



# Doing Business Without Debting

A monthly publication of BDA Intergroup Startup Project ([bdaintergroup.org](http://bdaintergroup.org))

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## Birth of the BDA Intergroup — “God said ‘not yet’ ...”

In April 2020, I heard from a fellow BDA member, frustrated with how difficult it is to get to know each other and to support one another in BDA, especially in terms of sponsorship and PRGS.

“You know,” my friend said, “maybe it's just time for us to break off and go out on our own.” My reply: “Absolutely not. It would take us 10 years just to get back where we are now.” Right?!

We would have to re-write the foundations of DA. We would have to start over. We would never get anything done, related to deepening our own solvency and recovery; to sharing our experience, strength, and hope with newcomers; and to carrying the message to the debtors and business owners we haven't met yet. We would do nothing except fight our way through creation of this new “thing,” reinventing the wheel that has already been so well-invented by DA. And too many of our members LOVE to fight!

Then both of us, after having a good laugh, talked about how we could operate from within the existing DA service structure. We could have a thriving autonomous group conscience, through the love of our collective Higher Power, that would allow us to serve our BDA groups and members worldwide. We could slowly and deliberately make decisions, have our own website, do our own Public Information (PI) and outreach, and grow the distinct but not separate BDA part of DA within the larger organization, not outside of it.

This new BDA endeavor would have the potential to shift and support the growth of BDA recovery for everyone who wants it, not just for DA members who own businesses, but for everyone with a desire to stop incurring new unsecured debt who must earn a living. But it turns out we could not create a BDA service group within the service structure either, not yet, anyway ... not without huge disruptions to both personal and shared recovery, not without a lot of fighting, politicking, power struggles, exaggeration, mendacity, bullying, and secrets. August 2020 has been a long, long month ... and we had started out so well ... so engaged and on track ...

We held a kickoff meeting in mid-May 2020 and decided to begin creation of our new BDA Intergroup, with our first real business meeting six weeks later in late June. During our June 2020 business meeting, we adopted our proposed *BDA Intergroup Service Handbook*, excluding spending plans, via a unanimous formal vote and elected our first BDA Intergroup officers and coordinators.

During our July 2020 business meeting, we approved the plan and layout presented by our Newsletter Coordinator, including giving encouragement to move forward with our first issue (the newsletter you're reading now) to be published in September; unanimously

approved our BDA Intergroup and PI spending plans; and discussed our Chair attending WSC, in-reach to BDA groups and members, and our interrelationship with other Intergroups, especially the DA Telephone Intergroup.

In the week before our August 2020 business meeting, four of six elected trusted servants resigned, leaving us with only two. Based on a 2/3 resignation rate in just one week, more passive people would have thrown their hands in the air and quit. Not us. We simply shrugged and said to one another:

**“God said ‘not yet’ ...”**

The two of us remaining elected trusted servants discussed and proposed a new approach to service for this BDA work group going forward, with a necessary renaming, reshaping, and reorganization to the:

**“BDA Intergroup Startup Project”**

To support this proposed new approach to service, we presented a project document, a “letter of agreement” — to replace the previously approved *BDA Intergroup Service Handbook* — and approved the new document. The bottom line is that we have regrouped, not as an existing Intergroup, but as a startup project to spend the next 16 months working together with a committed mission to “create and develop a spiritual service environment in which BDA and its members can grow and thrive.”

To that end, we have flattened out our org chart, flipped a finger at “Robert's Rules,” and rid ourselves of every position and formality we deemed unnecessary, that is: most of them. We have created as friendly and functional an environment for contributing our time and energy, and your time and energy, in pursuit of our own recovery by selflessly serving other debtors and business owners, as it is possible to create.

We are no longer a committee; we are an active and action-based work group, and this is going to be work. If you want to DO service, especially outreach, please join us. If you feel a spiritual need to “give to others what so generously has been given to us” (from “Service” in the DA Tools), please join us. If you are at least 90 days solvent and ready to begin accepting promise 11 — “Honesty will guide our actions toward a rich life filled with meaning and purpose.” — please join us.

Our next business meeting will be on Sunday, September 27th — healthy spiritually-centered help wanted! Join us if you can. See [bdaintergroup.org](http://bdaintergroup.org) for times and conference call details.

— Bob A, Seattle by way of SF and Portland



## Experience

### Years of Solvency

*Happiest of anniversaries to Bob A, in Seattle, on six years of solvency, which started on August 8, 2014. Yay, God!*

*Have a solvency anniversary coming up? <https://www.bdaintergroup.org/post/an-invitation-to-celebrate> for details.*

### Experience of a Paradox

*Beginning Step Nine filled me with fear that the many, many amends I needed to make would forever deplete my resources, especially money, time, and energy. As I made those amends over several years, I found the opposite to be true. I had more material resources and a growing spaciousness in my heart and spirit!*

*I could now ask for, listen to, and accept help from my BDA team and sponsor. I could act in the best interest of my business. No more compulsive, cavalier actions in the name of creativity for me. As I healed from my past — in making amends — I had complete capacity to practice the Principles and Tools of DA and BDA. My psyche had grown and so had my share of Higher Power's generosity. I am blessed. — Ingrid S, Bronx, NY*

## Strength

### Loving the Competition

*My competition feeds my drive to deliver the best possible services to my clients at a competitive price. Clearly defining what sets my business apart from my competitors informs my selling proposition. Thanks to my competition I know exactly why a client would choose my business over theirs, and I know exactly who my customer is versus someone else's customer.*

*I used to have great fear of failure, especially when providing a competing bid or contract. I finally realized it was often a lack of preparedness that scared me. When I recognized my place in the marketplace and the unique proposition I had to offer, fear no longer plagued me.*

*Finally, if we were the only "player in the game," we could not service all the clients with a need. Other businesses like ours are a great resource for us when we cannot accommodate high demand, and mutual referrals have made everyone's businesses stronger and more profitable. I love my competition!*

*— Nancy G, San Ramon, CA*

## Hope

### Blessed with a Vision

*My fledgling business grows organically one day at a time. I look back to see that my actions in recovery have opened doors to a new, solid basis for my business.*

*I have been called toward a form of ministry combining art and the spirit. My Higher Power was present as this vision and business began to emerge, but my compulsive disease had me think in distorted ways. I received divine guidance toward my vision, but my disease too often turned workable ideas into unworkable strategies. Other times I had excellent plans, but I rarely took actions.*

*In BDA recovery, with ongoing guidance from my sponsor and the BDA Tools, my spirit began to create viable tactics that would make my vision come to life. I was no longer trapped in corrupted views around money and debt. As I continued to progress, new circumstances arose in service to my vision. Sharing obstacles with my sponsor and PRG team, I maintained a committed desire and willingness to be solvent and in line with my vision. I was no longer derailed by my compulsive thinking or debting.*

*— Ingrid S, Bronx, NY*

## Doing BDA Outreach in a Very Real Way

Our BDA Intergroup website is our first and biggest ongoing outreach project, created not only to serve fellow BDA members and their groups, but also to do outreach to still suffering debtors and business owners in a very real way. For now, we will let the website speak for itself. Instead I will share here about our BDA Intergroup Project Vision, found on our "About BDA" page at [bdaintergroup.org](http://bdaintergroup.org): "We are a peaceful, collaborative, high-functioning service team, energizing each other and fueling each other's recovery and participation. We are focused on the recovering debtor and business owner, plus those still-suffering, both inside and outside our DA and BDA rooms, and are enjoying great diversity, including ages, genders, cultures, and nationalities. We have fun in BDA service!"

To us, the 3rd Tradition says "we won't kick you out" while a stated desire for diversity says "we welcome you, please come in." Completely different messages: we prefer the latter. None of the items listed — ages, genders, cultures, and nationalities — are outside issues, nor is anyone arguing about them. These are not "outside causes" to avoid because we might end up on the wrong side of an argument. They apply to every single one of us and overcoming lack of diversity in these areas would do much to move us — BDA and DA — forward as a fellowship. If we do this successfully, maybe we could then tackle some of the tougher diversity issues mentioned in the text of DA's 3rd Tradition chapter.

Here is our thinking on these four human characteristics: We need more young members, yet we do not want to lose our older members. We do not have enough men in the fellowship to create a balance and, all too often, the female majority demands that the male minority act against their natures, refusing to accept their strengths while guarding against their weaknesses. Culture is such a broad term that we cannot even begin to define what we mean when we use it, but we do know cultural diversity when we see it. We do know, too, that we want to invite people from every culture on earth and all their friends and families, but we're going to have to make room for them. And we are going to have to reach out and invite them in. Lastly, we are, by design, a global BDA work group, welcoming BDA members from every nation to join us.

Ages, genders, cultures, and nationalities are fine things for our Intergroup project vision and for our discussions at business meetings, especially when we talk about reaching our fellow debtors and business owners across a broad spectrum of the more than seven billion humans on this planet. Our website is our first attempt at inviting every compulsive debtor and business owner to join us in BDA now from anywhere in the world.

Please use the contact form at <https://www.bdaintergroup.org/contact-and-links> to let us know if you would like to join as either a coordinator or a volunteer. We are especially searching for our first-ever Public Information (PI) Coordinators; we need four. We're also looking for coordinators to guide us in our International, Special Events, Tech, and Web efforts. And there are sure to be many more coordinators to begin service offerings we haven't thought of yet. We look forward to meeting you and to expanding our spiritual and creative adventure together!

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