Survey Responses

Ad hoc Committee to Address the Issue of Pre-meeting Chat

These were the responses to the survey asking the members of the SMR meeting group about the talkativeness of the pre-meeting space.

At the August business meeting the issue was raised concerning pre-meeting chatting. A survey was designed to gather opinions of our members. The survey offered an opportunity for members to select multiple responses from suggested solutions. These were:

- Add some language to the Waiting Room message
- Create a slide to share a few minutes before the start of the meeting, asking for quiet.
- Create a 'silent' breakout room, to be closed at the start of the meeting.
- None of the above

Participation in the survey was encouraged and announced regularly. Submissions were received between August 28th and September 7th. There were 90 distinct submissions - either a choice of suggested solutions (46) or personal ideas and comments (44).
Of the 46 preferences of multiple solutions, here are the results:

32 None of the above
9 Slide sharing before the start
7 "Quiet" breakout room see comment
1 Waiting room message

These are the results of the survey. **The work of the ad hoc committee, 'to look at the issue of pre-meeting chit chat', is complete.** Any member of SMR is able to make a proposal for change, based on these findings.

Finally, below are the ideas and comments of members, submitted in the survey.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen in Harlem
Jim R

Ideas and Comments:

➢ My understanding is that travelers have the option to reparent themselves when they are uncomfortable, instead of micromanaging the behaviors and parameters of other members of the meeting, and the meeting itself. Many travelers have completely left the meeting altogether, due to this one person's inability or unwillingness to regulate themselves in certain situations.

- I think a pre-meeting slide and the guidance of the room host to address any disruptive people would be ideal

- Very simple. Slide - to be mindful of the energy you bring to this space?

- There's a saying "Rather than carpeting the entire world I can put on a pair of slippers." This program has helped me be able to use my triggers as parenting opportunities for my inner kids.

- I like the pre meeting chatter. It makes the room feel like a friendly welcoming family atmosphere. Thank you :)

- I am really confused about the issue / concern. I read the minutes and still don't understand. Is the request to have no quotes and no talking or anything? Would it be possible to issue a poll here to the effect of, "would you prefer restricting the pre-meeting to quotes and ready quotes only and prohibiting any other talking".

- Don't change something that's not broken. Don't let the opinions of a few affect the whole.

- The general meeting is very well organized and so much time, thought and energy has been put into keeping the meeting and after meeting safe and comfortable. Lets leave a few minutes for those who like to greet the room and share inspiring quotes. If I need quiet time before the meeting I can wait until 7:30 to join.

- Breakout room 4 quiet meditation Sounds like it may fly Ty

- Really ???

- In a 'regular outside of ACA' meditation meeting, people may stay out in the 'parking lot' to chat and catch up. If a person doesn't feel comfortable with the greeting among members here, rather than change the format of the entire meeting because of a few folks...a gentle reminder that in an ACA or any other for that matter, we do have the option in Zoom to press the mute button. I feel it's our own choice and responsibility.

- Love the idea of a meditative space.

- ***Breakout room*** *see comment* The pre-meeting chatter has always been an issue. Some people love the opportunity to connect. I personally can't stand it and have to turn my volume off. As a result, when I tech host, I sometimes do not hear when a need is verbally expressed prior to meeting start. That said, some people need that pre-meeting connection and my (or others) trigger should not negate the need for people to connect prior to the meeting start. The solution to addiction is connection. I would not be opposed to a slide suggesting a meditative start,

considering it is a meditation meeting. However, imposing a quiet space or silencing the room prior to meeting start feels too much like trying to take control. If we impose that, then why open the meeting at 7:15 EST? We could easily open the meeting (admit participants from the waiting room) at 7:28 EST, followed by a service need announcement for the day to get room hosts and start at 7:30 EST. I am not suggesting this. Just raising the point that pre-meeting is beneficial for various reasons. As tech host, I've learned to prioritize service needs for the meeting over chatter and will respectfully interrupt the chatter to get service needs addressed before the meeting starts. These are the types of learnings we gain from giving service in ACA :-). Less control, more practice speaking up to address needs. To note - I strongly disagree with comment 3 - that puts the meeting at risk and is frankly not as simple as written. Tech hosts are already preparing the meeting rooms and assignments as soon as the meeting opens. Having a separate breakout room managed by a co-host with floods of people joining in that 15 min space - trying to manage room host assignments when people are in a main vs breakout room will be a nightmare, especially because co-hosts cannot be assigned while in a breakout room...all assignments have to happen in the main room. We cannot have people back and forth between a pre-meeting breakout room and the main room while also trying to figure out who is where, who is volunteering to chair that day, who needs to be assigned, who needs to be moved, etc... Strong no on that option.

- I like the coffee quotes, etc. but I shut off my audio when I hear lengthy personal conversations or long strings of "good mornings" or what the weather is, etc. I prefer a more meditative space.

- If people have a problem with chatting, why can't they just turn the volume down? Seems a little controlling asking people to be quiet.

- Am very happy with the present format.

- I find the pre meeting chat and coffee quotes irritating. It is a time when I enjoy taking in who is present and readying myself for the reading and meditation. Even more irritating is the often lengthy welcoming of newcomers. One word — welcome— is enough.

- I support accommodating all attendees with their needs, and believe that pre-meeting fellowship is valuable for many of us. The suggestion of a quiet breakout room would meet both well.

- Thank you for sharing

- There are quiet days and noisy days, those who are triggered can turn the sound down. It is annoying sometimes, I know. When I'm triggered I notice and decide I can protect myself and leave others be.

- I sometimes get annoyed by the chatter that goes on in the pre-meeting. It may recall elements of my past, but I think it is my issue rather than imposing it on the group to take some action so that I'm more comfortable. I do have the ability to lower the volume on my computer by going to the small speaker icon at the top of my screen and this gives me the agency to create my own silence if that is what I desire.

- This is the time for coffee quotes, which can be beautiful and inspiring for members. If a member doesn't want to hear it, they can turn down their volume or simply not connect until 7:29EST. IMO, members need to reparent themselves around their reactions to this pre meeting chat, not try to control others member's behavior to suit themselves.

- I'm conflicted about this. I think for some people who may live alone or otherwise be isolated, getting on and saying things like "good morning family" seems really important to them. I don't wish to take that away. But I can also imagine how some of that may seem hard for a newcomer to hear- does it feel cliquish to them? I hope not. I like aspects of comment #2- maybe a slide that has a welcome message and explains that this time is used for sharing coffee quotes? But then again, I do enjoy seeing the faces of friends who are on camera and a slide would obscure that. So Comment #3 with a "quiet space" breakout room could be an easy alternative. I hate to add duties to the already busy Chairperson, but perhaps if they were on early enough to intersperse the chit chat with warm welcomes to newcomers and explanation of this time being for coffee quotes? - not to stop the chatter but mix it with welcome and the reading of quotes (which I find can sometimes have a meditative quality). Thanks to all of you for engaging with this topic. I love this meeting however this topic is resolved. And I love the continued attempts to keep it warm, safe and welcoming to all. N NY/FL

- This is a delicate issue. The morning greetings may be the only social interaction some members of our fellowship receive each day. For them, hearing their names and being greeted is life giving. Other members have colleagues, family, and friends, and would appreciate silence. Some folks don't like the coffee quotes, but they are part of a long standing tradition in this meeting. With a meeting this size, it's impossible to please all the people all the time and yet, we keep trying to do that. That's one of the most beautiful aspects of this meeting. Thank you for this meeting and all who attend and serve it. IF creating a silent break out room before the meeting wouldn't be a burden to our hard working service team, that seems like a good compromise. As always, you're appreciated!

- I am glad this is an anonymous survey! I do not appreciate all the excess verbal chat in the pre-meeting minutes, but I use it as an opportunity to practice patience and watch some of my Inner Parts feel annoyed, and some other Parts step in to support those annoyed Parts. It is a good opportunity for me, and when it is too hard or tiring, I just take my headphones out and remember I have choice and that honouring that self-set boundary is also good practice. I am going to be bold here and suggest that perhaps that there could even be a pre-meeting message

on screen to this effect! Some people want to chat, and not joining or listening is an empowering choice. I am so grateful to know about this group. Today is my second meeting and I will join as often as I am able.

- I love the idea of a quiet room and the self-selection into it.

- I think if people need silence, they can turn off the sound till the meeting officially starts.

- I view the pre- meeting as a sort of parking lot. I do enjoy the hellos. I don't enjoy when the time/space becomes occasionally monopolized by one or two members carrying on a convo seemingly between themselves. Therefore, a breakout room "quiet space" seems to be a nice & fair alternative. It neither impinges self expression nor one's potential need for quiet. I recognize occasionally inner children may become 'excited' and perhaps unintentionally 'take up more space' than may be socially accepted for adults. I feel a safe encouraging space for inner children to grow, learn, and sometimes enthusiastically (read: "be too much") express themselves is very important & I would not want that to be curtailed. Thank you.

- I like the quotes and suggest keeping that

- I like the quote sharing aspect. I can see the friendliness of regular members during the chit chat before the meeting. I think that can either be a positive to create a sense of ease and also the friendships that come out of this meeting, but also could make some people feel left out, as if they don't belong to that circle of friends that don't share that level of familiarity.

- Additional information in the window that opens when one is in the waiting room to enter the meeting could be implemented together with a period of informing participants about the addition in the announcements at the end of the meeting.

- I think Comment #2 is the best option

- I support accommodating all attendees with their needs, and believe that pre-meeting fellowship is valuable for many of us. The suggestion of a quiet breakout room would meet both well.

- At live meetings, we have greeters and encourage connection among members. I appreciate the enjoyment people get from seeing each other.

- I believe we all have a volume control on our devices. We seem to be trying to solve a non-problem.

- For some people this may be the only safe place that they are able to share their thoughts, whatever they may be. Would it be helpful to re-emphasize that sharing prior to meeting is for coffee quotes only?

- no thoughts

- The only thing that I don't like is when a member will say hello and name a bunch of people, leaving out a lot of others. It can trigger childhood memories of being left out.

- I think the three comments above suggest a level of control that is just not possible in such a large group of Adult Children

- I have experienced members greeting a specific group, just amongst themselves, saying hello only to each other, checking-in chatting in a very familiar way with each other. Definitely seemed like the cool kids clique were present and accounted for. I'm not jealous, I just felt very left out. After a lifetime of feeling on the outside our SMR group isn't the place to feel it too. I've been a member of this group for a long time, taking a months-long break, and coming back, it was very clear how this felt and how it would feel to a newcomer. Could there be a greeting like a hello etc and suggestion to chat privately? Not so exclusive? How about the whole group could be a quiet space and chatting in a breakout room? Thanks, K/ME

- I would like to see more open chats . I really don't care for the quotes . And being judged on the acceptance of said quotes . Very controlling and judgmental. A few special people are allowed to say goodmorning an chit chat , then other unacceptables will be immediately shut down .. I definitely don't come here for the stiff coffee quotes.

- When is/was the ad hockey committee meeting?

- I don't understand the main issue? Basically, is this person asking for silence? NO coffee quotes?? Is their request, creating an ad hoc meditation being addressed or did someone come up with these three options on their own, without an ad hoc? Maybe the ones who don't want to hear messages, press mute

- Thanks to whoever raised the issue. I have learned to "mute" my volume when this chatting gets to me. There seem to be only a few regulars who go on and on ... maybe speak to them directly??