

Speaker Guidelines

CPA Telephone Intergroup Speaker Meeting

(These Guidelines are for the speaker at the monthly Speaker Meeting hosted by the Telephone Meetings Intergroup and are intended for talks within CPA. Other CPA groups may adopt or modify these Guidelines to suit their needs. Guidelines for carrying the CPA message outside of CPA (Public Information) may be obtained elsewhere.

Sharing **Experience, Strength and Hope** (or What it Was Like, What Happened, and What it's Like Now)

Thank you for agreeing to be a speaker for our phone meeting!

Saturday Night Telephone Speaker is a share of up to *25 minutes* followed by *2-minute shares*. You may ask the meeting timer to give you a heads-up at any interval. (For example, many speakers like to know when five minutes are left so they can wrap up.) When finished, you may suggest a topic if you wish, but since member shares are short, a topic is often not necessary.

Here are some guidelines we hope will be helpful:

- 1) **Experience: What it Was Like** – Share how chronic pain or illness affected your life, what was particularly difficult about being sick/in pain. As a speaker, you have some freedom to talk about your specific illness and/or pain if you wish. However, remember that the spirit of the Traditions suggests we avoid mentioning specific doctors, therapies, or medications (if necessary, you may use general categories, such as steroids, pain medication, antidepressants, etc., but not name brands). Members enjoy identifying with other members' experience, but be careful not to over-focus on the problem with a long "pain-a-log". Ideally, keep this to a third of your share or less. You might even wish to set a timer or ask the timer for a reminder at 7 or 8 minutes. Also, remember that though religion may be part of our story, we do not name specific religions in order to avoid controversy.
- 2) **Strength: What Happened** – What brought you to CPA? How did you feel about it initially? How did you work the Program? What role do the Steps and your Higher Power play in your life? What tools work best for you (meetings, literature, sponsorship, etc.)?
- 3) **Hope: What it's Like Now** – How is your life different since coming to CPA? What areas of your life have been affected? What practices help you stay sane? How do you help others? How has your "relationship" with pain or illness changed? Do you have hopes for your future?

The questions above are just examples. Each speaker will find their own way of sharing from their hearts. Thank you for sharing yours with us!