

DA Tool #11 — Preparatory meditation and writing for conference registrants:

Please review the details below, then spend several minutes meditating on your own relationship with the telephone and the Internet in DA and BDA. If desired, you can request the DA *Using the Telephone and the Internet* pamphlet as part of the digital (eBook) 2020 DA pamphlet collection via the free literature request form at <https://www.helpfordebtors.org/free-da-and-bda-literature>.

DA Tool #11: “The Telephone and the Internet — We maintain frequent contact with other DA members by using the telephone, email, and other forms of communication. We make a point of talking to other DA members before and after taking difficult steps in our recovery.”

Written pre-pandemic:

The telephone and the Internet have become a lifeline for many of us. The online meetings, many using written communication technology for member sharing, allow participating members to feel like they’re in an ongoing meeting all day, every day. The phone and Skype meetings have allowed DA and BDA to truly become a worldwide fellowship of recovering debtors and business owners.

In our virtual recovery communities, limiting our interactions to meetings, service, and sponsorship — instead of the potlucks, parties, and other activities often scheduled in face-to-face DA and BDA communities — we diminish the problem of personalities being put before principles. Some of us have found it most effective to double down with DA and BDA online and phone groups. These groups are miraculous in supporting our solvency and our individual ability to thrive — spiritually, emotionally, and financially. We can’t imagine going back to face-to-face meetings, although a lot of primarily virtual members do attend the occasional share-a-day in nearby cities.

Besides the meetings, there are also outreach calls. It’s often difficult to pick up the phone in times of crisis to call another member and ask them to listen to our tales of woe. Many of us practice picking up the phone when we’re not in crisis, just to reach out and ask someone else how they’re doing. Some of us use email for this same purpose and many of us text. Outreach calls don’t need to be about asking for help; they can also be about offering support. Once we’ve built a little reciprocity into our relationships with fellow DA and BDA members, asking for the help we need becomes much easier.

Phone calls, texts, and emails are also perfect for bookending, which is alluded to in the description of this tool above and will be seen again in BDA Tool Eleven. We no longer need to take frightening or overwhelming actions alone. Especially when we’re caught up in fear or procrastination, we can tell someone what we’re going to do before we act, and we can follow-up and tell them what we’ve accomplished when we’re done. Bookending works equally well for business actions, personal tasks, and Steps in our recovery process. We simply need to pick up the phone and set a discussion in motion.

Lastly, let’s not forget the value of simple texts, letting someone know we’re thinking about them in the moment. Whose day can’t be brightened by an emoji or two or three or an animated gif of a dumpster on fire or a laughing llama? Those images may not be BDA recovery specific, but that doesn’t make them any less useful to the debtor in recovery who enjoys a laugh or a smile in the middle of their day.

Reaching out to our friends and fellows in program is a perfect way to “invite the Higher Power in.”