DA Meeting Format

This page contains suggested guidelines for the format of a D.A. meeting, which may vary, depending upon the group conscience of its members, using D.A.'s Fourth Tradition as a guide. Print this page by hitting the "Print" icon on your browser's tool bar.

**1. Opening**
Usually the Chairperson or Secretary starts the meeting, welcomes everyone and then introduces himself or herself by saying:

"Hello My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (first name only) and I am a compulsive debtor. Welcome to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(name of group) Meeting of Debtors Anonymous."

Many groups choose to open their meetings with a prayer, such as the Serenity Prayer or with a few moments of silent meditation.

**2. Serenity Prayer**"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference."

A reading of the Preamble usually follows the prayer or meditation.

**3. Preamble**"Debtors Anonymous is fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from compulsive debting.

The only requirement for membership is desire to stop incurring unsecured debt.  There are no dues or fees for D.A. membership;  we are self-supporting through our own contributions.  D.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution;  does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stop debting one day at a time and to help other compulsive debtors to stop incurring unsecured debt."

Some groups pass around the Twelve Steps and Tools of Debtors Anonymous for reading by group members.  After the readings, announcements of any special rules, such as, no smoking or eating, will often be made.

At this point, groups will ask newcomers and out-of-towners to introduce themselves (by first name only) so that they can be specially welcomed.

The Chairperson or Secretary will read A Word to Newcomers.

**4. A Word to Newcomers**
"If you are having problems with money and debt and think you may be a compulsive debtor, you have come to the right place and we can help you.  It is suggested that at first you attend at least six meetings over a period of two weeks to have time to identify with the speakers and absorb the D.A. concepts. If you then think D.A. is for you, you can arrange to have your first pressure relief meeting."

Sometimes a meeting focuses specifically on the issues of a beginner in the D.A. program. Although the format for such a meeting can vary, we find it helpful to expose newcomers to the Tools of the D.A. program. Often, the Chairperson encourages beginners to ask questions or explain why they came to D.A.

**5. Speaker**
At this point, the speaker is introduced and asked to share his or her experience, strength and hope with the group. This usually involves explaining what happened before the speaker came to D.A., how the speaker found D.A. and what it has been like since coming to D.A.

The length of the speaker's sharing depends on the meeting format. At designated speaker meetings, the speaker may have a half hour or more, while at discussion meetings, he or she may have perhaps ten or fifteen minutes.

**6. Sharing**
At discussion or topic meetings, when the speaker is finished, the meeting is then open for sharing from the group.

While sharing is generally by show of hands, other practices include the round robin (going around the room) or tag or pitch (each person calling on another when finished).

In some groups, the speaker may respond to someone sharing from the group. However, in D.A. we do not engage in cross-talk (members interrupting or directly addressing another sharer).

In some speaker meetings, sharing by the speaker is followed by a question and answer period.

**7. Announcements**
Announcements from the meeting's trusted servants and participating members can be made at anytime during or after the sharing depending on the group's conscience and the timing of the meeting.

The Literature Chairperson will announce the availability of meeting lists and literature, which some groups offer free to newcomers.

The Secretary encourages newcomers to speak to other members and exchange phone numbers before leaving the meeting.

Some groups ask if any members are celebrating an anniversary in D.A. or other special occasion such as 90 days of solvency.  In addition, some groups encourage beginners to share their days of solvency until 90 days are reached.

**8.  Seventh Tradition**"D.A. has no dues or fees. We are self-supporting through our own contributions, so we pass the basket.  Please give as generously as you can. However, if you cannot, please keep coming back."

"Keep in mind that our group's monthly expenses are $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (i.e., rent, literature, prudent reserve, etc.). In addition, D.A. has a service structure which depends on contributions from our group. After our group's needs are met, we contribute the balance, 45% to the General Service Office, 45% to Intergroup and 10% to the GSR Area Group. The General Service Office expenses include staff, rent for the office, administration, website upgrades and maintenance, new literature, and literature translations. Please help us meet our responsibility for supporting the Fellowship as a whole."

The D.A. General Service Board Treasurer’s Report can be viewed anytime in the *DA Focus* at [www.debtorsanonymous.org](http://www.debtorsanonymous.org)

**9. Closing Statement**
The Chairperson or Secretary of the meeting will normally thank the speaker and then read the Closing Statement.

"The opinions expressed here today are strictly those of the individuals who gave them. The things you have heard here are spoken in confidence and should be treated as confidential. We do not take outside the meeting what we hear and who we see at the meeting.

If you'll try to absorb what you have heard, you are bound to gain a better understanding of the way to handle your problems.

Talk to each other, reason things out with someone else; let there be no gossip or criticism of one another, but only Love, Understanding and Companionship."

Many meetings close with group members joining hands and saying a prayer.