

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO IF YOU WANT TO TAKE THE STEPS AS A PARTICIPANT IN THE BDA SOLVENCY IMMERSION CONFERENCE?

Register for the conference; add all the workshops, including *After Parties* and *Fellowship Drop-ins*, to your calendar, and attend as many conference activities as possible; invest yourself in preparation for and participation in each workshop; and listen for the DA and BDA members who share about their experiences staying solvent and TAKING THE STEPS. When we ask for volunteers to help with the Steps during the early *After Parties* and *Fellowship Drop-ins* in the cycle, speak up and ask for help. Or listen for those conference participants who have offered help and reach out to them privately. Help with the Steps will be available for everyone who wants it and is committed to solvency and the recovery process offered in DA and BDA.

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PLEASE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE THE STEPS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON WORK AND BUSINESS

First, let's be clear that the **BDA Solvency Immersion Conference** is neither a Step study nor a DA or BDA meeting. It is a unique recovery event for which we — the host group members of BDA Workshops (registered BDA group # 122319) — have prepared and provided everything any debtor will need to TAKE THE STEPS, with an emphasis on income and earning, work and business, within six months. Some of our registered participants do drop in and out of the workshops, using them like Step studies or meetings, which we're happy to support, even encourage, if it helps them prepare to TAKE THE STEPS. But that does not change the event we're hosting — again, an opportunity to TAKE THE STEPS based on our conference schedule, with an emphasis on income and earning, work and business, within six months.

Once more, our host group has provided everything a DA or BDA member would need to TAKE THE 12 STEPS, especially if they desire a focus on work and business. When we say, "we provided," we are including making specific pieces of DA's and BDA's conference-approved literature available to participants at no cost to them. (Please remember that ALL AA literature is also conference-approved for reading and discussion in DA and BDA. See aa.org for free downloads and options to purchase.)

We've outsourced provision of free literature to [BDA Help for Debtors \(registered group # 7720\)](#) via this link, [free conference-approved literature](#), which is available to anyone who asks, anywhere in the world.

A FUNCTIONAL ALTERNATIVE TO SPONSORSHIP WHILE ATTENDING THE BDA CONFERENCE

Unfortunately, it is especially difficult to find a sponsor in DA and BDA, and we do not attract as many BDA sponsors as needed by conference participants. Many participants, including the host group for these six-month conferences, are sponsoring but already at capacity for sponsorship commitments. Many of the other participants are new to DA or BDA; many more are returning to recovery from debting after a lengthy absence from this program.

If you are fortunate enough to find a full-time sponsor in DA or BDA or both, we suggest that both of you download and read AA's sponsorship pamphlet (conference-approved in DA and BDA) via <https://www.aa.org/questions-and-answers-mentorship> and use that resource, along with DA and BDA literature and the conference materials we've prepared, to TAKE THE STEPS together. As you will see, though, sponsorship is a HUGE service commitment, and many DA and BDA members are *not available to make it*.

On the other hand, as a functional alternative to sponsorship, we usually have conference participants who have TAKEN THE STEPS in a previous conference cycle and are excited to carry the message to newcomers. That is, carrying the message of the Steps, Traditions, both sets of tools, and the DA Promises to one or more newer DA and BDA members as part of their own practice of the

12th Step. We suggest using ALL of the **BDA Solvency Immersion Conference** workshop materials for these Step-taking relationships, truly immersing ourselves in the DA and BDA program, and in taking our spiritual connection and principles into our work and business lives.

If you are ready to TAKE THE STEPS, and willing to follow the guidance of a recovering debtor who has had a spiritual awakening, as a result of the 12 Steps, and is now carrying the message and practicing DA and BDA principles in all their affairs, we suggest the following “dos and don’ts.”

IF TAKING THE STEPS VIA THE BDA CONFERENCE, WE SUGGEST THAT YOU DO:

- ✓ Everything possible, with the help of the conference and the person taking you through the Steps (your Step guide), to get solvent and stay solvent through the DA and BDA program.
- ✓ Bring the essential elements of recovery — willingness, honesty, and an open mind (see Appendix Two in the AA Big Book) — to both your Step work and your participation in the conference.
- ✓ Commit to taking ALL of the Twelve Steps with your Step guide, making a whole-hearted commitment to take the first three Steps together and ... if that goes well ... making a commitment at Step Three to take the rest of the Steps together, ALL of the rest of the Steps. Then keep those commitments.
- ✓ Complete all the reading assignments from the DA literature and the conference materials, plus readings that your Step guide may suggest from the AA literature.
- ✓ Establish relationships with other conference participants and BDA members, including a conference “study buddy,” avoiding overdependence on your Step guide.
- ✓ Answer as many of the questions in the workshop materials as possible — every week — and arrange engagement with a “study buddy” to mutually share and discuss the answers you didn’t have time to share with your Step guide.
- ✓ Join in conference participation activities, including *After Party* and *Fellowship Drop-in*, as soon and as often as possible.

- ✓ Share, every week of the conference, if possible, on one or more of the topics being presented. We suggest bringing your answers to questions from the workshop materials and share those with the group.
- ✓ Recognize the importance of all our Traditions, tools, and promises, but don't try to implement them all immediately. It takes most of us years to put this program fully to use in our work and lives. For now, enjoy the immersion and pick up the tools you need soonest.
- ✓ Be open to understanding the scope of DA and BDA, beyond the group and beyond your own needs. Stay in gratitude and open to ways you can contribute to the well-being of others and to our fellowship.
- ✓ Quickly accept “I don't know” as a response from your Step guide, when that is the case, and accept suggestions from your Step guide in finding good sources of information.
- ✓ Ask for and gratefully receive help from your Step guide in recognizing what you are contributing to recurring difficulties and ongoing negative experiences in your business and life, beyond the conference materials, questions, and discussions.

ON THE OTHER HAND, WE SUGGEST THAT YOU:

- ✓ Don't allow yourself to give in to overwhelm, especially during the first five Steps. (The conference gets easier for everyone at Step Six.) You're trying to change your life and yourself in a meaningful way during a six-month period. This is likely going to be intense.
- ✓ Don't take your resistance — to solvency, to recovery, to new ideas and suggestions, to spiritual guidance, to clear directions about how to TAKE THE STEPS in DA and BDA, to feedback you don't like or want to hear — to your Step guide.
- ✓ Don't try to “figure (any of) this out” on your own. The availability of your Step guide will be limited beyond TAKING THE STEPS together, and your Step guide needs to be allowed to guide your interactions. You will need support from more than one person, perhaps several more people. We suggest “study buddies,” outreach calls, and PRGs.
- ✓ Don't waste time and energy arguing or debating personal opinions with your Step guide. It is in no way helpful for debtors to argue theological, program, or any other matters with their Step guides.

- ✓ Don't take and / or hold on to attitudes characterized by black-and-white, all-or-nothing, good-and-bad thinking. The main point in TAKING THE STEPS is to be flexible and open-minded. Healthy recovery is built on acceptance and gratitude. Growing into clarity includes "knowing when we don't know" about aspects of our business, work, personal, emotional, and spiritual lives.
- ✓ Don't expect your Step guide — or any other DA or BDA member — to offer professional services such as those provided by counselors, or the accounting, finance, tax, legal, medical, or social work communities. If any fellow members try to give you professional advice, rather than spiritual guidance and encouragement, you may want to opt out of further interactions with them.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE FOR RECOVERING DEBTORS

Allowing a more experienced fellow to guide us through the Steps is certainly a great start on what holds the potential to be a lifetime of recovery, especially if we uncover and begin the recovery process on personal problems related to our businesses (including freelancing and self-employment), work relationships, earning, income, and even time management. The DA and BDA program can contribute to the solutions for all of these problems, in addition to helping us to claim and maintain solvency. If you keep your commitments and do your work, both significant challenges for debtors, your Step guide may agree to sponsor you when it's time for you to carry the message and to practice your own 12th Step. Please do your own recovery work, ALL of the work, and see what happens next.

This is all to say that, if you want to TAKE THE 12 STEPS during one of the six-month **BDA Solvency Immersion Conferences**, the spiritual, written, and people resources for that will be available, although formal sponsorship often will not be. Please join us and check out this opportunity to take a deep dive into your recovery from debting, especially in work and business.