zoom chat and in hybrid meetings where there is often the on-line display of the faces of people who are seated in the room.

Here's a couple of meeting statistics that have changed since our last Town Hall. The number of Zoom meetings remains fairly unchanged. The number of in-room meetings has increased. That's since September. The number of outdoor meetings has also increased, but we expect that Daylight Savings Time and winter will likely change this. We hope you will find some useful information in tonight's discussion. A Survey Monkey link to four questions will be placed in the chat. It is estimated it takes approximately 2 minutes to complete the survey.

The questions work to learn more about the services and information that will be helpful to the group. There is also a question to gather topic ideas for future Town Halls. We hope you will participate. So that is a separate link and not the same as the full questions that Tom will display for us tonight. So thank you for being here and I will now turn the meeting over to our first panel leader.

**RICHARD:** Thank you, Jane. Good evening everybody. My name is Richard and I am an alcoholic.

I would like to introduce our timekeeper for this panel, Annie.

**ANNIE:** Thanks Richard. I'm Annie and I'm an alcoholic.

So each speaker will have 5 minutes, and at about 15 seconds to wrapping up, I'll send you a message in chat that will just let you know that you need to wrap up in about 15 seconds.

**RICHARD:** Well, thank you, Annie, and just really quick, any errors are all mine, so I apologize up front for anything that goes wrong, you can just say, hey, it's Richard's fault, and I will gladly take it.

I would also like to let you know that we do have another person in the background. Her name is Jane M. She's going to be doing the important service of note taking, so she'll be getting our notes down for this Town Hall. So I want to say thank you to Jane M. for doing that for us.

Gentle reminder. Please do not use the chat for any cross-talk. We would greatly appreciate that. And the three speakers for this panel are going to be sharing about their experience with the Zoom AA groups. So I would like to ask Dean so please take it away.

**DEAN:** Oh, great. Thank you very much, Richard. My name is Dean. I'm an alcoholic. Glad to be here. Thank you for inviting me, Jane.

Okay. So, yeah, we started our Zoom meetings on two days after the pandemic hit. On March 15th. The pandemic was a Friday out here. I'm in Palm Desert, California. Kind of close. And we started it right away, and you know what we realized -- when I say "we" I mean my wife and myself -- we realized right away, obviously there's some very basic differences between a Zoom meeting and an in-person meeting, one of them being it can be a little difficult to hold people's attention on Zoom because there are so many inherent distractions with having a

computer in your house. You know, the doorbell rings or the cat runs across the room or God knows what's going to happen. So we realized we really need to spice it up and make it more exciting for people, especially the newcomers.

So what we started doing was we would ask, of course, are there any newcomers in the room, and we would write down their names and we remember who they are, and here's part of the key. When somebody introduces themselves as a newcomer within the first 29 days of sobriety, we would all unmute, and we would all cheer, and greet them. And, also, we informally keep track of their days. If somebody comes on and says I have 11 days, I'll say we look forward to seeing you in 19 days from now to take your 30-day chip, and we'll mark the calendar. So we make it all about them. We try to make it as personal as we possibly can. And that's not just for the newcomers. We do it for any length of sobriety as well. 30 days, 60 days, 90 days. And we do birthdays. Which reminds me. Another commitment we have is a cupcake person. And we will actually a little cupcake with a candle in it and we'll hold it up to the camera and light the candle and we unmute everybody and we sing Happy Birthday to the person. And if they've never had that before, I'm telling you, it's gets a really big smile and a big laugh because they're being made to feel special.

So another tip that we found out, if I'm doing the cupcake, that's fine, you know. It'll usually be a speaker. You know how the camera goes to the speaker view. But if somebody else has the cupcake commitment for that day, we'll spotlight that person and most of you probably know spotlight means everybody can see that person and pin means just you can see that person.

Which brings me to the next one. We also -- you guys, you ready for this? -- we do signs. We'll have, you know, somebody has 30 days, we'll do, hip, hip, hooray or the newcomers or first timers, we also ask for anybody first time to this particular Zoom meeting. I mean, first timers to our meetings so we can greet you. And we'll hold up the welcome sign. And we've got little happy birthday signs. And then every now and then just for fun we'll do something like, oh, if somebody has 60 days or whatever, we'll just do something wacky like that, just to make them laugh and smile, you know. We've got woohoo. My wife usually does this stuff, but it just depends.

So most of you probably also know we have a co-host. It's really important to have a co-host because the co-host is watching the waiting room and anybody that

doesn't know to raise their blue hand electronically, they may just be waving. So the co-host helps with all of that.

So what else? I think it's very important for us to unmute in our meeting. We unmute so everybody can cheer. We will unmute to greet the speaker. We always have a leader, a 10-minute leader, and we'll all unmute beforehand. You know, I'll introduce today's 10-minute leader is Jane G. and I'll unmute everybody so we can all clap and cheer, and it just makes them feel welcome. And then when they're finished with their 10-minute lead, I'll unmute again so everybody can clap and cheer. So I think that's real important because it just jazzes it up. It makes it a little more spicy.

What else? We have a court card signer which we use very rarely, but every now and then the newcomer will come in and say, hey, I've got a court card, and so we've got a person. I think part of the key is just having lots of commitments for people. And in our particular meeting, we've got 1 or 2 people that seem to do all the work and they seem to volunteer for all the commitments. We try to spread it out also just like a normal in-person meeting.

What else? Obviously, we've got a treasurer. We've got a greeter. We've got people that greet. As people come on, they try to say hi.

Oh, out of towners. Also, we ask for any out of towners.

So I'm just about running out of time, it looks like. Chip is in my meeting also. Chip's here today.

You know, I think the key is, you guys, we just have fun. They have a lot of fun and everybody calls it a family because we make it so much -- we call people by their names. I try to say something personal about people, like, first time in the meeting or they've been a regular or whatever. That's really the key. If I can sum it all up, we try to make it as personal as possible. Unmute everybody to clap and cheer and just spice it up.

Thanks for having me. Hope I did what I was supposed to do. And, so, yeah, there you go.

RICHARD: Dean, that was very cool. That was fantastic. Turn it around, make it a hoo woo. Thanks so much, Dean. I greatly appreciated that. I would like to introduce our next speaker. Jerry M. If we can unmute and present him.

JERRY: Hi, my name is Jerry and I am an alcoholic. And thank you, Jane, for asking me to participate.

I want you to tap back in your memory cells. Think about the time that you walked into an AA meeting and you see this great big literature rack, and you probably see some great finds laying around there. You'd see some Big Books and other types of AA literature, and then (musical interlude) -- have any literature available anymore. And so my topic is serving the newcomer's literature needs on Zoom. And what do we do here? And I can tell you for the meetings that I go to, that wasn't one of the first things that we thought about, is what do we do about literature for newcomers. That took us a while before we started noticing that that was a problem. We were happy when newcomers showed up, when there was newcomers that found out about the Zoom meetings, and found out how to log in and things like that. So when we realized that we needed to figure out how to get some literature to newcomers, we heard that there were, you know, a couple of meetings in our area that were trying something that was a little bit different. We had to figure out, well, how can we address something like that.

The first thing we had to think about is how do we get the literature? And then we had to think about either do we have the financial wherewithal in order to be able to try and provide some books to the newcomer. So we had to take a look at our treasury. We found out that since we weren't paying any rent anymore to the landlords, to basically the cities, all of a sudden we had some finances there, and we saw that that wasn't a problem. So in the discussions that we had, not only within our group but within other groups, we found out that, you know, yes, we do have money that we could spend on literature if we had a way to get it to that newcomer. We knew that the Zoom meetings weren't all that expensive to conduct. So that wasn't using a lot of money. So we have the cash. Can we also agree that this would probably be a good use of \_\_\_ tradition funds in order to try and provide some, you know, some literature to the newcomers.

What we ended up at several of the meetings talking about this with a steering committee or an advisory committee, and then we brought the idea to our groups and what we -- I'm going to give you one example of what we're doing at one of the groups, and it varies a tiny bit from group to group. But what happens is when the secretary asks for newcomers and the newcomers will raise their hand, we make an announcement that says, if you're new to AA, this meeting wants to ensure that the newcomer has a newcomer packet and also a Big Book for our 12 steps and 12 traditions book. And we want to provide this to you at no charge.

Please put your name and your phone number and send in chat that information to the literature person and we will contact you towards the end of the meeting to make arrangements for that. That's sort of the basic theme there. We do kind of the same thing. At the end of the meeting, the literature person also will make an announcement reminding them, but the literature person will also say, also if anyone needs any literature and you're having a difficult time getting it, please let me know and I'll work with you to make sure that you can get that. Because not everybody can leave during the day and go to central office, whichever one you use, when that is open.

So what happens is the literature person will get that contact information from a newcomer and they might drop it off at the newcomer's house. They might meet them in a location. If the literature person is unable to do that, we have a couple of other people at the meeting that have agreed to do drop-offs, whatever is convenient to that newcomer. You see, the thing here is we don't charge the newcomer any information for that. Okay? So that is what we're trying. There's not a lot of newcomers, so it's not costing a lot of money. Many of the newcomers are returnees to AA. They already have a Big Book, etc., but it helping us share that needed information with the newcomers that are on Zoom meetings. So thank you.

RICHARD: Thank you so much for that, Jerry. That was awesome. Thanks for that great reminder. And another reminder to everybody. Please remember if you would like to send your question via chat, please do so. And then after our next speaker, we will also have an opportunity to share, so please make sure that you raise your hand at that point. Having said that, and I believe our final speaker is coming in from way across the country in Louisiana, and if I'm wrong, I apologize. Chip, would you care to share, sir?

CHIP: Thank you, Richard, and thank you, Dean, for asking me to jump in here.

I assume everybody can hear me okay? Right? Perfect. I'm Chip \_\_\_\_\_. I'm an alcoholic. My home group is Stand to Action Group of Alcoholics Anonymous. We're a pre-pandemic online only AA meeting.

A little bit of information. I saw my topic to share, so I'm going to play AA police for a moment. So the thought there, Richard, is I'm the chairperson of the group. I'm an elected member of the group's structure, and my responsibility has been a steward of the group conscience. I was elected based on a steering group

that we formed before we created the meeting, and that group comprised of stand and follow the delegates, former trustees of Alcoholics Anonymous and so forth, and the purpose of forming the steering committee was to advise the group and a number of things you're wanting me to talk about tonight. So real brief please tell me when I have about 4 minutes. I'm going to run through this very quickly.

So the primary focal point of -- I don't want to use the word "policing" but managing the online and the AA meeting experience. The group has a responsibility and it's our conscience to protect the privacy and anonymity, not to confuse the two. So we have roles in our group, not unsimilar to what Dean was describing, but our co-hosts have multiple responsibilities. We have readers, spiritual bouncer, newcomer liaison. We do have a person with multiple literature, albeit we don't buy literature for anybody other than our own members, but we do make literature available via online distribution which is obviously at no charge.

But one of the things that we've had to counter with the help of some friends of mine in New York, we dealt with Zoom bombing. We embraced the future of Zoom and Alcoholics Anonymous. All Zoom bombers are welcome in our meetings. We take a different attitude. We don't have to protect our group. We only use only a waiting room. We do control our room based on the best practices and guidance as issued by a number of intergroups like New York and our steering committee.

So here's what our global settings are. We don't allow chat except anyone other than the host. We are newcomer liaisons. Our host greeter allow people to come into the room, not that dissimilar to Dean's, but our spiritual bouncer sits at the end of the queue, so every time we admit somebody to the Zoom room, if you go to the very end of the video panel, every person at every room automatically goes to the very back of the Zoom panel. So if you go all the way to the very end of the video screen, Zoom bombers exhibit 3 behaviors consistently, and this is our experience because we hold them hostage in our meeting hoping one of them will get sober one day. So what we do is, they go to the back of the bus, we kick people out when they're throwing porn up in the video, just right click and remove. As the spiritual bouncer's responsibility. But you'd be surprised how many Zoom bombers hang out in the meetings, but here is the 2 behaviors, besides the porn, they'll immediately raise their hand and so we don't want to kick anybody out, but we'll put them in a waiting room, and we'll chat with them to make sure they understand the rules if they want to come back into the meeting.

If they do and they're not disruptive, they're welcome. And finally, and this will be the last thing I'll say, you know, we do break out rules. We keep our room on mute before the meeting. It's a very different thing with meetings that the average stay connected group that Dean and Debbie started.

We adhere to all 12 traditions, but with an emphasis on 4, 5, and 12, and our primary purpose emphasizes the use of the breakout rooms at the meeting after the meetings. After the whole meeting results in a secondary meeting that occurs where our home group members get put into separate breakout rooms, and with the Zoom capability users can select which rooms to join. We're finding that by the time the breakout happens, or the meeting after the meeting, the Zoom bombers are staying around, and anybody that really wants to sober and meet a home group member, find a sponsor, and have that type of meeting after the meeting experience. It's been where our group has grown. Since we started in February, we're up to 55 members where we started with 3, so pretty much everybody's pretty active.

Intoactiongroup.org, if you want to read about our group intentions and if I could be of any service, to answer any questions, I'll be happy to at any point. Thank you for having me.

JANE: Thank you so much, Chip. That was really cool. That was great. At this point of the meeting, I would like to open it up if anybody has a question or a comment, if they would like to share, we encourage members to share. (20:29)

## Panel Two

Notes from Town Hall #2, Panel 2

Michael E, Sunday 11:00 am Breakfast Group at the Cass St Alano Club, Pacific Beach.

The club closed in March. Meetings at the club pays the rent.

When the 11:00 am meeting went to Zoom the question of face to face meetings came up -when and how.

By late June the first open (hybrid/limited face to face) meeting happened. One of the board members of the Alano Club is on the Board of Health.

All precautions are taken – hand sanitizers, chairs spaced at least 6 ft apart, and then wiped down, only members with masks are permitted and only 32 members fit in the room.

Before Covid 75 – 100 would attend.

How is this meeting a hybrid? Is there a camera? What about anonymity?

The Board of Directors decided that each meeting at the club would decide if they would be entirely Zoomed or hybrid.

Of the 32 seats in the room, members may choose certain marked seats if they do not want to be seen on camera. The Club paid for the beautiful big monitor that is mounted on a side wall, a good camera, and a mic at the podium, plus wireless mics if members do not want to be seen when they share.

Evelyn R, Those Who Won't Socially Distance

Evelyn has a restriction on being in public. She will always Zoom or Skype.

What about face to face where there are no masks or social distancing?

Evelyn spoke with the South Bay Pioneer Club which has a \_\_\_\_ (Zoom?) \_\_\_\_\_ meeting.

She had challenges with technology, the format, and all the details.

That left her with face to face which she cannot attend because it was not safe for her.

Joey K., How and Why did you move to Zoom? The I.B. Up group, 7am daily

Joey is his mom's caretaker and cannot attend meetings in person. He wanted an early meeting. 7:30 am worked best.

People with compromised health issues were trying to straddle both the zoom meeting and conducting a business meeting in person at the 7 am. That did not work for Joey. He started a Zoom meeting and registered it with GSO in NYC.

What does a pandemic meeting created since covid look like? Some service positions are gone. Some people are going back to face to face. There is a need for service positions and that need needs to be filled.

Open Sharing

Andrea E, 319 International, shared about an international /world-wide GSO.

Jane M, LaMesa Step Study Workshop, District 12 - Discussion on connection with GSO, with Districts, and with meetings who are currently not meeting. Is our service structure falling apart?

Chip, Palm Desert meeting, suggested all groups register with GSO as they have.

*Respectfully submitted by Rose P*