

PREFACE

This toolkit is designed to offer guidance and suggestions for UA meetings, as well as templates for commonly used meeting documents, drawing on the experience, strength and hope of other UA members.

Everything here is a suggestion!

Because every UA group is autonomous in accordance with the Traditions, each meeting determines its own course via group conscience. Decisions made by the group always take precedence.

To obtain additional copies of this toolkit or other information, please contact nyinfo@9thtradition.org. The written materials and templates provided in this toolkit are also available online, and can be freely downloaded from:

<http://9thtradition.org/2015/08/meeting-toolkit/>

SERVICE POSITIONS

- See the “Elections Record” template for suggested roles, service requirements and terms.
- Service positions are our responsibility. Whatever service position we accept, we maintain it for the duration of the term. If we cannot attend a meeting, we arrange for someone suitable to stand in for us. If we need to step down, we assist the meeting in finding someone to replace us.
- Service positions exist to serve the group. We are supportive of other officers.
- Service positions have limits. As UA members, we are conscious of compulsively giving away our time and time indifference. We set guardrails for ourselves by restricting our service appropriately and tracking the time we spend on service with our action partners and/or sponsors.

Service Positions and Business Meetings

- Service positions generally require attendance at business meetings, so we familiarize ourselves with when those occur.
- Most positions, other than the chair, give reports at business meetings.
- By giving our reports and answering questions at business meetings, we make ourselves accountable to the group we are serving
- We prepare our reports in advance and bring one copy to give to the business secretary and another to pass around the room for review.
- If we cannot attend the business meeting, we arrange for someone else to give our report in our place.

MEETING CHAIR

- The chair is responsible for leading the meeting, which entails knowing the meeting format and understanding the contents of the meeting binder.
- The chair keeps abreast of the meeting cycle, including what kind of meeting is being held each week, when the next business meeting is, and when elections are due to be held.
- The chair schedules speakers a few weeks ahead, and confirms with them a day or two before the meeting at which they are to speak. It is strongly recommended that chairs use the Speaker List template provided in this toolkit, both as a planning tool, and to keep track of who has spoken in the past as a record for future chairs.
- The chair is clear with speakers about the meeting topic, and makes sure they are willing and able to talk about it.
- The other duties of the chair are: to arrive early, to retrieve the meeting binder and set up, and to make sure the chairs are arranged properly (ask for help if chairs need to be moved around!). At end of meeting the chair checks the room to make sure no one has left anything and that the room is in good order for the next meeting; if leaving early, then the chair deputizes someone else to do this.
- The chair helps maintain an atmosphere of serenity by keeping noise down, helping latecomers settle in, maintaining the focus on the meeting, and addressing people kindly and politely, whatever the situation. If people are speaking out of turn or trying to directly address other members, the chair reminds them of the cross-talk statement.
- Some meetings appoint two co-chairs, who rotate service by mutual agreement.

TREASURER

- The treasurer is responsible for making the Seventh Tradition announcement, collecting the funds weekly, paying the rent (weekly or monthly, depending on the location), and maintaining a treasury binder.
- The treasurer helps the meeting remain self-supporting: if the whole rent is not collected the first time around, the treasurer announces how much is needed and passes the basket again. Once the rent is collected, the treasurer may pass the basket again to collect for the prudent reserve.
- The treasurer keeps the meeting's money entirely separate from personal finances; if more than a few hundred dollars are involved, the treasurer should consider setting up a bank account for the meeting (see "Resources for Treasurers" in the Appendix).
- If the prudent reserve is not kept in a bank account, the treasurer changes loose change into bills and small bills into large ones, so the money is easy to count and store.
- The treasurer pays the rent and other expenses using a check or money order so there is a record of payment, and/or obtains a receipt.
- The treasurer keeps clear accounts of money received and money paid out, using or adapting one of the templates provided in this toolkit, or a similar format.
- The treasurer places their name (first name, last initial) and telephone number on each sheet of the records so later treasurers can easily contact them with questions.
- The treasurer brings a copy of the latest accounts to the business meeting and gives it to the secretary, keeping the originals in the treasury binder.
- The treasurer sends the group's donations to the NY Intergroup and the UA GSB—see resources for treasurers in the Appendix.
- We suggest that meetings send contributions **only after** all other expenses have been paid, and once the meeting has built up a prudent reserve of at least three months' rent. We also suggest that contributions be divided equally between Intergroup and GSB. (Note that these are suggestions only, and not a requirement by Intergroup.)

BUSINESS CHAIR

- The business chair runs the business meetings that keep the meeting going. Business meetings serve the group in two ways: conducting the administrative business that keeps the meeting going—status reports, electing new officers, etc.—and also providing a safe venue, bounded by the Serenity Prayer, for discussing and addressing issues that arise within the group, so the group may come to decisions through the group conscience.
- The business chair asks for reports from each group officer. Once delivered, she or he asks for any questions from the group; generally reports are accepted by acclamation once there are no more questions (i.e., no vote needs to be taken).
- The business chair reviews old business, moderates discussion on issues and motions, and presides over voting, but does not vote. She or he does the same for new business.
- The business chair ensures that everyone gets an opportunity to speak, and that one or two voices do not dominate. When there is contention on an issue, as far as possible speakers for and against a motion should be given equal time.

Roberta's Rules

- Many meetings use a modified form of “Robert’s Rules,” a rule-based format for parliamentary debate. Business chairs should bear in mind that these rules generally conflict with program principles: for example, they encourage contention and place sharp limits on speech.
- Although not written specifically for 12 Step programs, the book “Roberta’s Rules” presents suggestions and guidelines for running business meetings that are very much in line with 12 Step principles and traditions.
- Examples include coming to agreement on what the problem is before deciding on a solution, making sure that everyone has a voice and the opportunity to be heard, taking straw polls to quickly decide between multiple options, and so on.

BUSINESS SECRETARY

- The business secretary records and keeps the minutes of the business meetings, and maintains election records.
- Minutes should be written in a clear hand and include only important information, such as the exact wording of motions, and clearly state whether the motions passed or failed. Officers reports are also included, preferably in summary form.
- When motions arise, the secretary records the motion exactly and then re-reads the motion before voting takes place, to ensure that the official record matches the intent of the proposer and that everyone hears what they are voting on.
- If a motion passes that will “live” for more than one meeting, the secretary also records it in the Passed Motions Record, to make it easy to find at future business meetings. (Examples of motions that live for more than one meeting include changes to the meeting format, contributions to the GSB or Intergroup, literature decisions, and so on. Motions that only affect one meeting, such as opening a window or closing the business meeting, are only recorded in the minutes.)
- The business secretary is responsible for updating the example Elections Record to match the group’s requirements, and for adding officers’ names, contact information and terms, when they are elected.
- When the group approves changes to the meeting format, the business secretary is responsible for typing up the new format and sending a copy of the revised format to the website calendar manager at the email address ua12step@gmail.com, so that the calendar entry for the meeting is kept up to date. (This is invaluable if meeting records are somehow lost!)

LITERATURE REP

- The literature rep is responsible for the distribution of UA literature and should become familiar with both the increasing amount of printed literature, and the abundant materials available on the UA website.
- The literature rep works with the Treasurer and the Intergroup Literature Chair, in order to maintain an inventory of program material for the meeting.
- See the “Underearners Anonymous Literature” chart provided with this toolkit, and kept up-to-date on the website, for a list of literature available from NY Intergroup. At a minimum, it is suggested that the literature rep maintain a stock of **meeting lists**, which are distributed free of charge.
- The Intergroup also provides a literature “starter kit” at a discounted price, designed to help meetings start their literature effort.
- Printed literature can be obtained from the Intergroup Literature Chair at Intergroup events, or by contacting nyliterature@9thtradition.org.

“Outside” Literature

- One question that comes up a lot in meetings is about what “outside” literature can be used or read. The World Service Conference has provided the following guidance on the use of literature in the U.A. fellowship:

“Conference-created literature” describes material approved by the World Service Conference for publication by the General Service Board of Underearners Anonymous, using the funds available to the GSB. The creation process is designed to ensure that everything in this material is in accord with UA principles, and deals with recovery within Underearners Anonymous and/or information about the UA fellowship.

But that is all that “conference created” means: any member of UA can read anything any time anywhere for any purpose. And any Group can determine for itself by Group Conscience that a specific piece of literature conforms to the principles of UA and is thus acceptable to be read at that meeting. Likewise, any Group or Intergroup can determine by Group Conscience what literature to provide for sale to its members.

CONTACT SHEET COORDINATOR

- Groups that maintain contact sheets require a contact sheet coordinator, who generally makes the contact sheet announcement.
- The coordinator makes sure the meeting always has blank copies of the contact sheet, a clipboard and pen, if necessary working with the Treasurer to purchase replacements.
- There is a copy of the contact sheet template in this toolkit, and it can also be printed from (insert web address).
- Intergroup recommends that contact sheets **only be used at large meetings**; otherwise, it is suggested that members be encouraged to meet each other and exchange contact information directly, after the meeting, thereby encouraging the use of the tool Communication.

INTERGROUP SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

- Each meeting may send up to two ISRs to Intergroup meetings, and may elect a third person to serve as alternate in their absence. But please note that having an ISR is not a requirement to make use of Intergroup services!
- The ISR links the meeting to the greater whole of UA, coordinating the flow of information back and forth between the group and the fellowship at large, especially with the NY Intergroup. Transmitting ideas and opinions is just as important as relaying facts and requests.
- The most essential part of the role is attending monthly Intergroup meetings, making sure that your home group's interests are represented in the discussions and votes that come up, and reporting back to the group on major program news.
- The ISR is also responsible for helping the meeting make as full use of Intergroup resources as possible, for example, by announcing Intergroup events, by helping with literature distribution, and by encouraging the meeting to make contributions to Intergroup.
- ISRs are also encouraged to serve on Intergroup initiatives and projects when they have time available, but this is not required.
- New ISRs should email nyinfo@9thtradition.org to be added to the Intergroup mailing list, and visit the site 9thtradition.org/new-york-intergroup for more information.
- Meetings are currently held on the second Monday of the month, but note that this is subject to change, so please always check if you haven't received an email confirming the date and time.

GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

- The GSB and the role of GSRs are in flux at present, so **information presented here may be outdated.**
- The biggest fixed burden on a GSR is the World Service Conference. By attending the Conference, GSRs help provide the voice of UA, representing the group conscience of the whole fellowship. However, this requires both a significant time commitment, plus the expense of travelling to a remote location.
- To this end, the GSR ensures her or his group is collecting funds towards the cost of the trip to the World Service Conference.
- The GSR handles registration for the Conference, which includes following the process rules and deadlines for obtaining stipends.
- Outside the Conference, the GSR looks for committees where she or he can be of service throughout the year.
- New GSRs should email info@underearnersanonymous.org to be added to the GSB mailing list.
- Currently the GSB meets on the phone on the fourth Monday of the month; more details may be found at the bottom of the Phone Meeting page on the UA website: <http://underearnersanonymous.org/phone.html>

MEETING ISSUES

Disruptive people

- If the meeting becomes contentious, or individuals act in a disruptive manner, the chair pauses for a moment of silence and leads the group in the Serenity Prayer again.
- The Chair may also re-read the cross-talk statement if appropriate or requested.
- Where an individual continues to act in a particularly disruptive way, the Chair may ask them to leave for the remainder of the meeting, in line with the First Tradition.

Over-Crowded Meetings

- When a group grows beyond the capacity of its meeting space, there are several options it may want to consider.
- Most simply, the group can look for a larger space in the same location—sometimes this is a matter of trusting in the Higher Power that a larger room will bring enough people to support a higher rent.
- When the group has outgrown the largest space available in its present facility, then the group can look at adding a second meeting, before or after the current meeting.
- While it is probably preferable to add the second meeting at the same location, the Saturday morning meeting was forced to divide into two locations, and both meetings are now thriving.
- The group should also consider what format should be used for the second meeting: a beginners' meeting may be chosen to give newcomers a voice, but other options can be considered.
- Splitting the prudent reserve can prove contentious; in general, it is best to have a clear and up-to-date record of the prudent reserve, and the group conscience should be consulted before dividing it.

Low Meeting Attendance

- If your meeting is suffering from low meeting attendance, then Intergroup offers several tools to help attract new members.
- First, make sure your meeting is accurately presented on the Intergroup meeting list, and in the UA meeting calendar.
- Intergroup offers a service for promoting the meeting within the fellowship, by circulating flyers about the meeting at other groups.
- We also provide the “Are you an Underearner?” flyer for attracting new members from outside the program. This is designed to be posted in public places such as 12 Step meeting places, libraries, job search centers, welfare

offices, and other locations where underearners are likely to encounter them. Please remember to **always ask permission before posting flyers!**

- Intergroup can also provide the group with the related pamphlet, if the location gives permission for distributing this as well.
- In the absence of an ISR, please contact nyinfo@9thtradition.org for more information.

Losing a meeting space

- If your group discovers that you are going to lose your meeting space, either temporarily or indefinitely, then it is best to begin searching for a new one as soon as possible.
- Rather than waiting for the next business meeting, it is suggested that your group hold an emergency business meeting as soon as it finds out, to address finding a new space.
- How the group goes about finding a new space should be determined by group conscience. Possibilities include assigning an individual with free time to coordinate the task, creating a search committee, and/or asking all members to ask around at other locations.
- Once a new space is found, then a member of the group should be assigned to contact the UA website calendar manager (insert email address) with the details; the ISR or another representative should also contact the Intergroup so the meeting list can be updated.
- If the group would like assistance publicizing the new details within the fellowship, then Intergroup can also assist with that.
- If the space is lost suddenly, or the group cannot find a new space in time, then it is the responsibility of the current officers to safeguard the prudent reserve and meeting materials, and to coordinate finding a new space as soon as possible.

MEETING MATERIALS

Meeting Binder

Organize meeting materials in a ring binder with protective sheets. The binder can be kept in a bag or other protective container. If there is no secure storage at the meeting space, the meeting chair(s) will need to keep the binder and bring it back and forth to the meeting. Suggested contents include:

- Meeting format
- Any sections of the meeting that are read out by other people—welcome or closing statements, business meeting format, Steps, Traditions, Tools, Symptoms, etc.—should be laminated and/or placed on clearly labeled sheets so they can be easily handed out.
- Speaker list: records of who has spoken at recent meetings and who is scheduled to speak at upcoming meetings
- Spare contact sheets; a clipboard and pen should also be kept with the meeting binder if contact sheets are used at the meeting
- Elections record: requirements and term for each position, along with current officers and contact info
- Minutes of business meetings, including officers' reports, motions passed and other important information

Treasury Binder

A ring binder containing the treasury reports, receipts, prudent reserve and/or checkbook and bank statements. The binder should be kept by the treasurer in a secure place, and brought to business meetings, so that it is available for inspection by the group. It does not need to be brought to every meeting.

Ideally, use a purse that can fit into a binder, and keep it with the treasury binder.

Literature Inventory

The literature inventory that the meeting offers for sale. If there is no secure storage at the meeting space, the literature rep will need to keep the literature and bring it back and forth to the meeting.

In the absence of a literature rep, then the chair(s) may keep the literature with the meeting binder; any monies collected should be kept securely.

APPENDIX

RESOURCES FOR TREASURERS

Making Donations To Intergroup

IN PERSON

Donations may be made in person at an Intergroup meeting or event, in cash or by check or money order. Checks and money orders should be made out to UA NY Intergroup.

PAYPAL

- PayPal requires the donor/contributor to have his or her own PayPal account.
- Go to PayPal and choose "Pay or Send Money" and then "Send Money to Friends or Family."
- Enter this email address: ny.ua.intergroup@gmail.com and the amount you wish to send.
- In the message space, please include the name of your group.
- The money is then transferred to the Intergroup's PayPal account.
- Please also send a separate email to the same address confirming the transfer, just in case anything goes astray.

BY MAIL

DO NOT SEND CASH! Send a check or money order made out to UA NY Intergroup, with a note including the name of your group, to:

UA NY Intergroup
P.O. Box 1836
Madison Square Station
New York, New York 10159

Making Donations To GSB

ONLINE

Make donations *via* PayPal account or debit/credit card at <http://underearnersanonymous.org/contributions.html>

BY MAIL

DO NOT SEND CASH! Send a check or money order made out to UA GSB, Inc., with a note including the name of your group, to:

UA GSB
P.O. Box 1839
New York, New York 10163-1839

SETTING UP A BANK ACCOUNT
