



BDA Solvency Immersion Conference

Hosted by BDA Workshops (registered group # 122319)

Conference Survey Results
July through December 2023
83% Survey Response Rate

This is a summary of participant surveys for a 26-session intensive cycle of recovery workshops for Debtors Anonymous and Business Debtors Anonymous members who own, operate, manage, or work for businesses, either for-profit or not-for-profit (using conference-approved literature from DA, BDA, and AA and workshop materials developed by active BDA members in 2020 and revised in 2021 and 2022)

THE BDA SOLVENCY IMMERSION CONFERENCE

During this BDA Conference, we covered most of the 12s in DA and BDA — Steps, Traditions, DA and BDA Tools, and DA Promises (see our contact page at www.bdasolvency.org/contact for downloadable pdfs of each list).

For the primary program principles, tools, and promises, we offered specific applications for DA and BDA members who own, operate, manage, or work for businesses, either for-profit or not-for-profit.

Each numbered set of recovery topics (i.e., Step One, Tradition One, DA Tool One, BDA Tool One, and Promise One) was allotted two workshop sessions.

NOTES: All pictures in this survey report / presentation are stock images. We hold our workshops by video conference, and no pictures are ever taken; we do record audio. Our anonymity is vital to our recovery.

The theme for this report is *“Steps and Stairways.”*





OUR SURVEY INCLUDES THREE DISTINCT PARTS

- General Experiences
- Connections and Cycle Goals
- Personal Progress in DA and BDA

We asked a total of 20 questions, including 11 opportunities to give ratings of 1—5 where:

1. Poor
2. Okay
3. Good
4. Great
5. Excellent

Two questions related to service for future cycles are not included in this report.

Before we get started on our scores and survey responses from our participants, we need to share about some recent conflict experiences.

We're sorry to report one major conflict incident in each of our two most recent conferences. We're providing no details in the interest of everyone's anonymity.

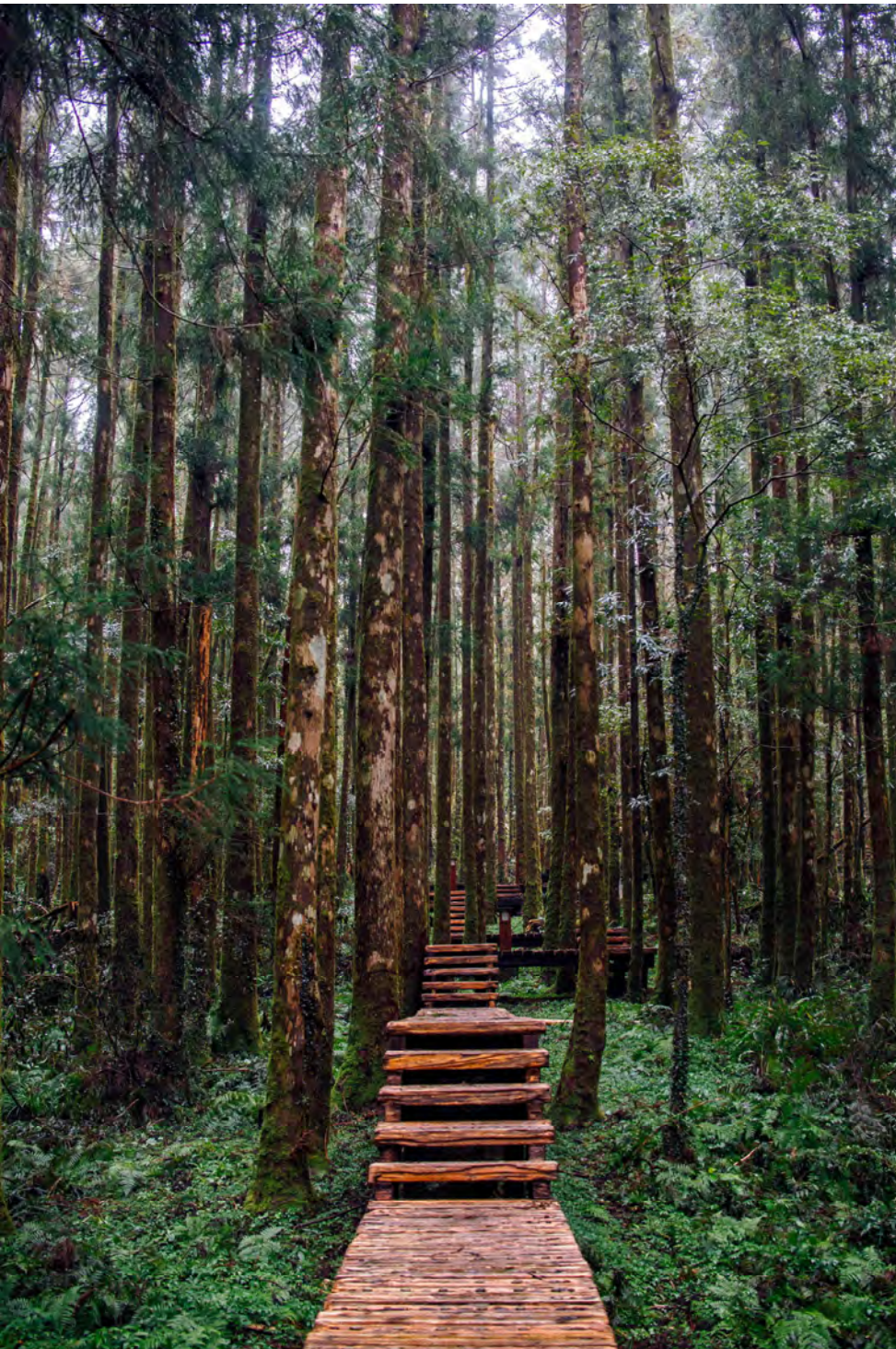
Let us first say that we don't think conflict is a problem, even when it happens in our recovery workshops and experiences. Our experience is that the change created within us by our solvency, Step work, and the rest of the DA and BDA program causes us growing pains. Our growing pains cause friction and sparks. Those sparks sometimes ignite into interpersonal conflict.

We believe the problem is our reactions to conflict, especially as recovering debtors. We are addicts according to our literature, and addicts are famous for seeking quick fixes and going to great lengths to avoid discomfort. Avoidance and running away from conflict is an unhealthy reaction. Personalizing conflict that is between other people and not our business, is an unhealthy reaction. Using other people's conflict to activate or pursue an agenda — such as gender or other personality-based affiliations — is an unhealthy reaction.

The behaviors below and in the column to the right have consistently caused conflict in our recovery workshops and conferences. We beg our participants to do our Step work to overcome these barriers to our successful recovery, unity, and service:

- Refusal to practice honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness
- Demanding special attention and special treatment

- Resistance to our leaders and leadership, beginning with our orientation document and continuing throughout the conference (see <https://www.bdasolvency.org/about-our-service-structure>)
- Refusal to follow our leaders' — specifically our steering committee members' — guidance on the Traditions, perhaps especially the first three Traditions: maintaining our unity and common welfare (Tradition 1), following our group conscience decisions as an expression of our Higher Power's will for us (Tradition 2), and protecting our singleness of purpose (Tradition 3)
- Making drama in workshops, by email, by gossip, etc.
- Unwillingness or inability to stay out of other people's interactions and relationships, including but not only when there's conflict
- Refusal to experience the conference we've planned, have guided for more than four years so far, and are guiding now
- Forgetting the "trusted" part of "trusted servants"
- Bringing in outside issues, including our personality-based, non-recovery-related affiliations and preferences (gender, etc.)
- Unwillingness to separate DA and BDA recovery and participation from other 12-Step programs and fellowships
- Forgetting why we're here — solvency first, Steps second, everything else third or later



OUR NUMERICAL SCORES FOR GENERAL EXPERIENCES

Experiences of *After Party*

(<https://www.bdasolvency.org/about-after-party>)

Rating: 5 of 5

100% of 100

A+

Experiences of *Fellowship Drop-In*

(<https://www.bdasolvency.org/about-fellowship-drop-in>)

Rating: 4.8 of 5

96% of 100

A

Workshop sessions and materials

(<https://www.bdasolvency.org/workshop-overview>)

Rating: 9.6 of 10

96% of 100

A

Overall scores for part 1: Rating: 4.85 of 5 97% of 100 A

Do you have any advice to offer future BDA Conference participants?

Please be committed to this process and to following the group conscience, format, etc. Be an active participant, get connected, and don't take yourself too seriously. Recovery can be challenging but can also be fun.

Yes, to newcomers I would say: the material is very extensive, and it can be overwhelming. It was helpful to me to only work on one part at a time. Not trying to go too deep. Because each time will be a new understanding of the material. I would say: take it easy and give it your best from where you are.

Don't feel rushed or pressured to go with the exact pace of the conference. Bring the timing to your HP and trust the process. With that being said, do participate and continue to do the work.

It's very worthwhile scheduling plenty of time in your calendar to read the relevant literature and to download and read the format (which contains useful information) and to answer the questions at your leisure. The hour or two of preparation [each week] will improve your experience of the [conference] and potentially provide other participants with the benefit of your ESH [experience, strength, and hope].

It works if you work it so work it cause you're worth it. Haha!

Make sure everyone is on the same page that it is a workshop [series] not a weekly meeting.

Get a Step guide and study buddy as soon as you can. Set aside some time each week to do the work. Join in as much as you can and offer service.

Stick with it through the bumps in the road. Recovery is more important than relational harmony.

I strive to stay focused on what I'm learning from everyone (by physically taking notes) and strive to be intentional about building relationships with fellow attendees.



Do you have any advice to offer about improving the BDA Conference?

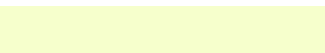
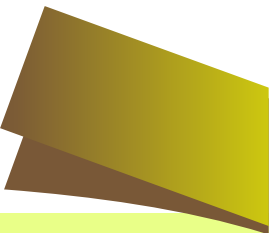
None at this time.

I like the way it is structured like it is.

Nope — you've got it down to a fine art.

Nope.

Clear and brief reminders pre workshop each workshop on the communication guidelines (both oral and written / chat) for all involved from the stewards to the newcomers.



How was your experience of *After Party* (<https://www.bdasolvency.org/about-after-party>)?

The topics and conversations and connections that often happen there are great.

It was really nice when I was able to stay. I had previous commitments sometimes.

This time around I made the commitment to join the “morning” [workshops] for the added experience of the larger [participant] numbers. Unfortunately, it made joining the *After Party* unworkable.

Great structure and helpful.

I love *After Party*. It's one of my favourite bits. I don't always have time to stay on after the [workshop] but I always do if I can.

I did not attend the *After Party* this cycle. My only feedback here is that it'd be really tough for me to stay for a full 3-hours. I appreciate that it is optional and it's good to know I am able to use it as a resource whenever needed.

I found the round robin [format] engaging and helpful.





How was your experience of *Fellowship Drop-in* (<https://www.bdasolvency.org/about-fellowship-drop-in>)?

It was great when I attended, but I was not able to attend often.

It gave me a chance to work Steps 1-3 and be prepared for my Step guide.

The timing of the *Fellowship Drop-in* was early the following morning in my time zone; I regularly get to bed too late on Wednesday evenings to feel enthusiastic about missing sleep to attend the *Drop-ins*.

Great structure and helpful.

I love this too. It's [very similar to] *After Party* but on another day.

I realize that my feedback last cycle helped to move *Fellowship Drop-in* to a better time [for me]. Unfortunately, this time ended up conflicting with a newly standing meeting with a client. I believe I attended a few times this cycle. I always find *Fellowship Drop-in* to be a helpful resource to address specific concerns.



How were the conference materials?

Very thorough and in depth.

They are excellent, very well structured.

They are truly excellent materials. It feels grounded in spiritual principles. It's simple, straight to the point, and provides for a profound spiritual experience.

Refer to my recommendation to new registrants about reading the format for the useful information it contains..

Great and fun.

The materials are superb quality. They are very thorough and lead us in a very well-structured way through the Steps, Traditions, tools, and promises.

Generally, I really got a lot out of the materials. I think a 4.5 would be a more appropriate rating. [**NOTE:** But we don't offer half ratings, so this one was counted as a 4.]

Excellent materials (informative).

How were the workshop sessions?

All great and appreciate the hosts and co-hosts being prepared and sharing that sets the tone.

Most of them were very helpful and transformative.

Most of the workshops I'd rate a 5. I enjoyed the structure, ESH [experience, strength, and hope], and recovery. My Step guide is a Godsend and has gifted me with her time, love, and honesty.

Great and structured well.

The sessions are great. You get to hear two speaker shares and the group members then also share on the week's topics.

Generally great.

Informative and good to hear from fellow attendees what their work with their Step guides brought out of them in their answers to the questions.

Were there any sessions that stood out as your “favorites” or most productive for you?

No not really.

Step 4, this one required a lot of self-reflection. I could see the need for this work.

I did enjoy the variety of speakers. It was cool to hear the variety in recovery. My “favorites” in terms of speakers that automatically come to mind are Jamila, Naiika, Marie-Louise, Marc, and Nick.

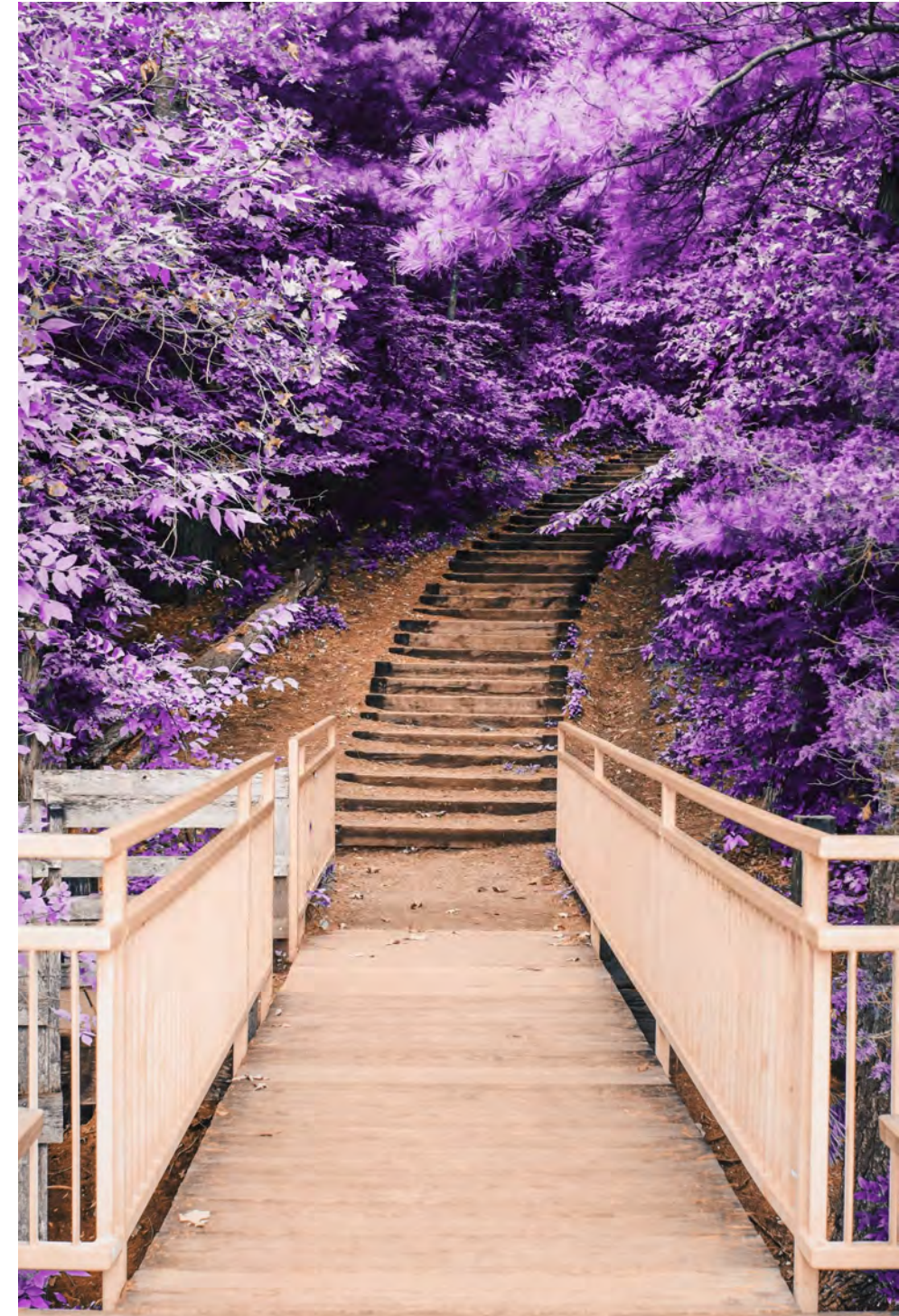
Nope — all the sessions I attended were great and I seriously regret the ones I missed; listening to the recordings just isn't quite the same.

No, I liked the structure for all.

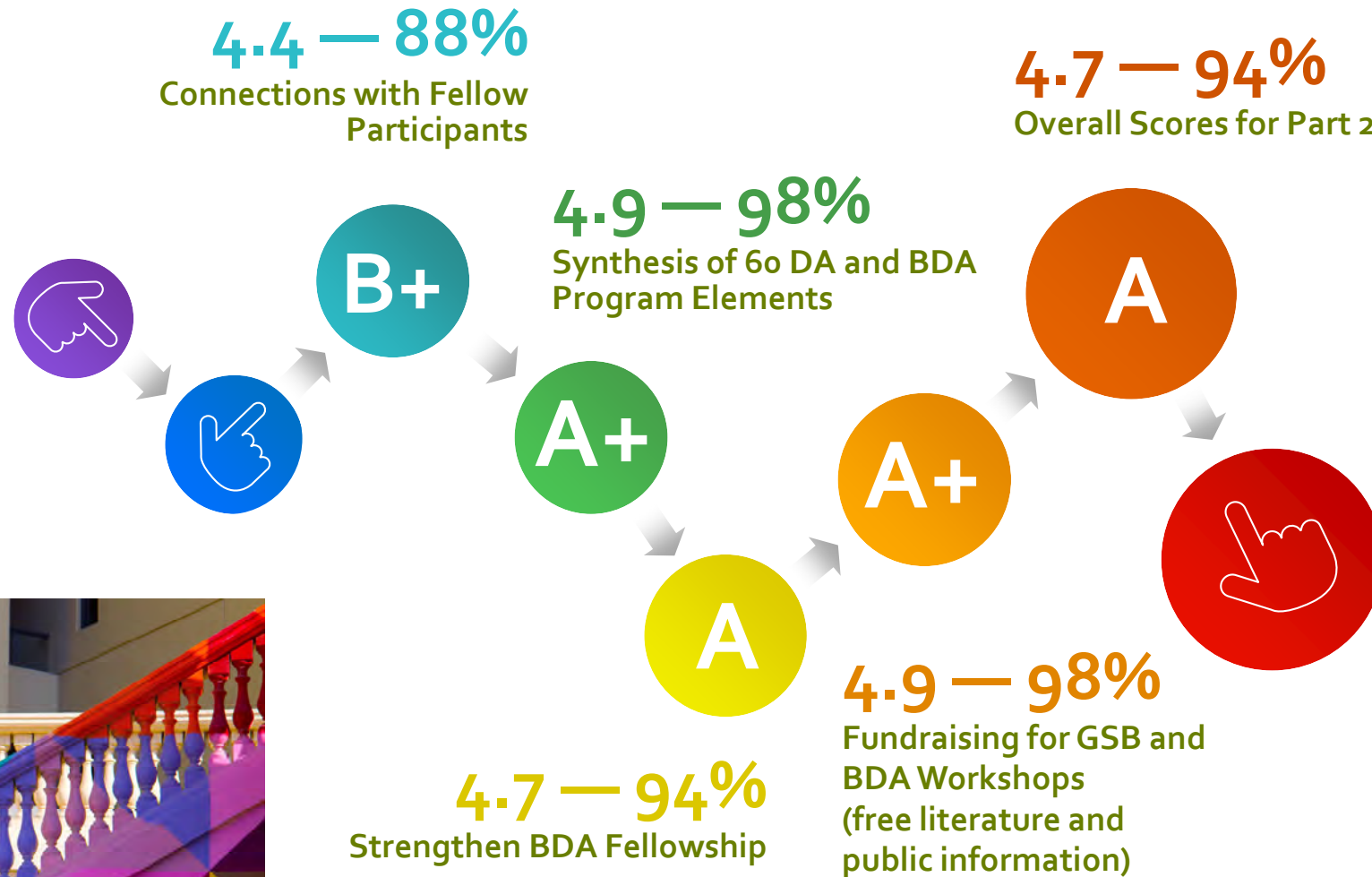
No, I liked them all.

Favorites are hard for me — but generally I'd say I believe I got the most out of the 4th through 7th Step workshops.

The one where people name their [character assets] with the alphabet comes to mind. [**NOTE:** Sharing our assets, as we see them, is part of our coverage of promise 3 in workshop 7.]



OUR NUMERICAL SCORES FOR CONNECTIONS AND CYCLE GOALS

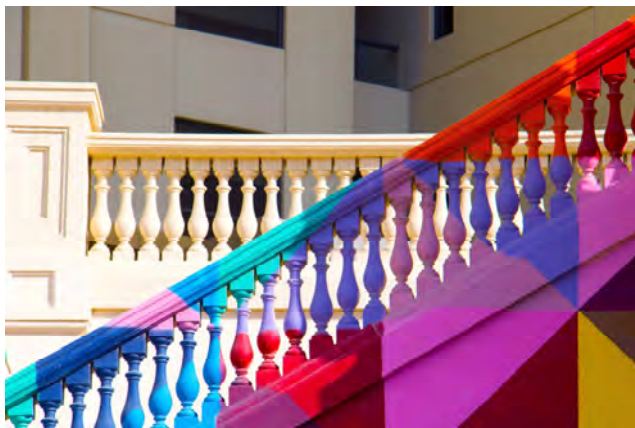


WHAT WE'RE OFFERING:

Our emphases for the BDA Conference are helping recovering debtors to immerse ourselves in the abundance of resources available to us in the DA and BDA program, all the resources, while also supporting each other in taking the 12 Steps, one Step every other week for six months. Solvency first, Steps second, everything else third or later ...

While encouraging and supporting our fellows in putting the program to work in our lives, we purposely DO NOT do any of "the work" for our participants or do anything to hold them accountable.

We believe accountability — to the Steps, to the homework, to preparation for workshops — is between each of us and our Higher Powers, and it's our Higher Powers that will connect us with Step guides, study buddies, and so on, if we're honest, open-minded, willing to listen, and praying for that guidance.



How was the availability and connection with fellow conference registrants?

I would give a 5 but many people were not on camera and the camera helps me feel more like I'm in an in-person [workshop] and to be able to see people's reactions and faces helps me feel more connected.

I was lucky to work with a wonderful Step guide. I feel that if I needed or wanted, I could reach out to others.

The fellows that I reached out to were extremely responsive.

This reflects my own availability; I was able to connect with the participants who reached out to me and to the few that I contacted. This has been a particularly busy year.

Great.

I did not make an effort to connect with conference registrants.

The format of the weekly workshops, *After Party*, and *Fellowship Drop-in* gives good opportunity to build connection with fellow conference registrants. Seeing the same people week in week out and hearing one another's shares and supporting one another through the *After Party* etc. means that you get to know each other quite well. Also working with a Step guide builds up an even stronger connection on a 1 to 1 basis as you work through the Steps. Personally, I do not often reach out to other members on a 1 to 1 basis, but I would like to and I think this would be really beneficial and help to build those connections. It might just be me, but I tend to naturally avoid making those kinds of calls. So, I think a push in that direction or some encouragement to do that would work well for me.

Everyone seems to be pretty available, and it seems pretty easy to find people's contact information.

Pretty good, but it fluctuates and is impacted based on who remains in the conference.



We're seriously considering integrating our approach to service (income) planning into this conference. That is, business planning through gross profit, including service development, benefits vs. features clarity, time planning, management of business income by hour, setting of wages and taxes for the business owner, and goal setting. We're thinking we would offer this planning service to anyone who is on track with the conference schedule as we complete Step 5 together. This would be an opportunity to give and receive service as BDA members, not an expectation or obligation. The planning would be done as our conference participants take Steps 6 and 7, also during 8 and 9 if necessary. We could do service (income) presentations during Fellowship Drop-in on open agenda weeks. Please let us know your thoughts.

This sounds good to me.

It sounds like a great idea to me.

At this moment, I'm not interested.

Oh man! This would be so awesome! Unfortunately, for my own sanity I need to at least skip the next 6 month's program and complete all the projects I have on the go before considering whether to return in mid-2024 or early 2025 ... at the recommended rate of donation from here on in!

I don't know what this entirely means or entails but I'm curious.

I think this is a great idea. I took part in the separate business planning conference last year and it was fantastic. I think it will be a great addition to add this into the immersion conference.

The conference content is quite a lot as it is, but if it can be implemented seamlessly, I trust it will benefit someone.

How did we do on ... connecting the various elements of the DA program with the practical aspects of our BDA approach to doing business, developing a more complete recovery experience using the spiritual Principles, Promises, and Tools available to us?

I can see the flow and connection of the sessions.

I love the structure and the materials. They helped me to truly immerse myself fully into all aspects of the DA and BDA program.

4.5? (counted as 4) — If I hadn't read the paragraph, above, about potentially including support with business planning, it would have been a 5 ... context is everything! (feel free to round this score up 😊)

Amazing.

I don't have much to add here — I think we are operating from a good place and in congruence with this intended outcome.





How did we do on ... strengthening our BDA fellowship through the Steps, one-on-one support, and connection of national and international members through a focused, committed recovery and sharing environment?

The program, the immersion, is very generous in content and so helpful. It naturally makes you want to help others in whatever shape or form we can provide.

I thoroughly loved working with my Step guide. I appreciated the structure of the workshops. It helped me to remain focused and engaged.

Again, I regret not being able to attend the *Fellowship Drop-ins*.

Yes.

Through registrations for this event, we raised \$5,990 (including \$1,080 in donations for scholarships) for outreach to debtors and provision of free conference-approved literature to anyone who asks. How did it feel to contribute to these DA and BDA service efforts?

NOTE: Visit <https://www.bdaworkshops.org/treasury-reports> for treasury reports.

This is great work and very cool to see how we can directly impact those efforts.

I think that is brilliant to be able to raise all this money to benefit other debtors. The program gives so much, it is very important to anybody that wants to get better and work on themselves.

The outreach and free conference-approved literature is an amazing service. It's been one I've referred others to. Thank you!

But feels like a 10 ... thanks to all of you for your dedication and hard work.

I feel blessed to be given the gift of this, it was / is and will be a great foundation for my recovery and how I move in this world.

Wonderful.

Feels good to know that general participation contributes to carrying the message in broader ways.

OUR NUMERICAL SCORES FOR PERSONAL PROGRESS IN DA AND BDA

Did you make progress on the Steps?
Did you complete the Steps?

Rating: 4.9 98% A+

Overall scores for part 3

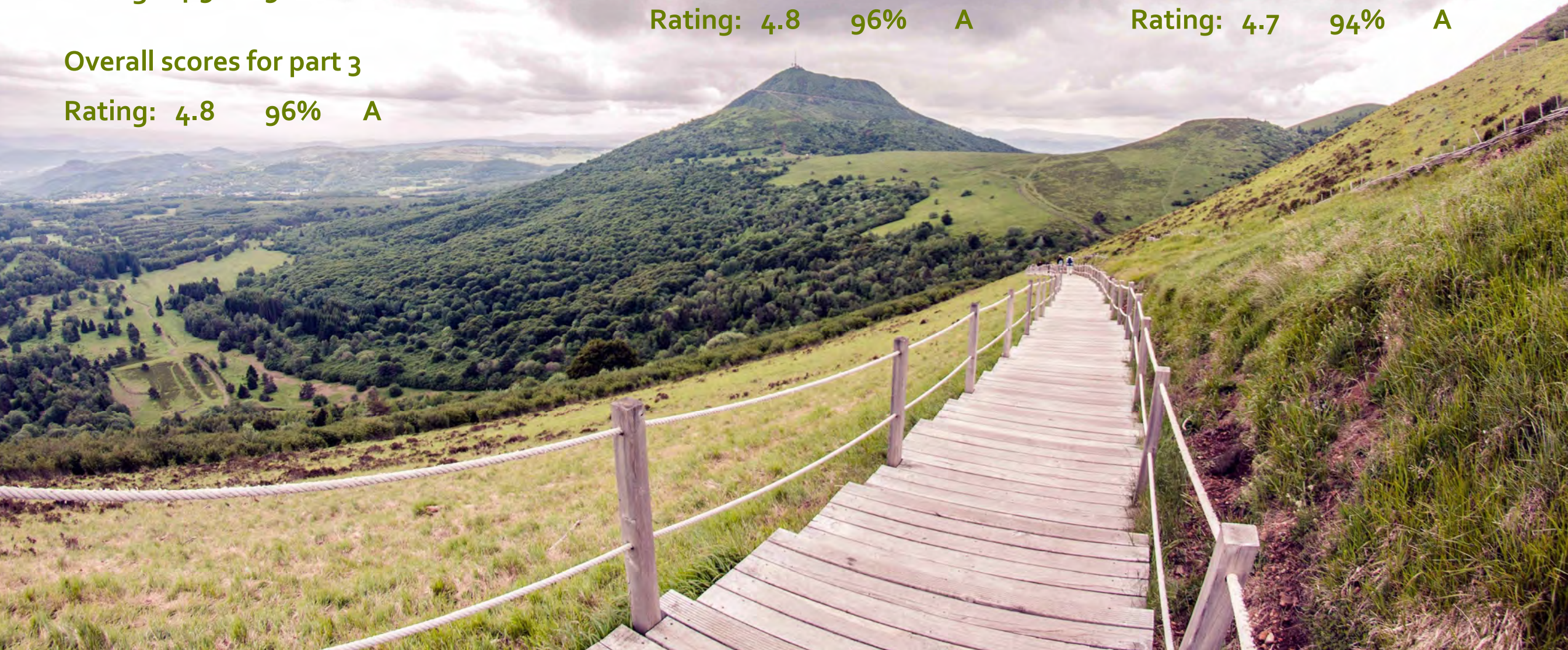
Rating: 4.8 96% A

Did we help prepare you to be a
more confident sponsor or
trusted servant?

Rating: 4.8 96% A

Did we help prepare you to a
business owner or a more
confident business owner?

Rating: 4.7 94% A



Did you make progress on the Steps during this conference cycle? Did you complete the Steps?

Yes, I made progress – I got off track due mainly to myself and may not complete [the Steps] in the timeframe but will complete them.

I am making a lot of progress, I am on Step ten, one Step behind only [at survey time]. Due to circumstances out of my control. I am very optimistic I will complete the Steps. Thanks again to my Step guide.

Yes, I did make progress on the Steps. I did not complete the Steps. I am finishing up the Sevens this week.

Yes, it was very satisfying to do the material through again the second time. In the process of finishing BDA Step 12 with my local sponsor. If / when I do the workshop series again, I'll request a Step guide at the kick-off.

I am behind. I feel a bit stressed about this but from my understanding it's okay. I am not completed but still working through [the Steps]. I have been showing up and so has my Step guide so beautifully. So, it's just the way it goes.

I didn't complete the Steps myself this time around, but I did act as a Step guide for a fellow. I benefit myself so much when I work with someone else.



Did you make progress on the Steps during this conference cycle?

Did you complete the Steps? — continued



I'm very close! Just have some more amends to go through but I am essentially on track. Just need a bit more time to get through the amends and I will likely have completed all 12 steps by the end of December.

Yes, this was my first journey through the Steps in this fellowship.

5 — I completed my Steps technically during this cycle. **[NOTE:** This means that this participant began the Steps in the previous cycle and got as far as Step 10 by June, then completed the Steps by August. The ideal is to complete the Steps in six months, and many do, but we're also living life on life's terms. When folks do need to take an extra month or two to complete their Steps, we encourage them to get started as a Step guide anyway. As long as we're at least a Step ahead of the people we're guiding, we are qualified to guide them.]

NOTE: Please visit www.bdasolvency.org/taking-the-steps. If you want to take the Steps, please ask us to help. We will.

Did this conference help prepare you to be a sponsor or a more confident sponsor? A more confident trusted servant?

Yes, it did.

I am growing into it, too early for me.

Yes, to both. As a sponsor I believe that it is my job to take someone through the Steps and to admit when I don't know the answer. I think the materials and the structure make it simple to carry the message to the next debtor.

On balance, definitely. I feel more solid about my own program (i.e. I have more recovery to offer sponsees).

It has helped me and is building a foundation.

Yes, the conference helped me to be a more confident Step guide and also more confident at general sharing and at being a host / guest speaker.

Absolutely — and not just for this program, but for my other 12-Step program as well. I have a much better and well-rounded understanding of recovery (and what good sponsorship can look like) now.

Not yet still working on it.

Yes.





Did this conference cycle help prepare you to be a business owner or a more confident business owner?

It definitely did.

It showed me a lot of my blind spots, very helpful.

I'm still dipping my toes into the BDA portion of the conference. I think the content is great and know it's been helping me trudge along. Personally, I'm not fully confident in myself but that's a me thing. I find this whole process helpful.

Yes, as above, I feel doing the series through twice has given me spiritual "juice" to apply in my fledgling business.

Yes absolutely.

Yes.

Absolutely — I'll keep this brief but the changes I've noticed over this last 6 months are nothing short of miraculous.

This and other things helped me.

More clarity was received, implementing has begun.

If you could wave a magic wand and make three changes to the conference cycle, what would they be?

Better implementation of rule 62 from AA.
[“Don't take yourself too damn seriously.”]

I like it the way it is.

More diversity and participants.

To have all participants magically prefer the afternoon session so that those of us in weird time zones could have the benefit of the dynamics of a larger early-Sydney-Sunday-morning session.

I don't have input on this at this time.

Adding the option to create a service plan.

Use “bcc” on group emails, so we, as registrants can't see each other's email addresses and click on reply all, which can often lead to dispute. We would still all have each other's email addresses from the contact list.


Perfect attendance for me and everyone, for everyone to complete everything, and serenity for all.

Clear and brief reminders pre workshop each workshop on the communication guidelines (both oral and written / chat) for all involved from the stewards to the newcomers.

If you could wave a magic wand and make three changes to the conference cycle, what would they be? — continued

- I would prefer the Saturday workshops to be 1.5 hours long. [Although we don't recommend it, everyone is welcome to come late and / or leave early if that's their choice.]
- I would prefer an option for the workshops to be earlier in the day on Saturday CST [central time zone] (I know we have PST [pacific time zone] folks – but hey, you said I had a magic wand!)
- I would prefer timekeeping to be stricter for all members of the conference.

[NOTE ON TIMEKEEPING: Each host and guest speaker have at least 15 minutes to share each week, plus up to a 5-minute overage if they need that time to complete their coverage of our scheduled topics. We take all questions during our Q&A periods, as long as hands are raised before our 10-minute period has ended, even if that pushes us over time. And each host and our share shepherd have the “right of decision” to do what they believe is best — within the boundaries of our group conscience — for each workshop and its participants. Our conference leader, co-founder, and the writer of our conference materials can sometimes be a bit of a long sharer. Out of gratitude and reciprocity for his years of service, we don't give him a hard time about those time overages. Please trust our leaders to guide the workshops and see <https://www.bdasolvency.org/about-our-service-structure> for details.]



Can you name three things about the conference cycle that you would not want to see changed?


Covering all the materials we cover and the structure.

1) Materials

2) The structure

3) Can't think of a third

None that I can think of.



Can you name three things about the conference cycle that you would not want to see changed? — continued

1) The comprehensive approach to working through the Steps, Traditions, DA and BDA tools, and the promises over 6 months. Solid frigging gold! ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

2) The Guest Speakers: I've picked up an incredible number of tips — both practical tips and to do with mental attitudes — over the past year from other group members, but especially the guest speakers.

3) Not really under your control, but the mix of participants from various walks of life, stages of recovery, and different parts of the world!

Can you name three things about the conference cycle that you would not want to see changed? — continued

1) The materials — these are first class materials that provide a thorough guide through the Steps, Traditions, tools, and promises. No matter how many times I work through them, I am constantly learning new things. It is such a well thought out and structured program.

2) The level of support offered from the steering committee who work tirelessly to serve the participants and guide them on their path to recovery.

3) *After Party / Fellowship Drop-in* — feeling heard and supported and learning to support others is also a very valuable part of the conference.



Can you name three things about the conference cycle that you would *not want to see changed*? — continued

This is a hard question for me. I don't have definitive opinions on this. I can say that I love the structure that focuses on experience, strength, and hope. I absolutely love it.

I would not change it, it works.

I think everything is good the way it is but what do I know?

The materials primarily, the speaker/host format, and round robin [format for *After Party* and *Fellowship Drop-in*].

Can you name three things about the conference cycle that you would not want to see changed? — continued

1) I'm not sure if all Step guides use the same format as Marc does (1-hour meeting each week at a standing time), but this has been such a rewarding and impactful part of my experience.

2) I think that the host/guest speaker dynamic is great - I get the most out of the conference by hearing those shares.

3) The general structure of focusing on the Steps and completing them in 6 months — this is incredible and such a powerful medium for being immersed in BDA recovery.



Did we focus enough on DA and BDA recovery in business and at work for your needs and wants?

Yes.

I think it helps everybody.

Yes.

A solid yes.

For this I think if I brought more, I would have gotten more out of it. I think the conference is great and parts of it adjust to what I bring as a participant. So, I do think this would be a yes. I just didn't have more to bring in terms of particulars at this time in my journey. That's a me thing though.

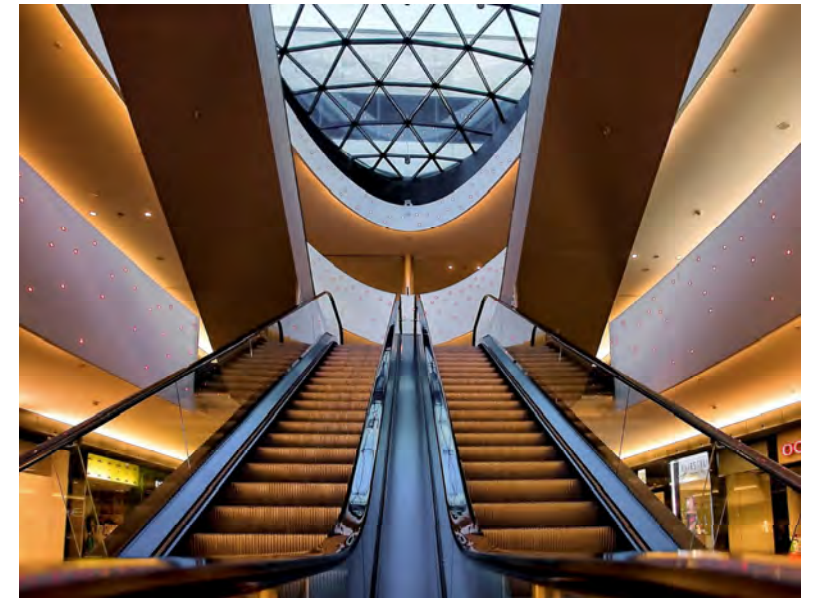
Yes.

Yes.

Yes, absolutely — no concerns here.

Yes.

Yes.



During a previous BDA Conference, we wrote BDA promises together.

Short form of our BDA Promises, submitted to WSCs 2020 and 2021 for consideration by the BDA Committee:

1. We are committed to our recovery from compulsive debting.
2. We are growing spiritually and are unafraid of letting others know about our recovery.
3. We properly fund our personal lives and live within our businesses' means.
4. We are rapidly becoming free of shame.
5. We focus on learning from our experiences and grow to appreciate both positive and negative feedback.
6. We have positive self-esteem.
7. We can identify and define the contributions we make.
8. We see ourselves as equals with everyone we meet through our jobs or businesses.
9. We charge appropriately for our time and services.
10. We are clear about our limits; we set boundaries.
11. We are engaged in work that is fulfilling and rewarding.
12. We know that we are enough.

We have found that it is only through working the Twelve Steps of Debtors Anonymous that lasting solvency, recovery, and serenity may be obtained for our businesses and ourselves. Until we take all Twelve Steps, these promises for business owners and the other promises of DA will likely remain out of our reach. Please take the Steps and join us in the new life and experience described here.

BDA Solvency Immersion Conference

bdasolvency.org

www.bdasolvency.org/sitemap

www.bdasolvency.org/workshop-overview

www.bdasolvency.org/about-after-party

<https://www.solvency.org/about-fellowship-drop-in>

<https://www.bdasolvency.org/about-our-service-structure>

<https://www.bdasolvency.org/all-da-members-are-welcome-here>

<https://www.bdasolvency.org/lets-leave-outside-issues-out>

www.bdasolvency.org/taking-the-steps

<https://www.bdasolvency.org/tool-tips-for-da-and-bda>

www.bdasolvency.org/contact

Many more pages and resources are available in the registrants-only, password-protected area of our website. Please register and join us!

BDA Solvency Immersion Conference

— Next Cycle
Starting Soon —
Saturdays, January
through June 2024
Visit bdasolvency.org
for all the details.

