

BDA Business Planning for 2024 — Please hold your feedback until the end:

We respectfully request that all participant feedback be held until the end of the conference. There will be a survey provided as we finish the penultimate (next to last) workshop in the conference series. If you're still with us at that point, we will be incredibly grateful to read all about your thoughts and experiences with us.

Until then, you'll be acclimating to what we're doing for at least the first month, maybe longer. Instead of asking us to make changes to make you feel more comfortable, please experience your discomfort, do your work, and grow — spiritually, emotionally, and quite possibly materially.

Throughout these three months together, please do not try to control the workshops, the host group, or the experience of any participant, including your own. We're not in control, and you're not either. If we're doing this right, Higher Power is in control and, in our experience, Higher Power doesn't care about our comfort. Maintaining conscious contact and doing the Higher Power's will is often uncomfortable. We do both anyway. Thank God!

We can almost promise you that you will hear things in these workshops that you don't like and that make you feel uncomfortable. Deal with it and get better. We are not bad people trying to get good; we are sick people trying to get well. Please do what you need to do to get well. Focusing on yourself and your own symptoms as a debtor is a great place to start.

In the meantime, please refrain from moralizing. There will be swearing, there may be some joking about sex and other topics bandied about by friends and fellows. We are all adults, and none of us are innocents or saints.

"We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection." Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition (p. 72). Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Kindle Edition.

We encourage laughter and joy. We discourage self-obsession, self-seriousness, dishonesty, hypersensitivity, and closed minds. Let's try to have a good time together, even if that's not easy to do at first.

"We have been speaking to you of serious, sometimes tragic things. We have been dealing with [debting] in its worst aspect. But we aren't a glum lot. If newcomers could see no joy or fun in our existence, they wouldn't want it. We absolutely insist on enjoying life. ...

"So we think cheerfulness and laughter make for usefulness. Outsiders are sometimes shocked when we burst into merriment over a seemingly tragic experience out of the past. But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others.

"Everybody knows that those in bad health, and those who seldom play, do not laugh much. ... We are sure God wants us to be happy, joyous, and free. We cannot subscribe to the belief that this life is a vale of tears, though it once was just that for many of us. But it is clear that we made our own misery. God didn't do it. ..." Alcoholics Anonymous, Fourth Edition (p. 121). Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Kindle Edition.

And there will be typos ... we ask your forgiveness, patience, and tolerance upfront ...

Once more, let's please hold our feedback until the end, do our own recovery work, and don't take ourselves "too damn seriously." (From AA's rule 62.)