

BACK-TO-BASICS, "A Design for Living"
Closed, Committed 12-Step Media Sobriety Groups

COMMITMENT MEETING FORMAT
For Group Sponsors

Mentors are Moderating this meeting

Welcome, everyone to our Group Sponsor Commitment meeting for Back to Basics. My name is _____ and I am your Group Mentor. This meeting will run for one hour.

Please join me in the "We" version of the *Set Aside B2B Group Sponsor Prayer* (each take one line please):

- Higher Power, please help us set aside everything we think we know about our closed Back-to-Basics group and its members.
- Help us to set aside everything we think we know about ourselves and our abilities to be Group Sponsors.
- Please help us set aside all we think we know about our fellow Group Sponsors, Mentors, and all those who are serving Back-to-Basics in whatever capacity they are called to serve.
- Help us to have an open mind so that we might be able to see your will for our lives and the lives of those we serve.
- Please help us hold to the principles of Patience, Tolerance, Kindliness, and Love. Please help us put these principles before personalities.
- Help us to serve this group and each other from a spiritual viewpoint and remember to call upon your light and love to restore us to right-mindedness.

Thank you all for being here today. You are the glue that holds the Back-to-Basics program together. The fact that you have chosen to serve your group, your own recovery, and to carry the message of hope and recovery to others who are still suffering is a testimony of your desire to be of service. We are grateful for your commitment to B2B and welcome you to another month of Big Book step recovery. We are excited to see new faces at our meeting [if there are any] and we welcome back our Group Sponsors from last month.

Our purpose as Mentors and Group Sponsors is to carry the message and help give media addicts a chance to awaken to the new freedom we have found in Big Book Step recovery.

On page 89 of the Big Book, in the chapter on *Working With Others*, the first paragraph states (and we will change alcohol to media):

- “Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from a [media relapse] as intensive work with other [media addicts]. It works when other activities fail. This is our *twelfth suggestion*: Carry this message to other [media addicts]!”

Please remember, we are here for our own recovery first. We have found that the more we took others through the Steps, the more we stayed connected to the Steps and our recovery. There is a saying, “Teaching is learning something twice,” so being a Group Sponsor ensures that we will strengthen our own recovery and increase our ability to work the Steps in our own lives.

Some of you have just made it to three months of fasting from unnecessary media. Congratulations! That is quite an accomplishment. When we first started these groups, we couldn’t imagine fasting from media for one day, let alone 3 months. Others in this room have been fasting for 4, 5, 6, or even more months, while some Group Sponsors have been staying abstinent on the media sobriety plan they developed with their personal sponsor.

Let’s make something very clear, we are all in new sobriety. It will be years before any of us can say we have a full and deep understanding of media addiction and what that recovery ultimately will look like. We mention this because it is easy right now to think that we have arrived. The truth is, we are all just one click away from a slip. As leaders, we need to be even more diligent and seek more support than the people we serve. One reason I am here with you today is to give you support as we continue “trudging the Road of Happy Destiny” together.

The Big Book tells us that our greatest weakness (media addiction) now becomes our greatest strength:

- “You can help when no one else can. You can secure [a media addict’s] confidence when others fail. Remember [media addicts] are very ill.”

Imagine going to a Back-to-Basics group where the Group Sponsors were non-media addicts, people who just wanted to help addicts. Would you have listened to these people? Wouldn’t they have irritated you if they told you that you needed to fast and gave you annoying rules you had to obey to be able to join the group?

But your Group Sponsors were real media addicts just like you. They knew what it was like to be defeated by media addiction and they had stories similar to yours. So, you trusted them. You even agreed to fast and be “all in” on the long list of commitments they required you to take. You wanted what they had.

Your media addiction is now your superpower. It gives you the credentials to connect and help empower others to recover as you have recovered. The last sentence of the paragraph reads: “Remember [media addicts] are very ill.”

Yes, we are. Remember how you felt when you came to your first commitment meeting? You may have been hung over on media, you may have been in withdrawal, you may have been scared to death of letting go of your beloved media. Ultimately, we come into these rooms feeling wounded, shameful, remorseful, and discouraged. It’s important to remember when we are attempting to help others that a media addict will sometimes make our job harder. However, as long as we remember that we are dealing with addicts, and addicts will behave as addicts do

(especially when they are not getting their drug), we can be compassionate, loving, and supportive as members go through withdrawal and the intense feelings that the 12 Steps bring up.

Patience, tolerance, and love are key. Remember, we don't take personally what a media addict says, who may still be in the ravages of their disease. Instead, we get to pray for them and be an example for them of the way out.

Let's continue to the next paragraph on 89:

- “Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends —this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.”

Think of the “Fun Fridays” you experienced. The satisfaction you felt when your Sponsee made it through their first month. The joy you felt when your Sponsee finally released a hard-held resentment and found freedom. Where else could you be immersed in such meaningful and effective interaction with people? When you were first fasting, how did it feel to know others were going through the same things you were? Imagine having to do this all by yourself. What would that have been like for you?

We will go around the room and each share for two-three minutes about the experience of being a part of a group, helping others through the Steps, and seeing loneliness vanish.

As your Group Mentor, I will start.

[After everyone has shared for 2 - 3 min]

Thank you all for sharing.

This is a WE program and WE grow together. As Group Sponsors, your role is to make sure your group knows they are in good hands. If this is your first time Group Sponsoring, it may not feel comfortable taking a leadership role. Taking actions, like having to ask a member to keep their camera on or to show up on time, asks us to step up into what many of us call the “Graduate Program” of B2B. We are called to work the Steps around service in ways we may have never experienced before, but the growth you are about to experience will be phenomenal.

It's never going to feel good when we confront someone who is slipping or relapsing and ask them to keep their commitments to themselves and the group. We don't want to look like the bad guy and we don't want to be disliked. However, as Group Sponsors, our job is to follow the Al-Anon way and not enable addicts to act out and avoid the consequences of their actions. Luckily the Big Book is filled with great advice on how to work with alcoholics or, in our case, media addicts. Please read one section each.

1.

- “Don't start out as an evangelist or reformer.”
- “If [they are to find their own personal Higher Power] the desire must come from within.”
- “When you discover a prospect...find out all you can about [them].”

- “If [they] do not want to stop [getting drunk on media], don’t waste time trying to persuade [them].”
 - “...Be patient, realizing [you] are dealing with a sick person.”
 - “Get an idea of [their media behaviors], problems and background, the seriousness of [their] condition, and [their] religious leanings. You need this information to put yourself in [their] place, to see how you would like [them] to approach you if the tables were turned.”
 - “Sometimes it is wise to wait till [they] go on a binge.” (Pass)
- 2.
- “If [they] don’t want to see you, never force yourself upon [them].”
 - “Tell [them] enough about your [media] habits, symptoms, and experiences to encourage [them] to speak for [themselves]. If [they] wish to talk, let [them] do so.”
 - “Tell [them] how baffled you were, how you finally learned you were sick. Give [them] an account of the struggles you made to stop.”
 - “Show [them] the mental twist which leads to the first [click of a media spree].”
 - “If you are satisfied that [they] are a real [media addict], begin to dwell on the hopeless feature of the malady. Show [them], from your own experience how the [insane] mental condition surrounding that first [click] prevents normal functioning of the will power.” (Pass)
- 3.
- “Be careful not to brand [them] as a [media addict]. Let [them] draw their own conclusion.”
 - “If [they] stick to the idea that [they] can still control [their media], tell [them] that possibly [they] can—if they are not too [media addicted]. But insist that if [they] are severely afflicted, there may be little chance [they] can recover by [themselves].”
 - “...You may talk to [them] about the hopelessness of [media addiction] because you offer a solution.”
 - “Let [them] see that you are not there to instruct [them] on religion.”
 - “You should not be offended if [they want] to call it off, for [they] have helped you more than you have helped [them].”
 - “Maybe you have disturbed [them] about the question of [media addiction]. This is all to the good. The more hopeless [they feel], the better. [They] will be more likely to follow your suggestions.” (Pass)
- 4.
- “Your candidate may give reasons why [they] need not follow all of the program. [They] may rebel at the thought of a drastic housecleaningDo not contradict such views. Tell [them] you once felt as [they do], but you doubt whether you would have made much progress had you not taken action.”
 - Sometimes a new [person] is anxious to proceed at once, and you may be tempted to let [them] do so. This is sometimes a mistake. If [they] have trouble later, [they] are likely to say you rushed [them].”
 - “You will be most successful with [media addicts] if you do not exhibit any passion for crusade or reform. Never talk down to a [media addict] from any moral or spiritual hill-top; simply lay out the kit of spiritual tools for [their] inspection.”

- “Tell [them], if [they] want to get well, you will do anything to help... If [they] are not interested in your solution....you may have to drop [them] until they change their mind.”
- “We find it a waste of time to keep chasing a [person] who cannot or will not work with you....To spend too much time on any one situation is to deny some other [media addict] an opportunity to live and be happy.” (Pass)

We who are media addicts know that addicts can be the hardest people to work with. We are all here for our own recovery first. If someone wants what we have, we will go to great lengths to help them, but if they don't want what we have, we also understand. We all had to get to the point of doing whatever it took to recover. That is one reason why we choose to be here today: to commit to ourselves and this group to continue fasting and being media sober. Service to others is ultimately service to ourselves and our own growth and freedom.

Why are we asking you to make more commitments? Because there is something powerful about committing to sobriety in a group of other committed addicts who are also your peers. No one here has this thing licked. We never will. So, we wish to give ourselves another opportunity to recommit to our sobriety and our service in Back-to-Basics. Starting this next round with an “all in” attitude brings us to a higher level of engagement and enthusiasm. It's more fun to be a team and be sober and serve together than doing this alone.

Group Sponsor Commitments

Being a group sponsor is not only a service position but an opportunity to grow spiritually. The following ways of leading we believe are essential for the health of a closed Back-to-Basics Group.

Here is what we request you align to as leaders of Back-to-Basics.

- To either fast or abstain from all bottomline/addictive media while being a GS. If you are not completely fasting, have a solid, well thought-out sobriety plan that you have okayed with your sponsor. Continuing to fast for 3 additional months after completing Closed B2B is highly recommended.
- Have an MAA sponsor or sober co-sponsor to help maintain your own media sobriety. (If you need a new sponsor or co-sponsor, please get support to find one as quickly as possible.)
- Continue to be honest with your sponsor, mentor and other GSs if I have a media slip, so that I can get the immediate support you need to stay sober a day at a time and continue your GS service with integrity.

As a Group Sponsor your personal self care should come first. Here are recommendations to keep in positive health and spiritual condition:

- Continue to work Step 11 by taking quiet time daily.
- Continue self care by eating well, getting outside, keeping your media curfews and getting enough sleep.

- Continue working the twelve-steps with sponsor/co-sponsor.

So that everyone is clear with the guidelines from the *Group Sponsor Manual*, we wish to go over important points. It is suggested you refer to the Manual often.

- Please answer questions on the first page of the manual under “Good Questions to Ask Yourself” and to familiarize yourself with the qualifications for a Group Sponsor.
- Understand and support what is in the document “What Does Media Fasting Really Mean?”
- Please attend Group Sponsor Orientation meeting, (most preferred) or read and familiarize yourself with the content of the Group Sponsor Manual and staying current with updated versions.
- Use the GS Manual Timeline to guide your GS activities.
- Use the formates and documents created for the B2B groups on the website only so there is consistency across all B2B closed groups.

We encourage you to:

- Be a team player with your Group Sponsors, Mentors, and the Intake and Enrollment Committee.
- Openly discuss with your Sponsor or Mentor any issues that may come up for you in the group.
- Continue (Step 10) to take personal inventory and when you are wrong, promptly admitting it.
- Support the individual sponsors in your group.
- Share and help with all administrative duties to lighten the load for all.
- If you can, please attend the Group Sponsor Support Meeting weekly (Wednesday at 11:30 ET), or make sure another GS in your group will attend.
- Attend your Group Sponsor meetings when needed and support the lead GS of your group.
- Communicate in a timely way with other GSs, mentors and Intake coordinators.
- Learn the basics about your tech needs so that you can keep the group functional and safe.
- Take time to check the B2B Calendar on the website so you know when things are supposed to happen.

- Be supportive and available to your team and group both online and by making regular outreach with them and having a presence on communication platforms (if WhatsApp is allowed in your own media plan).
- Keep group members safe. Not allowing any unsafe practices (hook-ups, inappropriate behavior online, disparaging remarks or actions, etc.) to be done within your group, and take appropriate action if this happens.

Lastly,

- We value your opinion and insights. If you have suggestions about how to make B2B better, please give them to the B2B Service Committee for consideration. All changes in the script and assignments need to go through the B2B Service Committee.
- Also, if you need to leave your group for any reason, we ask that you do everything you can to replace yourself before you go. Be aware that if you leave the group and there are no new group sponsors to take your place, the group may fold.
- Please note that the program is designed so you remain in the same group at the same time slot for at least three months. This is so that you can grow together with your own group and so that the groups will have the same Group Sponsors for a full three months.

We will now answer any questions you may have about these guidelines.

(Q & A time TBD by Mentor)

Because it is a powerful way of committing to your recovery and to your team, let's acknowledge to ourselves and each other if we are all in. When I call your name, please state if you are "all in."

(Read names and take commitment)

Thank you for your service! We will end today's session with the WE version of the Serenity Prayer.

(Serenity prayer)