

# ***Subject 25-5 The After-meeting***

Proposed by various SMR meeting members, as noted below

Three proposals on the subject of the SMR after-meeting were received recently. We are listing all three here to give a broad perspective of the issues. While not a typical means for addressing proposals, it seems that for clarity and focus, we could offer the proposals here, together, and begin hearing comments.

Two of the proposals focus on concluding the after-meeting in order to make space for an SMR business meeting. The third proposal expands that focus to include exploring creative solutions to other challenging aspects of the after-meeting experience.

## **Proposed by Jim R – June 17, 2025**

**Issue A:** I move that clear, concise ending times be established, daily, for the SMR after-meeting, at or before 12 noon eastern standard time.

**Background:** On multiple occasions the Thursday 2pm Website working group has logged-on to find a few remaining after-meeting participants, talking and sharing. Unfortunately these encounters have generated accusations and resentments resulting in hurt feelings.

Zoom Workplace technology allows SMR to easily set time limits by scheduling meetings. This is a practice we once employed and can return to. We are asking the group to determine an appropriate time for the SMR after-meeting to close.

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## Proposed by Suzanne B – June 18, 2025

**Issue B:** I move that now would be a good time to look at the variety of issues surrounding the after-meeting, as set out here:

1	<i>Move to set a fixed daily end-time for the after-meeting session.</i>	A clear cutoff prevents open-ended conversation and encourages timely negotiation toward closure.
2	<i>Move that after-meeting hosts be SMR-trained, appear on camera at least 50 % of the time, use timed shares, and close the gathering.</i>	Aligning host practice with SMR norms builds safety, trust, and procedural consistency between the two meetings.
3	<i>Move to reinstate and enforce the no-crosstalk rule, apply a timer to each share, and redirect extended dialogues to private follow-ups.</i>	Structured sharing protects boundaries, reduces conflict, and maintains group unity and focus.
4	<i>Move to pilot a subcommittee-led observation of the after-meeting for a defined period (e.g., one month) to assess its health.</i>	A time-bound trial yields real-world data before permanent adoption of changes.
5	<i>Move to adopt WSO guidelines as the baseline framework for boundaries and safety in the after-meeting.</i>	Established fellowship standards embed proven best practices for healthy group conduct.

6	<i>Move to introduce a brief opening and closing script that affirms confidentiality, safety, and unity.</i>	Repeating core principles at start and end sets expectations and reminds members of shared values.
7	<i>Move that all hosts and co-hosts review and understand the <b>ACA Community Safety Guidelines</b> before serving.</i>	Informed facilitators can model and uphold safe conduct for the group.
8	<i>Move to schedule solution-focused discussions on topics such as healthy relationships and healthy group practices.</i>	Guided topics channel energy toward recovery skills instead of conflict or crosstalk.
9	<i>Move to keep the after-meeting open to all ACA members while maintaining time limits, scripts, host accountability, no-crosstalk, confidentiality, and a clear end time.</i>	Inclusive structure prevents cliques, ensures fairness, and lets everyone know the boundaries.
10	<i>Move to provide breakout rooms during the meeting for members who wish to practise conversational skills.</i>	Parallel spaces allow deeper connection without disrupting the main group's focus.
11	<i>Move that all participants honour ACA safety guidelines and respect the SMR calendar of events.</i>	Consistent adherence to agreed standards safeguards harmony and respects scheduled programming.

**Background:** In my experience, having a bit of structure in our meetings can really support everyone's voice being heard and help prevent any one perspective from unintentionally dominating. This kind of balance makes it easier for us to heal and grow together.

I believe that by collaborating intentionally, we can uncover creative and unifying solutions. With shared input, we can shape simple, helpful guidelines that serve our collective goals.

These are just some personal reflections I wanted to offer. I believe addressing these points can help us create a healthier, more effective meeting space for all.

Also, I have taken part in meetings that would do annual group inventories where a committee would survey and report on the health of the meeting.

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### **Proposed by Sue of the Swamp – June 19, 2025**

**Issue C:** I make a motion that the members of the SMR after-meeting be responsible for checking the zoom meeting room schedule and clearing the zoom room at least 15 minutes before other scheduled meetings are due to arrive.

**Background:** The SMR aftermeeting is a close knit, supportive community of ACA members who hang out together online after the end of the SMR

meeting and Newcomer Question Session. Not unlike an AA clubhouse, members often hang around for hours enjoying the companionship and support of our fellows. All members of the ACA community are welcomed there.

This often lengthy meeting is sometimes still in the zoom room when other SMR related groups show up for their meeting. The members that attend the aftermeeting realize that this can be problematic.

As a solution, we propose that members of the aftermeeting be responsible for checking the zoom room schedule published on the ACAmorning.org website and that they clear the zoom room for scheduled incoming meetings at least 15 minutes ahead of that meeting's start.

This aftermeeting zoom space is very important to those who participate. It is moderated by the attending members, has boundaries in place regarding cross talk, and while we don't have timed shares, members are reminded to be respectful of others regarding the amount of time they speak. In this meeting members speak honestly and openly about the issues that are distressing them and are listened to with compassion and respect. Most importantly, the after meeting provides connection and support for vulnerable members of our fellowship, allowing them to develop the safe relationships that make recovery possible.

When voting or commenting on this proposal, please keep in mind that this proposal solely addresses the cooperative use of the zoom room space. We hope that this proposal sufficiently addresses the concerns arising from the difficulties that can arise when multiple groups share a zoom room meeting space and that this proposal will be accepted.

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The opportunity to comment and reply will be open for 3 weeks, until Thursday, July 17th.

## *37 thoughts on “Subject 25-5 The After-meeting”*

### **Comment 1**

July 16, 2025 at 10:40 am

Jun says:

I appreciate this open structure for all of us to share our thoughts and opinions.

Valuing my own voices and others is part of the healing for me.

CLOSE THE MEETING 1/2 HOUR BEFORE SCHEDULED SMR MEETINGS

I agree with Sue (of the swamp)’s proposal. SMR meetings hold higher priority than after meetings. At the same time, I am for letting after meetings use the space outside these higher priority meetings.

THE INCREDIBLE HEALING POWER OF AFTER-MEETING

I resonated deeply with the comment on July 14th, made by anonymous, many others who shared similar sentiments.

Even though I am 1 year new to ACA, I have done more than 15 years of personal work. Therapies, group therapies, social and emotional learning / trainings, graduate study of social emotional learning & growing, etc. Not bragging but to put this in perspective. I am talking from a non-professional but experienced healing journeyer, and the after-meeting has been the most powerful & healing space of all of my experiences. There is something special about the after-meeting that is unique and magical. And the extended time it goes on is, from my personal opinion, part of the formula, that opens the space for people who might need the hours to speak up.

Healing does not happen much in isolation. Trauma happens in relationships and needs to be healed in healthier relationships. Regular meetings are powerful, and

after meetings provide the space for people who struggle to share in bigger groups and with limited time to share.

#### FOR: TIMED SHARES

I agree with giving participants more time to share than regular meetings.

However, with consideration for people who are listening as well, I would like to suggest a time limit of 10 minutes for sharing. This creates consciousness and consideration from the speaker to the listeners. It also helps the listener to focus on what is being shared by the speaker, instead of being overwhelmed by the extended share.

#### PARTIALLY FOR: STRICT NO CROSS TALK RULES

I propose speaker-requested level of cross-talk rules. This means that it is up to the speakers of the content to let others know what level of feedback they desire. This has been mostly in practice and seems to be effective for me.

I am for No interruption of the speaker as part of the no cross-talk rules.

#### AGAINST: MODERATORS BEING ON CAMERA >50% OF THE TIME

As Sue (of the Swamp) shared on July 12th, it makes it impractical for many moderators, who are using their time to do service here. The main role of a moderator is to create a healthy structure and safety. That does not need to be on camera to accomplish that.

## **Comment 2**

July 16, 2025 at 9:43 am

Anonymous says:

My thoughts on the after meeting proposal :

That the after meetings be limited to 1 hour, in alignment with the main meeting format. The first 15 minutes are reserved for newcomer questions, followed by 45 minutes for open sharing and comments.

I also feel it's important that the after meeting be hosted by someone who has previously served as a trusted servant in the SMR morning meeting, to ensure consistency, safety and support.

On days when a scheduled SMR business meeting is taking place, I suggest we use the first 15 minutes for newcomer questions and skip the after meeting. This would give more members a chance to take part in the business meeting discussion and have a voice in the proposals being shared

## **Comment 3**

July 16, 2025 at 8:50 am

Andrea says:

I AGREE STRONGLY with Sue of the Swamps proposal, posted on June 19, as well as her follow-up comments listed above, on July 12.

A parking lot "space" is just that, it's not a "meeting" with enforced rules, start and end times, etc. but a space for ACA's to socialize as human beings, coming as they are, speaking their truth, and what's true for them. I personally love the

parking lot “space” after this meeting, its a wonderful way for myself and others to come out of our shells (due to fear of ‘mistepping’, breaking a no cross-talk rule within the meeting, fear of being imperfect, fear of triggering others, etc.). Thank you to everyone who has spent time and effort addressing what was a concern or issue for some of us. This truly reflects how wonderful this particular meeting addresses concerns, no matter how big or small.

## **Comment 4**

July 15, 2025 at 10:32 am

Jim R says:

I am glad for the abundance of thoughtful comments that have been offered here. The testimony to the power and effectiveness of the fellowship space that is held in the after-meeting is commendable. We have something very special.

These concepts I find very agreeable:

– I am in favor of offering training for moderators of the after meeting space.\*

[ at the very least, the person designated as ‘host’ and the person calling on hands would need to understand Zoom functioning, including how breakout rooms work; admitting members into the room; and the basics around raised hands and muting. They would also be aware of safety protocols in case of disruptions.]

– I am in favor of drafting an opening script to be read by the moderator every day.\*

[ it would be helpful to support clarity around the practices specific to the after-meeting. In the morning meeting we state that members will not refer to or use the content of what another person has said. This is close to impossible when a topic is put before the group. The language around these moments could be developed. Some great suggestions have been offered in the comments here. The after-meeting attendees could document these suggestions and guidelines and the material could be placed on the acamorning website for easy reference.]

– I am in favor of the after meeting zoom space continuing to be open to all members of the ACA community.\*

[ we aspire to be a program of inclusion. ]

– I am in favor of the creation of breakout rooms in the after meeting zoom space.\*

[Yes, as was stated, “I think this is a fantastic idea.”\* We could create a practice of morning meeting Tech hosts recreating breakout rooms during the announcements, perhaps 4. These rooms would be available for members to join and leave as they wish. It could actually be more of a real ‘parking lot’ where members could find a space to talk to one another in smaller groups. It is definitely worth a try. It would be good for our members to understand how to move into a breakout room, especially for business meetings. Also having the rooms available would promote fellowship activities like storytelling, coloring and the games and meditations that we have during our Anniversary Celebrations. There may be some sticking points on later-arriving working groups being made cohost in order to screen share in a breakout room – with time and experience it



could all be worked out amicably.]

I feel strongly about utilizing the website to get all members on the same page, so to say, with the practices that the after-meeting agrees to list as guidelines and ideals. They can always be edited by the group. They will establish clarity for the newcomer.

Additionally, our meeting in many ways is a model for other online meetings. The better, the stronger, the clearer our group fellowship, the better, stronger and clearer the ACA fellowship as a whole. We make a difference.

\*excerpted from the comments of Sue (of the Swamp)

## **Comment 5**

July 14, 2025 at 2:44 pm

Anonymous says:

The after meeting in its current format has been invaluable healing for me. I haven't before found a space so loving, caring, open, honest and Soul searching as I have found in this after meeting. I attend almost everyday and it helps me ground myself in many ways.

To have space held for me as well as having the opportunity to learn how to hold space for others has contributed to my growth and understanding of the ACA program. The open, honest and vulnerable shares here have inspired me to begin my process of uncovering my well protected parts in order to learn to trust and to grow. It's not easy. Having the extra time in the after meeting to explore deeper issues and needs that I am discovering within myself is only possible in its current format. The after meeting enables me to connect with others in a relaxed, respectful, natural, organic, and free-flowing atmosphere that fosters depth, interconnections, reciprocity and friendship with my fellow travelers that I wouldn't ordinarily be able to attain during a time limited share—much like a real in person parking lot gathering after a meeting. Not having time limits allows me to share more deeply about my challenges and wins on my road to recovery as well as to hear and experience how others are approaching their emotional sobriety. I have had space held for me and the sacred privilege of holding space for others as well. There are no in person meetings available to me in my area and this Zoom connection with SMR and the after meeting is one of a kind.

Holding the space open after the main SMR meeting for ALL is important.

The journey of recovery we share is often difficult and it can feel extremely lonely and isolating. Here we don't feel alone and isolated. Here we feel listened to, validated and honored for our willingness to face our struggles and celebrate our successes. We learn something from each and every heartfelt and respectful share. We learn to break the pattern of: don't think, don't feel, don't trust. These are extremely important concepts in this beautiful healing program of ACA that get practiced here in the SMR After Meeting everyday 365 days a year.

I invite anyone reading this to attend the after meeting and witness for

themselves what beautifully unfolds in each and every after meeting gathering. It will help you understand why the duration of the after meeting is essential for our fellow travelers to have the safe space to open up and share. At times it takes people a little bit longer to gather their thoughts and courage to open up and share...and on occasion, it's for their very first time ever doing so — anywhere. This after meeting is where this can and does happen for us. It's called healing together.

As for issue B, I am confused as to if each one of these will be voted on individually? This is concerning to me as I don't understand this process. It is extremely unclear and cumbersome. I can't effectively participate within this comment process format presented here. I am disappointed in how this is being handled.

I agree wholly with Sue of the Swamps' proposal. Thank you for creating it Sue.

Please don't change what is working for so many of us that do in fact attend regularly. I suggest that on Thursdays (or other days when needed) the SMR after meeting attendees exit the room ½ hour before in order to create a smooth transition for other meetings. And to let the after meeting fellow travelers know of the schedule ahead of time. From my understanding this is the original reason for imitating this confusing and lengthy proposal. This fix is quite SIMPLE really, isn't it?

Finally, I greatly value what our fellow travelers do behind the scenes in order to have this beautiful SMR and after meeting each and everyday of the year without fail. I do know there is so much that has to go on behind the scenes for this all to work. I offer my gratitude and many thanks for all that you do. You are appreciated.

## ***Comment 6***

July 15, 2025 at 8:35 am

Naomi says:

I feel like the freedom aspect of the after meeting is a healing component in itself and a lot of rules would destroy that. It's been termed the "parking lot" for a reason. Bc of the number of people and some of us struggle with time and boundaries around it I would possibly suggest a cap at 5 minutes just as precaution. But the main meeting is full of rules to me the parking lot feels like recess and unwind and PLAY , as we read in the meeting today .

## ***Comment 7***

July 14, 2025 at 12:12 pm

Chris (Madison) says:

I agree with all of the comments which note that the After-meeting/Parkinglot AS-IS is a healthy, beautifully structured space; in keeping with boundaries and traditions of ACA; where many deeply healing conversations have taken place and rendered it Sacred Space.

No further regulation is needed.

I agree also that when an SMR business working group needs the space, the Aftermeeting should Yield the floor and close. THIS is the only real conflict.

The PROCESS has become hopelessly complicated:

14 June a motion was passed to create an Ad-hoc group re: aftermeeting.

Supposedly to prepare a motion for Town Hall, discussion & Group Conscience vote.

Instead we find the Business meeting receiving multiple, complicated, conflicting Proposals. How can members make sense of this and respond in a meaningful way?

## ***Comment 8***

July 14, 2025 at 9:31 am

Anonymous says:

I agree with Sue of the Swamp's proposal but also believe there should be a time cap and an alternate space for gathering to be created by those who often attend the after meeting for extended time. Not unlike how you may travel from the "parking lot" to a coffee shop or park to continue fellowship after an in person meeting. SMR's main focus should be the daily meditation meeting, with support for newcomers, and some time for fellowship but not responsible for its entirety.

That being said, I look forward to hearing more and providing input as needed. I love our community and respect the evolving needs of its members.

## ***Comment 9***

July 13, 2025 at 1:14 am

anonymous says:

I support Sue Of The Swamps proposal. I feel a tremendous gratitude for the fellowship after the meeting and have found a safe healing space there. It's a model to me of how I can practice being a loving parent to respectfully interact and even work out minor conflicts. I support working in unity with the service team at the times they need the room. I also am opposed to timed shares or control for the after meeting. It organically respectfully follows the traditions and principles and could be an example of a lab for the Loving Parent Guidebook. I feel safe, heard and supported there.

## ***Comment 10***

July 12, 2025 at 3:06 pm

Sue D says:

It is unclear to me as to what the upcoming “vote” on this proposal will be voting on.

Instead of there being one clear cut proposal that members can vote “yea” or “nay” to this proposal, (25-5), contains 13 separate proposals (Issue A, Issue C and 11 from Issue B). I am opposed to some and in favor of others. How can I indicate that by a single ‘yea’ or ‘nay’ vote?

Can you please provide some clarity as to what we will be voting for/against?

As in :

“A yea vote for this proposal will mean...”

“A nay vote for this proposal will mean...”

thank you

## ***Comment 11***

July 14, 2025 at 3:24 pm

Jim R says:

Hi Sue,

To be clear, 3 separate proposals on the subject of the after-meeting arrived basically at the same time. Rather than present the proposals separately, and in the case of Proposal B – with multiple listings, all of which would require members to toggle back and forth to comment and scroll to read in different postings... and to remember, what was said where... we decided to place the issues together.

And, this is listed, this time as a ‘Subject.’ If there is any voting it will likely be about meeting as a group to discuss the issue in a Zoom space, and/or about fashioning a clear Motion that would describe some of the practices and boundaries of the after-meeting.

The webworking team also recognizes the value of having any descriptions and agreements regarding the after-meeting posted to the website so that all members may be informed and supported.

We are taking our time and being thoughtful about our actions regarding the use of the group Zoom account.

## ***Comment 12***

July 15, 2025 at 10:24 am

Anonymous says:

Thanks so much for that clarity, Jim.

## **Comment 13**

July 12, 2025 at 2:34 pm

Sue (of the Swamp) says:

I'd like to respond to the multiple proposals made above.

As to the proposals regarding the end time of the after meeting: it is fact that an incident occurred where the after meeting participants failed to clear the room before an incoming meeting arrived. I feel the most respectful solution to this conflict is to allow the members of the after meeting to take responsibility for knowing about incoming meetings and clearing the room well before another meeting enters.

Limiting the after meeting space to a hard end time every day of the week because of a conflict that has arisen two or three times on one day a week seems punitive. If the attendees of the SMR after meeting continue to fail to clear the room before incoming meetings then perhaps Jim's proposal of a set end time every day would be warranted.

I am opposed to the proposal that the after meeting be limited to noon time every day. If the alternate proposal does not solve the conflict I am in favor of Jim's proposal being implemented.

As for the other proposals set forth in "Issue B"...

Please bear in mind that the after meeting space is not a "meeting". It is an open forum for discussion and general Fellowship. It is the zoom equivalent of the parking lot outside of the in-person meeting hall or the coffee shop that people would retreat to for "the meeting after the meeting". Anyone who has hung around in the parking lot after a meeting listening and learning or enjoyed the hours of coffee and conversation with trusted fellows will understand this.

As such, some of the proposals made are not appropriate for this type of gathering.

Timed shares: the after meeting Fellowship space does not have timed shares by design. Many people find that timed shares, whether they be 2 minutes or 5 minutes puts pressure on them to try to formulate their thoughts and say what they need to say quickly. This external pressure is counterproductive to the kind of open, honest, vulnerable shares that are the hallmark of the after meeting Fellowship space.

Yes, it is true that some members can share at length. If there are no hands raised the person speaking is generally allowed to continue. However, if there are hands raised indicating others are waiting to speak, the person speaking may be asked to be mindful that there are others waiting and to keep their comments brief.

I am opposed to timed shares.

Pre chosen topics: the after meeting has no predetermined topics to be discussed. Topics for discussion arise naturally from the questions or concerns from those who attend. Pretty much every day a member will ask a question or express some sort of struggle they are having and receive support and feedback – in the form of other members' experience, strength and hope – that invariably helps them. If there was a set discussion topic for the day, members may not feel free to bring up the topic that's weighing heavy on their hearts if it varies from the days chosen topic.

I am opposed to having predetermined topics of conversation in the after meeting space.

Cross talk and boundaries: though they are unwritten, there definitely are rules around crosstalk in this space. This is a space intended for conversation and discussion – both of which are not possible without referring to a previous member's share. The boundaries that are in place are that a) the person who shares originally indicates if they want feedback (or if they don't!) and b) if the original speaker hasn't indicated such, subsequent people sharing ask the original person's permission to refer to their share.

Implementing the strict no cross talk rules that are in place for the SMR meeting would hinder, and possibly eradicate, the possibility of the open discussion that most members find so valuable.

I am opposed to enforcing the strict no cross talk rules from the main SMR meeting.

Observation from subcommittee member(s) to assess the health of the after meeting space: Am I reading this proposal correctly? Are you suggesting that an external authority figure from some subcommittee be assigned to monitor the after meeting for a month and then make a judgment of how healthy they think it is?

I invite anyone and everyone who is a member of the SMR community (like you, the person reading this comment right now) to come hang out in the after meeting for a while and determine for yourself if you feel it is healthy or not instead of depending upon the opinion of an externally imposed authority figure.

Yes, there is a precedent for groups to do annual inventories to determine the health of the group but these things are generally done internally, by the group members. Sometimes the group will ask for the support of an external entity such as the local intergroup to guide the process. But this external entity does not decide themselves if the group is healthy or not.

I am strongly opposed to the idea of having externally assigned subcommittee members monitor the meeting to assess it's health.

Trained moderators: to my knowledge, there is no training for moderators of the after meeting space – we are self moderated by our own attending members. However, I think it's a great idea to have a training so that the people who hold this space can be up to date on safety protocols and get some guidance on how to handle the conflicts that can occur in an open format discussion space such as this one.

I am in favor of offering training for moderators of the after meeting space.

As for being on camera 50% of the time: I believe that it not a feasible or reasonable ask. I often moderate the after meeting space and I do so as I am moving along through my day at home – folding laundry, cleaning the kitchen, weeding my gardens, even engaging in my pottery hobby. I turn my camera off while I'm moving around or doing other activities. Adding a requirement that the host have their camera on at least 50% of the time would prevent many of those who currently moderate from being able to do so any longer.

I'm opposed to requiring that moderators be on camera 50% of the time.

Opening and closing script: one does not currently exist to my knowledge and I think this is a fantastic idea! Maybe to be recited by the moderator after the end of the newcomer session?

I am in favor of drafting and opening script to be read by the moderator every day.

Open to all members: the after meeting zoom space always has been and will remain open to all members of the ACA community.

I am in favor of the after meeting zoom space continuing to be open to all members of the ACA community.

Breakout rooms: While it is not the current practice to have breakout rooms during the after meeting zoom space, I think this is a fantastic idea. My concern is that doing so may split up one unified after meeting group into a bunch of smaller, disconnected groups but I agree that an alternative meeting space can useful if a group of people want to talk about something other than what's being discussed in the main room.

I am in favor of the creation of breakout rooms in the after meeting zoom space.

If you're still reading, thank you for listening to my point of view on these issues. I invite respectful feedback.

In Fellowship,  
Sue

## ***Comment 14***

July 10, 2025 at 4:52 pm

Wendy C. says:

I'm happy to see such thoughtful and respectful discourse on this subject. I wanted to add the historical perspective from earlier circumstances that arose with groups using the SMR Zoom space.

In 2022, we had two "adjacent" meetings using our Zoom account, a Boundaries meeting which met once a week after our regular meeting, and a Men's meeting which met once a week in the evening. The Men's meeting contributed to SMR with 7th tradition donations. I believe the Boundaries meeting encouraged donations either to the SMR group or directly to WSO. Issues arose when technical support was needed by the Boundaries group and a committee was formed to study how to best handle the situation. That

committee held open meetings and looked at how other groups handled use of their Zoom spaces. Here is the final report of that committee.

<https://www.acamorning.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/ZSSfinalrecs2.o.pdf>

This was posted in August 2022. In January 2023, the Boundaries Meeting moved to its own Zoom account. The Men's meeting had already moved to their own Zoom space.

In Section V of this report, it is recommended that there be no subgroups allowed to use our Zoom space until there are policies and procedures that assure health and safety of groups using our platform. Although the Parking Lot is a continuation of our daily meeting, the extended length invites people who have not attended the morning meeting to drop in, essentially creating a subgroup. The committee also states that SMR does not have the "operational service bandwidth" to support a sub-group meeting. That continues to be true. I know the parking lot is keenly aware of how important it is to keep the room safe. I am not against there being an after-meeting group but am concerned about what happens if there are issues of bullying, harassment or predation. SMR has a safety policy in place that says we will take all complaints seriously, and has a procedure to deal with those complaints. However, we operate with a skeleton crew of trusted servants and although a resolution for room host empowerment came out of the last complaint, we did not have the support capacity to deal with the situation as we said we would.

What happens if there are complaints in the after-meeting? Who does a person turn to? What gets done about it? It sounds like people are going very deep in the meeting, and that's good. But it's also dangerous to do without very good boundaries and guardrails.

There are some great suggestions here for creating more responsibility within the group for the safety and structure. It may take a while for something concrete to come out of this discussion, but I'm grateful it is being handled with a lot of maturity.

## ***Comment 15***

July 11, 2025 at 5:39 pm

Brian eM says:

Thanks Wendy. So great to have this sober history of how this group has handled business in the past.

## ***Comment 16***



July 10, 2025 at 8:55 am

Julie says:

I've enjoyed the after meeting. So much love, honesty, and strength. Very professional how it is run and taken care of.

## ***Comment 17***

July 10, 2025 at 8:45 am

Anonymous says:

I think it would be great if we could have very simple ground rules for the after meeting to keep it safe. It can become hurtful if boundaries are crossed, disregard or disrespect occur. I used to attend but stopped because I was not treated with respect a few times that I started to feel it wasn't safe and became damaging, so I stopped coming. However, it's difficult to legislate decency! One simple ground rule might be to not flame or attack anyone?

## ***Comment 18***

July 9, 2025 at 9:21 am

Natalie F says:

I agree with Sue of the Swamp's proposal.

The parking lot space after the meeting is beautifully structured to have healthy conversations, which is rare for me to find.

It has personally allowed me to start healing from heavy things that I couldn't have uncovered without this space for communication. I don't have access to healthy conversations in my in-person relationships, so this space is valuable to me.

When I don't clarify if I want feedback or not, no one cross talks, comments on, or reflects on what I talk about.

Most times people will ask for feedback on something that they share and that's usually how the conversation flows, we will share our experience, strength and hope if one of us has been through something similar.. if no one else has something to share about the feedback that was wanted then someone else will share about an issue or experience that they are going through.. I think some people randomly join mid conversation and then get confused because they don't know the boundaries that are in play or the feedback that is being given.

I benefit from this space , it is a healthy space, it is respectful, and it has a beautiful transition from the meeting to the "parking lot" for the members of SMR

It would be like having a long conversation with a group of people after an in-person ACA meeting in the parking lot , but even better because it allows us to not interrupt and it allows us not to give unwanted feedback. Being in an in-person conversation usually it's more difficult to implement those healthy

aspects.

This space for conversation has also taught me how to have healthy conversations in my relationships.

### ***Comment 19***

July 8, 2025 at 8:54 am

Anonymous says:

I think the solution set forth by Sue of the Swamp makes the most sense. The after meeting is beautiful and works as it is with a few small changes to avoid conflict with other scheduled meetings. As others have shared, it takes time for the deeper connections to happen, so keeping it going as long as it goes is something I hope will continue.

Just to share and compare my experience in a local in-person ACA meeting, there was a ton of crosstalk happening in that in-person meeting, the actual meeting. The after meeting here in SMR is WAY more considerate and adheres to no crosstalk by asking and checking in with each other, and many of us attend the after meeting to get feedback.

Maybe putting a solid check-in that someone has actually checked the meeting room calendar that day would be helpful, so we will all be maintaining the change to get out if needed.

### ***Comment 20***

July 7, 2025 at 6:12 pm

michael mcmanmon says:

this system wont take my comment

### ***Comment 21***

July 7, 2025 at 6:09 pm

michael mcmanmon says:

I have been involved and chaired for the after meeting for several years. I believe that Sue's proposal is the best. The parking lot is a space where people can talk freely about things that are related or that they cannot share in two minutes during the meeting. I think the structure is already enough and works well. we dont need to structure a parking lot where people talk to each other and respectfully ask or feedback etc. Its one of the best things I have experienced in 32 years of recovery and it should be left alone. the meeting can end If there is a committee meeting and that only happens once or twice a week. Ask yourself this question: can we all work together? or does it have to be controlled by others?

### ***Comment 22***

July 7, 2025 at 8:50 am

Mary S nj says:

The after meeting is equivalent to being in a parking lot after a meeting

There aren't rules or guidelines for how it works

It's open share

More people trying to create rules bc of their out laundry list traits

When will we look at ourselves and our own

desire to control

Also how much training do we need to be in an after meeting/ parking lot

Again more control

I can't be in the after meeting or comment unless I'm trained / really !!!!

I've been in many parking lots after meetings and it was so beneficial and helpful

More family of origin rules

So unnecessary

Cant we leave well enough alone

I appreciate the back and forth sharing

I learn so much

Thx for letting me share

Please do not contact me if will be with criticism / I will NOT respond thank you

## ***Comment 23***

July 7, 2025 at 8:47 am

Sherri - NJ says:

I appreciate the space SMR creates for differences of opinion and resolving conflict in ways that are healthier than anything I ever learned in my family of origin. That in itself is the recovery I'm working toward. I also think it's important to have guidelines, limits and priorities. In my opinion, the priority of the SMR zoom room is for our daily SMR meetings and for gatherings necessary for those meetings. While I have also benefitted from the "parking lot", I don't think it should take priority over other SMR business or maintenance. I do like the idea of separate breakout rooms, timed shares and parking lot host training. The parking lot is representative and associated with the SMR meeting and therefore, should not be a free-for-all. I am confident that a healthy solution will be achieved. The process might get ugly...and that's ok too. I've learned that growth doesn't happen when I'm comfortable.

## ***Comment 24***

July 6, 2025 at 9:33 am

Heather B says:

As a procedural issue, there were too many proposals to think about here. I would like to see a few concrete proposals (motions), each with their own comment section. This many proposals raises my concern that the group is trying to micro-manage or clamp down on the after-meeting. The after-meeting has been very helpful and encouraging to me and while I would like one reform (time limits), I don't want to see it curtailed in any significant way. Zoom has breakout rooms, so I don't see why the after-meeting would have to shut down for a committee meeting. It sounds like there was shock at people still talking at 2pm, but *\*is\** that a bad thing if the people involved find it helpful?

## ***Comment 25***

July 4, 2025 at 5:02 pm

Anonymous says:

A little known FACT:

When we have a Business Meeting for Strengthening My Recovery Meditation Meeting, there are only a few people there. We are basically thrown out of the Strengthening My Recovery Meditation Meeting Zoom Room into a Break Out Room so the After Party can continue undisturbed by SMR Business. Who Says? The business meeting needs to go into a Break Out room. It's SMR's room, and we should be able to have Business meetings and let people who want to have another meeting GO ELSEWHERE. So there!

## ***Comment 26***

July 4, 2025 at 9:17 am

anonymous says:

I agree with the notion IF IT AINT BROKE DONT FIX IT. SOOOO many of us have benefited soooooo deeply from the Parking Lot just As Is. The Over-control is UNECESSARY. Parking Lot is precious and sacred to sooo many of us who come regularly. ANYONE WHO DOESN'T LIKE IT, DOESNT NEED TO COME. Or Can LEAVE if the P. Lot isn't of interest or meaningful to them that particular day

## ***Comment 27***

July 4, 2025 at 11:24 am

Anonymous says:

Perhaps you are the one in DENIAL about the brokenness. ACA have valued their Laundry List Traits out of DENIAL. There are many who disagree with what is going on there and

simply do that very thing – not get involved.  
However, this has been brought to the SMR group for consideration and the various proposals identify several issues of concern, ie brokenness or perhaps a better term is dysfunction. Dysfunction thrives with don't talk, don't trust, don't feel. As far as I know, the after meeting was created by one individual simply by volunteering to take Host everyday for well over 2 years. Their rules are The Rules, even though they say their are no rules. There has been no group conscience to create or set boundaries for this space.  
It is not a parking lot. It is platform speaking because of the design of Zoom.  
SMR should be able to determine what goes on in their Zoom room after the meeting.

## ***Comment 28***

July 3, 2025 at 4:39 pm

Brian eM says:

SMR is a Meditation Meeting attended by hundreds of members daily. It has clearly defined structure, boundaries and service roles. This includes a Newcomer greeting period of 15 minutes after the Meeting.

However, what happens next is vague. Some call it an after-party, some call it a parking lot, some call it an after meeting, but they refuse the concept that they are having a separate meeting, even though many attend only the After-Meeting that is not a meeting. So are the "Trusted Servants" serving SMR or some other group of which we are funneling newcomers into this undefined recovery space where advise, feedback and cross-talk abound. A few of the leaders of this group have been saying "They are not going to mess with us" Obviously there is an Us vs. Them mentally that has seeped in and this is dysfunctional and not healthy.

At this point, I believe it would be best for this group to get their own room and invite people to it as a separate event. Just like the Boundaries meeting or any of the many other meeting advertised at the end of the meeting, like step meetings, LPG meetings, etc.

The newcomer session last 15 mins and after that SMR and its trusted servants are done for the day and SMR meeting is closed.

I think to continue to "Host" this unstructured anything goes space will continue to bring forth conflict.

FYI – I too have been a fan of the after-meeting. I think it has lots of value, but I also think it's time to move on and move out of SMR and SMR shouldn't be endorsing what goes on there.

## ***Comment 29***

June 26, 2025 at 8:44 am

Anonymous says:

Hi

I disagree with changing the SMR after meeting

I do not see or hear any problems in the after meeting

It is so helpful to have it open to all and to any topic

The actual SMR meeting itself is already structured

I think it's ok to leave the after meeting as it is

What is proposed is so over the top in my opinion ..... thank you

### ***Comment 30***

June 26, 2025 at 8:40 am

Anonymous says:

Or simply say, I just needed to be heard. So thank you, my share is not open for feedback.

### ***Comment 31***

June 26, 2025 at 8:38 am

Anonymous says:

For me, I would feel more comfortable having more clarity on the after meeting script, so it can remain a safe space and respectful.

For example: Everyone is welcome to ask questions (giving priority to newcomers to the meeting) or share and afterwards precise/voice the kind of feedback/help they are seeking.

Am I seeking a reflection or paraphrasing of what I just shared? Or am I seeking to hear and be inspired by other members similar experiences, strength & hope?

In this way crosstalk guidelines can remain intact.

### ***Comment 32***

June 26, 2025 at 8:37 am

katherine says:

After spending considerable time contemplating this issue, I believe strongly that the after meeting should conclude at the time appropriate and decided by those who are in attendance of that space. The depth and profound healing that I have witnessed in the sacred space known as the after meeting is beyond description: I question why anyone would want to curtail and control recovery in process? As I understand it, control is a trait and not a principle.

Given the advent of the technology of Zoom where multiple meeting rooms and spaces can be accommodated simultaneously, I see no reason to "control" the Divinely guided recovery process amongst those who attend. I am

also struck by the fact that the motions to control via time limit have been primarily promoted by those who do not attend the space...that is concerning to me again because controlling others is a trait and not a principle. I therefore support a respectful co-existence of multiple meeting rooms if needed by utilizing breakout rooms.

### **Comment 33**

June 25, 2025 at 3:20 pm

Maria says:

I hope that this space is left open as long as it is possible to .... The after meeting has been so nurturing and loving  
I'm new to this room and these past three days it's the after meeting that have helped me to deal with many personal issues  
I felt the freedom to share intimate issues that I would not have been able to share in a larger setting . I've been welcomed and supported while going through very difficult times. It is a safe and welcoming space and I'm so grateful for having found it and have been embraced by everyone!!

### **Comment 34**

June 25, 2025 at 1:02 pm

Angela B. says:

I agree strongly with the proposal put forth by Sue of the Swamp!  
It is very important that those in the after-meeting not add extra stress or challenges on leaders for the S.M.R. meeting. I was facilitating the after-meeting that Thursday when the conversation was still going when the website team entered to undertake their duties. Because of the extremely delicate and vulnerable conversation of healing that was taking place at the time, a request was made for a break-out room.  
Thinking deeply about the experience since then, I feel it is extremely important that all who provide leadership for S.M.R. (including the website team) be treated with the utmost respect! Realistically, the after-meeting only happens in the first place because of the organizational skills and personal sacrifices of time and energy of those who provide leadership for S.M.R.  
As one who often stays in the after-meeting until its end, I have personally benefitted from the great healing that occurs in that space. Conversely, I recognize that many people might not be inclined to stay on the after-meeting, nor even understand why anyone might want to do so. Honestly, though, any person who doesn't benefit from the after-meeting has the freedom to hit the "leave meeting" button at any time and go about their day.  
Having been present that particular Thursday when the conflict occurred, I doubt the deep healing achieved would have happened if the after-meeting had been arbitrarily cut off at noon.  
In my opinion, a big part of the beauty of the after-meeting is its organic

nature, in that topics shift based on who is present and sharing at the time. To attempt to dictate what topics are allowable would significantly detract from the power of the space, I believe.

### ***Comment 35***

June 25, 2025 at 9:22 am

Jim R says:

I have been struck by the fact that there is no section on our website devoted to the after-meeting. Having a space where the agreed upon guidelines and customary practices are written out and available as reference would be really helpful.

I look forward to reading what members ideas are around the after-meeting.

Personally, I believe there is great healing that occurs in the space.

Oh, and I love the idea of having, as a standard practice, 3 or 4 breakout rooms created daily for members to move in and out of freely – a time out space, a separate chat, a private discussion – very empowering for the group.

### ***Comment 36***

June 25, 2025 at 8:38 am

Kim B says:

I support setting an end time for the after-meeting. (Say 2 hours)

I agree with the hosts having training.

I think the ability to give feedback is highly beneficial and should continue as long as it is preceded by confirmation from the original sharer that they are seeking feedback.

I'm torn on timing. I have experienced the lack of timer being abused, but also recognize the after-meeting is a place for those who need to share more.

### ***Comment 37***

June 25, 2025 at 8:30 am

Morgan says:

I agree with an end time for the after meeting and that there be an ongoing communication about having safety standards for the after meeting