

# S.L.A.A. Group Inventory - Suggested Meeting Format

- **OPEN THE MEETING promptly at the appointed time.**

- **READ:** "Welcome to the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of S.L.A.A. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I will be chairing the meeting today. Please join me in a moment of silence and the *Serenity Prayer*."
- **ASK** for a volunteer to read the Preamble.
- **PASS** the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions to read.
- **READ:** "Today's meeting is a special Group Inventory meeting. That means that this group has designated this specific meeting a time for the group to take its own 4th and 5th Step together. Everyone is welcome!

"The 4th Step states, '[We] made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves,' and the 5th Step states, '[We] admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.' Simply put, it is a form of cleaning house, both personally and as a group.

"The format for today's meeting will be as follows:

- ☺ We will go around the room in a round-robin fashion and each person is asked to say:
  - 1) One thing they **like** about the group and/or meeting.
  - 2) One thing they would like to see **changed** about the group and/or meeting.
  - 3) One thing they **plan to contribute** to the group and/or meeting.

An example of a response to these questions might be:

- 1) "People greeted me when I came in and offered me literature."
- 2) "I would like to have some kind of handout explaining about the group's process, its meeting format, and what cross-talk is."
- 3) "I will volunteer to help write the handout with some long-time members of the group."

- ☺ One group member will record the "likes" people talk about and another member will record the "changes" people would like to see. This information will then be reproduced for group distribution and discussed at the group's business meetings over the next few months to discuss making changes (where necessary) and come to a group conscience as to what would better meet group member needs.
- ☺ There will be 25 minutes at the end of the meeting for members to get current, if it is needed.
- ☺ Everyone here can benefit from this process--even the newcomers. Everyone is encouraged to share, but if you wish, you may pass. However, please remember sometimes even the simplest feedback can benefit the whole group.

"The usual fashion for a Group Inventory is that a person who is not a member of the group chairs the meeting so that members can speak freely and the Chairperson can stay detached. **I am here to facilitate, not to judge.**"

- **BEGIN INVENTORY PORTION OF THE MEETING...**

- **ASK:** "Can the 'recording secretaries' identify themselves." (If there are not pre-assigned secretaries, ask for a volunteer to write the "likes" and one for the "changes".)

**CHAIR NOTE:** We do not record the contributions. This part of the "inventory" is for the benefit of the member and enables him/her to show willingness and commitment to their own recovery and sobriety. Those persons and Higher Power are responsible for follow-through on their personal contributions.

- **ASK:** "Can we have a volunteer to keep time?"
- **DIVIDE** up the remaining time (minus 25 minutes for emergency getting current and 5 minutes for closing the meeting--a total of 30 minutes) by the amount of people at the meeting. That number will be the amount of time each person has to speak.

"Please acknowledge the time keeper when you are signaled."

- **BEGIN INVENTORY** in round-robin fashion. Remind people they are stating:
  - 1) One thing they **like** about the group and/or meeting.
  - 2) One thing they would like to see **changed** about the group and/or meeting.
  - 3) One thing they **plan to contribute** to the group and/or meeting.

**CHAIR NOTES RE: ENDING THE INVENTORY:** Suggestions *for handling the following scenarios*.

- Everyone has had a chance to share and there is no more desire to discuss the inventory before the emergency getting current time. *Begin the getting current portion of the meeting and run until 5 minutes before the end of the meeting.*
- The 25 minutes before the close of the meeting is approaching and not everyone has had a chance to speak. *Let people know the time.*
- It is the 25 minutes before the close of the meeting and not everyone has had a chance to speak. *Take a group conscience vote by show of hands as to whether to continue the inventory portion of the meeting into the emergency getting current time.* If YES, continue. If NO, tell people they can submit their "likes, changes, and plans to contribute" in writing to the facilitator and they will be added to the record.
- If the meeting process is on time, announce the getting current time 25 minutes before the close of the meeting.
- Someone cannot attend the Inventory and submits his/her "like, changes, contributions" in writing. The person's name must accompany the written submission, and the facilitator is responsible for reading the item into the minutes during the time everyone else is sharing.

- **BEGIN EMERGENCY GETTING CURRENT** (30 minutes before the end of the meeting.)
  - **READ/ASK:** "At this time, we would like to welcome newcomers. If you are new, please raise your hand and tell us your first name so we can welcome you."
  - **READ:** "This is the emergency getting current portion of the meeting. All who need to get current kindly raise your hand."
  - **DIVIDE** the remaining time until 5 minutes before the end of the meeting by the number of people who wish to get current.

"We will continue this portion of the meeting in a pitch format. The Chair picks the first person to share and that person picks the next person and so on. Please remember the meeting will end **PROMPTLY** at \_\_\_\_\_. Please stay within your allotted time. Failure to do this may affect another member's ability to share. PLEASE keep this in mind while you are sharing so that everyone who wishes will be able to speak."

- **CLOSE THE MEETING PROMPTLY!** (5 minutes before the end of the meeting.)
  - **READ:** "If you did not get a chance to share, please talk with someone after the meeting. If you are available after the meeting to speak to others, please raise your hand. [pause] See these people after the close of the meeting."
  - **READ:** "According to the 7th Tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Our spending plan is \$\_\_\_\_\_ per week. The money is used for: weekly rent, literature, and contributions to Intergroup, the Delegate Travel Fund, and Fellowship-Wide Services. Please keep this in mind as the basket is passed."
  - **READ:** "Are there any S.L.A.A. related announcements?"
  - **THANK** the Time-Keeper and Recording Secretaries. **ASK** the Treasurer what is the final 7th Tradition collection amount.
  - **READ:** "In closing, we would like to remind you that the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you like and leave the rest. Also, anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our program. If we are to recover, we must feel free to say what is in our minds and hearts. Therefore, who you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here."
  - **READ:** "Please join me in closing the meeting with (leader's choice--Serenity Prayer, Our Father, etc.) This meeting is an optional hand-holding meeting."

## **POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:**

### **MY PART AS A MEMBER OF THE GROUP**

1. Do I periodically volunteer to lead a meeting?
2. Can I accept disagreement and differing points of view good-naturedly?
3. Do I volunteer for, or willingly accept, a group office: group representative, secretary, chairperson, program chairperson or treasurer?
4. Do I criticize others in the group or gossip about them?
5. Do I welcome new members, talk with them, suggest pieces of SLAA literature, offer my phone number or the group's telephone list and local meeting schedule?
6. Do I interrupt or carry on a conversation while another member is speaking?
7. In my own sharing do I focus on the problem or the solution? When group problems arise, do I focus on the problem or the solution?

### **MY VIEW OF THE GROUP**

1. Are we forming cliques or being indifferent to other members of the group?
2. Do we make sure newcomers have at least one member's telephone number, a schedule of local meetings and some SLAA literature?
3. Do we keep our meetings fresh and interesting in order to retain our longtime members?
4. Do we order an abundant, wide variety of SLAA literature including CD's?

### **MY VIEW OF OUR WEEKLY MEETINGS**

1. Are our meetings interesting and helpful?
2. Do we stick to the subject of the meeting or wander off on tangents (ie Anorexia meetings with Anorexia qualifications; Step meetings with Step qualifications; Focusing on recovery in general rather than the ways we "act in" or "act out")
3. Is the group attracting members from different backgrounds? Are we seeking a good cross-section of our community, including those with special needs?
4. Do new members stick with us, or does the turnover seem excessive? If so, Why? What can we as a group do?
5. How often does my group rotate our leadership positions? Is everyone encouraged to participate? Are we conscious of the fact that the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition applies not only to the collection of a treasury but also applies to contributions of service at the meeting?
6. What has the group done lately to bring the SLAA message to the attention of professionals in the community—the physicians, clergy, court officials, educators, and others who are often the first to see alcoholics in need of help?