

## ACA SMR Safety Meeting Notes

Minutes by Eddie

Thursday, February 9, 2023

Meeting called to order by Jean at 8:55 am, with a moment of silence followed by the serenity prayer.

Jean stated the purpose of the meeting: that disruptions of the meeting over the previous two weeks had caused a number of emails being sent to Jean, requesting answers. Jean wanted to pose questions to the group for guidance.

General guidelines were read by Cynthia S and Barbara

Call for Service: Eddie is taking notes, Lisa from FL volunteered to be time keeper, Kelly volunteered to watch for hands.

Jean then reviewed the overview of the meeting's agenda. Stephen H moved to accept the agenda as read, seconded by Barbara. The only opposing vote was by Robert, who opposed the motion as stated, and wanted to add "Problem and Guidelines should follow ACA traditions"

ACA Traditions 1 & 2 were read by Kate H, 3 & 4 were read by Kathleen, and 5, 10 & 12 were read by Wendy.

The Suggested Commitments to Service was read by Jean, Marian O'R, Joy and Nancy B

Safety Discussion and Solutions

Jean read the meeting's Guiding questions

1. What do I consider Significant disruptive behaviors (not just eating or drinking)?
2. When could trusted servants remove the disruptive person?

3. Who is entrusted or empowered to either: a) Move the disruptive person to the waiting room, or b) Remove the disruptive person from the meeting?

The meeting was then opened up for one and a half minute shares to allow members of the group to speak to the questions:

A – Any disruptive person is causing the meeting to feel unsafe and is a target for removal. I try to message them about their behavior. If they keep repeating the behavior, it's best to remove them for meeting safety. It was harder to deal with before breakout rooms. Sometimes people lose control or get upset. It's not my job to calm you down, but protect the meeting's integrity.

B – I'm troubled by this and want to follow tradition 3 if people aren't allowed to demonstrate these traits. I don't want to squelch someone.

C – The meeting needs to be a safe place. I'm troubled that the person is not in the room, that the person we're talking about most recently is not in the room. I'm not confident that any one of us will have the answer, it should be all of us.

D – The first day of the behavior that recently happened, it was definitely a religious or political attack. Co-hosts are trusted servants who should be fit for service and I made an effort to keep the meeting safe.

E – Things like Zoom bombing isn't an issue. But isn't this type of behavior a good reason there's like 300 of us in this room and can handle this upset. I don't think we can make everyone feel safe.

F – I was Tech secretary for one and a half years, 3 incidents occurred that were disruptive. One was someone posting about a Mark Zuckerberg barbecue video invitation. Another involved a room host showing images of putting sage in the room to "bless the room". Members of the group asked the person to stop, the person refused. Another was a Zoom bomber. The Zoom bomber got removed immediately. The other two individuals were invited to discuss the issue, but they both refused.

G – I think we need to be careful about drawing the line about these boundaries, safety versus political views. I view this as a place where I can bring all parts: good, bad, and ugly.

H – I have problems. This person was not invited to this meeting. Another time a person interrupted a meeting to compliment the chairperson. I found that inappropriate. Also, the question of unilateral behavior about moving people into breakout rooms.

(Timekeeper notified member about time being up, member acknowledged the timekeeper, then continued to speak. Timekeeper reminded member a second time, member then wrapped up share.)

Jean at this point asked the group to allow a spiritual pause, then reinforced that the focus of this meeting is not about any particular person, but rather about keeping the meeting safe. The floor was then re-opened for sharing on the questions posed.

I – I was a disruptive person in the past. I would have accepted my being removed by a meeting. The group is strong. A strong container can handle the disruption.

Jean then notified the group the current time was 9:32 am, and that she had set the boundary to end the meeting at 9:45 am. She had not expected over 80 people however, so this issue could require further discussion. She asked the group: if you would like to continue discussing the questions, use checkmark to vote yes. If you wish to stop the discussion, use red x to vote no.

Robert volunteered to tally votes, coming up with 16 yes votes against 3 no votes. A member spoke up that the count was wrong, it was actually over 40 yes votes to 3 no votes. Robert acknowledged the counting error and apologized for the mistake. The group conscience voted to continue discussion of the questions. Jean then re-started the discussion.

J – Somebody pulling all attention to themselves or attacking an individual is disruptive. This isn't about a specific particular individual, but about developing a process for a safe space.

K – The element of safety is the most important thing for healing. If we could behave in Zoom like we do when in person.... (the audio from member K stopped working at this point).

L – I’m confused. I thought there was no authority to govern. I would rather see the chat closed, if that’s the issue, rather than kick the person out.

M – Asked if room hosts could bring up a tally whenever yes or no votes are taken. Not everyone is ready to recover. There are expectations that people won’t cross-talk. If someone starts selling something or being political, I’d love to be able to rescue them, but they may not be ready.

Jean then interjected that we will not be able to resolve this issue today, then continued discussion

N – It strikes me that we’ve become a large group. If we’re going to hear everyone’s voices, we’re going to have to invest some time. We have over 500 members now.

O – This disruption has taught me how to deal with this. This has been a learning experience. I will have this type of behavior come up.

Jean took a pause to breathe, then apologized to the group that we would not be able to resolve this issue today. Jean then asked everyone to think about this topic, and we need to meet again to discuss possible solutions.

P – I just wanted to quickly distinguish that the meeting script refers to safety, perhaps the term “safe enough” is more accurate and could be changed

Q – Stated the chat is abused

Member sharing ended

No Announcements put forth

Jean thanked everyone for providing service and for volunteering to read, then made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Wendy. Approved by group, none opposed, no abstentions

Meeting officially adjourned at 9:51 am

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Minutes by Carmen

February 16, 2023

A. **Call to Order:** Jean, GC chaired the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 8:45 AM.

B. **ACA Serenity Prayer:**

C. **General guidelines for this meeting only were read.** Two volunteers read the guidelines.

1. *To be called on to speak, please use the digital Raise Hand function. The GC secretary will call on you.*
2. *Waiting to do your second share until everyone has had an opportunity to share. (BRB 595)*
3. *To ensure everyone has an opportunity to speak, shares are limited to 2 minutes.*
4. *We do not interrupt one another during shares.*
5. *We ask that (Inner) children not be brought to a business meeting so that disruptions can be avoided. (BRB 597)''*

D. **Call for Service:**

1. **Recording Secretary:** *Carmen M has volunteered to be the Recording Secretary*
2. **Timekeeper:** *(??) has volunteered to be the Timekeeper.*

E. **Motion to adopt the agenda:** Agenda was placed in the chat. A question was asked by a member on why the group was not adopting the WSO guidelines for disruptions? A few members explained that these guidelines addressed Zoom bombers and that the issues we are addressing went beyond that. As each group was autonomous, the group should decide how to address these issues. Cynthia called for motion, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sarah. Motion passed.

F. **Volunteers to read Traditions:** three volunteers read the ACA traditions.

G. **Suggested Commitments to Service:** 3 volunteers read.

1. Affirming that the true power of our program rests in the membership of the meetings and is expressed through our Higher Power and through group conscience.
2. Confirming that our process is one of inclusion and not exclusion; showing special sensitivity to the viewpoint of the minority in the process of formulating the group conscience so that any decision is reflective of the spirit of the group and not merely the vote of the majority.
3. Placing principles before personalities.
4. Keeping myself fit for service by working my recovery as a member of the program.
5. Striving to facilitate the sharing of experience, strength, and hope at all levels: meetings, Intergroups, Regional committees, service boards, and World Services.
6. Accepting the different forms and levels of service and allowing those around me to each function according to their own abilities.
7. Remaining willing to forgive myself and others for not performing perfectly.
8. Being willing to surrender the position in which I serve in the interest of unity and to provide the opportunity for others to serve; to avoid problems of money, property, and prestige; and to avoid losing my own recovery through the use of service to act out my old behavior, especially in taking care of others, controlling, rescuing, being a victim, etc.
9. Remembering I am a trusted servant; I do not govern.

H. **Safety Discussions and Solutions:** Suggested guiding questions were read and put in the chat:

1. *What specific things can we do to keep our meetings safer (safe enough)?*
2. *When could Trusted Servants remove the disruptive person?*
3. *Who is entrusted/empowered to:*
  - a. *move the disruptive person to the waiting room?*
  - b. *remove the disruptive person from the meeting?*

I. **2-minute silent meditation** to reflect and journal on these questions.

J. **Discussion:** 3 Breakout rooms were created to share with possible solutions/ best practices/policies and procedures/guiding principles.

*Minutes continued by Chris (Madison)*

K. **Breakout room Reports:** The 3 Groups reported discussions from the 3 Breakout Rooms.

Common topics of discussion were:

- a) Acknowledgement that not everyone is ready for recovery in a Group setting
- b) Decisions to remove a disruptive person need to be made on a Case by Case basis.

c) Whether the decision should be made by the Room Host; or if the Room Host should call for a group vote on the spot was discussed. A common feeling was that Room Hosts should be trained and responsible for enforcing the Safety Rules (eg No Cross talk).

An example was given in one group---in which the Room Host immediately put the entire breakout room on MUTE; paused, then repeated the Safe-rules with a warning; and after a moment of silenced, resumed the meeting.

d) Preference was expressed for a process that allowed newcomers to make mistakes and learn. Moving a disruptive person to the waiting room on "Time-Out" was often favored over removing from meeting altogether.

e) Helping newcomers learn "self-care" practices when triggered was suggested: eg learning to use zoom features as a filter.

e) Concerns about the CHAT feature were discussed in each room; and whether it should be disabled during break-out rooms.

#### **L. After the reports:**

Chair asked "*What's next? What do we do now?*"

Suggestions:

1. Making a survey based upon the discussions; and generating a process that would allow the full membership to vote on a policy was suggested.
2. That the primary value of today's discussion was the Discussion itself. That we need to not over-focus on a relatively infrequent problem; but consider that our current practices are "good enough," adequate, that value lies in periodically having these open discussions as our expanding membership needs/wants to process and participate.
3. A Tech Host felt the need to point out that interactive communication between the Tech Host and a person removed to the waiting room is technically not possible. If a "teachable moment" is desired, a way to do it must be created.
4. A long-time member of the group described a long history of discussing the pros and cons of whether or not to keep chatrooms open or disable them. (self-care features can be useful here).

#### **M. Announcements:**

1. Jean announced that her term as GC Coordinating was ending soon; and a new GC Coordinator would be needed soon.
2. Barbara announced that another Room Host Roundtable was coming up Sunday and invited anyone to attend.

#### **N. Adjournment and Closing Prayer- (??) time**

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[Room 1 Notes - by Carmen](#)

by Asa only

Member Recommendations:

That the chat be closed during the meeting. Shared that the chat is distracting as a room host. We may want to have some guidelines on screen images that may be triggering, such as guns and political images.

Chat is triggering during the meeting. Each disruptive situation should be handled on a case by case basis. Calling for a group consensus for the group to decide what to do in each situation.

Trusted servants should have the authority to use their best judgement. Member defined situations in which this may occur: disruptive behavior, chats not ACA, cross-talk.

Didn't feel comfortable in entrusting one person to make the decision to remove someone. Those who do disrupt should have the opportunity to grow and make amends. Having trusted servants re-read the no cross-talk message and maybe we share more about what it's important.

Room hosts are asking for some guidance and language to use in these situations. Training needed on what to look for and what to do about it. One may want to gently remind the person about the principles of the rooms, and if this doesn't work, remove them to the waiting room. Each person is responsible to take care of themselves. This may look different for each person.

Member shared the meaning of the word disrupt " to rupture, break apart, to destroy unity." The first 5 guidelines on disruptive behavior on the WSO website could help our group with best practices.

Not comfortable in monitoring someone's choice in screen images. Training and guidelines are needed for room hosts to feel a bit more secure in their role as trusted servants.



Thank you!

### Asa's notes by chat

My thoughts are to have a clear description of what being disruptive is.

Then possibly a “safety team” in each meeting - trusted servants that are empowered to place a bomber or disruptive person in the waiting room and talk with them - this means we wouldn't be deciding as one individual how to proceed; and the “disrupter” themselves would be able to contribute to how best to proceed.

The chat has been very helpful to my personal recovery - it is how I have been able to slowly connect as I am not ready to speak in front of the group.

I do not get to dictate others descriptions of themselves or their profile pictures to suit my own comfort level.

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### Room 2 Notes by Lisa

#### Breakout Room #12 Solution Recommendations

Attendees: Krista, Lisa, Macy, Francis, Barbara, LL, Katherine, Karen, Heather, Heather, Kelly

- 2021 used similar guidelines Charlotte was speaking about BRB p 594-98. Tech Host and Co-Host are the only two that have the capabilities to move the participant to the waiting room or from the meeting. Not sure what else to do.
- Experienced moderator removing the person, read the WSO disruption card, putting everyone on a one-minute mute, then resumed the meeting.
- Practical – moving the safety chat up earlier. Otherwise handle on a case-by-case situation.
- If this is what we are currently doing, to continue to 1) have the host or co-host remove the person to the waiting room, and 2) someone (GC? Chair of Meeting?) move the person to a waiting room where they are offered to

either come to a GC Meeting to discuss the disruptive behavior or to agree to stop disruptive behavior.

- Update website with current verbiage of safety in the script.
- Give the tools to the Room Host in the training, so they know what to do. How we act as a group is what shows the newcomer the way. So, we should communicate and hold people accountable for no cross-talk, etc in the chat (or verbally), at all times.
- When there is a change, put on the website, and announce at the first few meetings.

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### Room 3 Notes by Wendy

Q1!

Read the rules of safety and refer to our website in the script. Ask in intro if people don't understand safe rules.

Shut down the chat when the meeting starts. Does not exclude anyone.

Appreciate this process. Trying in earnest to find solutions. In reading comments, it shows all the trigger of rescuing, persecution. Also useful in working with conflict outside of the meeting. Learning new ways to deal and cope. Easy to say what to do but tech hosts have different issues.

Q2.

Was here when someone was removed after the meeting. and I appreciated it. I could tell the person was looking for conflict. That's not safe and very triggering.

If the behaviour is deliberately aggressive or disruptive it would be good to have a warning system. Like saying if you don't stop this behaviour you will be removed from the meeting. Fair to give people at least one warning. In the chat you ld be nice but they might not see the chat. A gentle reminder.

Maybe another trusted servant who could do that.

Trained as a trusted service for host training. The waiting room is about tech hosts having the authority to do that. If we have people stepping in without training it's

not safe. Hosts and Tech hosts have trusted servant status. There's a lot going on behind the scenes.

One uncomfortable thing was the person was taken out and allowed back in. That was disconcerting. She demonstrated many times she was not able to practice. How many times of warning.

In person meeting a person became disruptive. We announce now at that meeting anyone who is disruptive will be removed from the meeting. We had 2 people allocated to remove the person if they wouldn't leave.

A clear policy on our website people can point to.