

Sample E-Mail Communications to Prepare Participants

Here is a sample e-mail invitation you can send to your future virtual meeting participants -- after you have had a chance to screen them to 1) assure they are survivors, and 2) understand how important the format and structure of the meeting is to the safety of everyone who participates. Feel free to edit this communication so that it fits the specific details of your meeting.

Hello! You're invited to participate in our virtual ASCA meeting. Instead of meeting face-to-face, we will be using a platform called _____. Similar to "in person" meetings we will rely on participant contributions and donations to keep the meetings going. *[Here is where you spell out how people will donate their weekly or monthly contributions. For example via PayPal. Or perhaps you would like them to send their donations to The Morris Center via the www.ascasupport.org website so that TMC can continue to support ASCA meetings around the world.]*

NOTE: This meeting is "closed" and by invitation only. *Please do not forward this invitation* without checking with us (the co-facilitators). *[Here is where you spell out how people will join the meetings. For example, the phone number or login info, and the date, time, time zone, etc.]*

TIPS: 1) PLEASE login or call in a few minutes early so that you don't interrupt others once the meeting starts. 2) Please also print out and review the attached handouts and have them ready before the meeting. 3) make sure you download a free copy or purchase a bound printed copy of the Survivor to Thriver manual from the www.ascasupport.org website. 4) Use a headset if you're using your computer to join us via VOIP. And 5) Make sure your phone battery is fully charged if you're using your mobile phone.

The same guidelines and ground rules apply as in face-to-face meetings – including arriving on time and staying till the end of the meeting, unless an emergency arises during the meeting. *The meeting door will be "locked" by the co-facilitators 5 minutes after we start.* So please arrive on time or a few minutes early.

Thank you!

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Here is a sample e-mail invitation you can send to your virtual meeting participants to explain a little bit more about what to expect in the meeting.

Hello! Here is a little bit more information about what to expect during our virtual ASCA meetings.

The meetings run 90 minutes. The meetings are structured and we follow a script. We have two meeting rotations. Rotation A are open topic meetings. Open topic meetings allow participants to share anything they need to talk about related to their recovery. After sharing the person can ask for supportive feedback. We only allow supportive feedback so, please, no advice, psychoanalyzing, or telling anyone what they should do. The week right afterwards is a Rotation B meeting-- a step meeting in which we study one of the 21 ASCA steps. A volunteer may give a long share up to 15 minutes and afterwards may ask for feedback. After the 15 minute share we have tag shares so the other members can share. During Rotation B meetings, we do not allow feedback except to the 15 minute presenter.

At the beginning of every meeting, one of the co-facilitators will remind everyone about muting the phone or microphone until ready to speak, and identifying oneself and waiting for acknowledgement before giving a share or feedback. Following this are introductory remarks, followed by a reading of meeting do's and don'ts and guidelines. The co-facilitators will then ask for volunteers to read the Statement of Philosophy and Stages and Steps, which you should have as handouts. If it is a Rotation B meeting a volunteer will also read the step material from the Survivor to Thriver manual.

Please write to me if you have any questions. If you would like to talk over the phone we can arrange a time to talk. We want to be sure everyone understands the meeting format and guidelines before they come to their first meeting.