

Meeting report for Zoom and Pathways training, April 2, 2020

Hosted by: Maungakiekie Toastmasters

Session led by:

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The meeting was divided into two sections, one to discuss Zoom and one to look at Pathways. As expected, both sessions raised as many questions as they answered, highlighting that we are all learning.

This report is in lieu of a recording because of the learning from point (1) below.

Points raised by the Zoom section

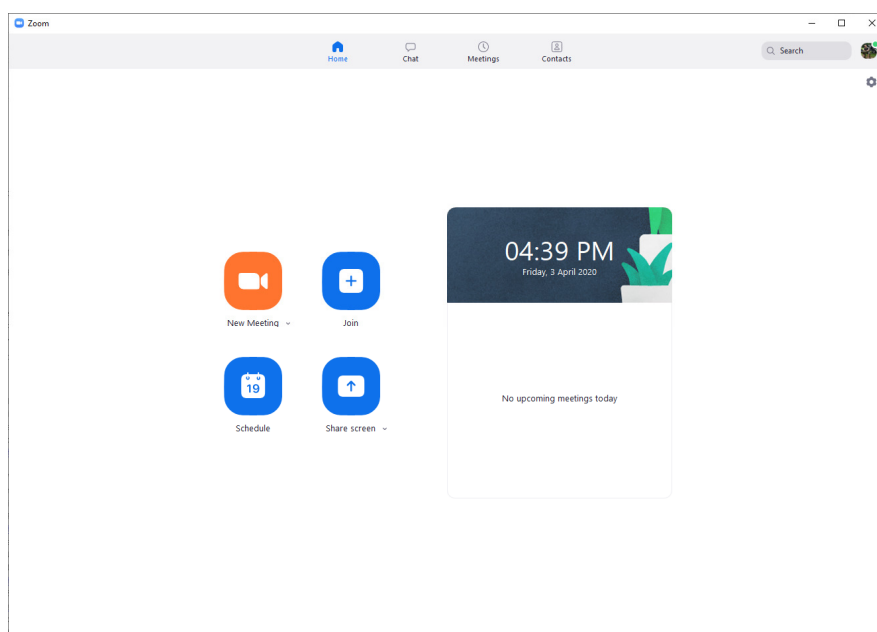
1. If you want to record a meeting, log in before you join it! A meeting can only be recorded by its host, or someone the host allows to record, and this means you need to set up an account to allow you to be a host. A “Basic” account is free; to set one up, go to zoom.us and click “Sign Up For Free”. You’ll find tutorials on recording sessions, among other basics, at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/201137166>

2. “When you set up a meeting, how do you invite participants?” is a great question for this meeting. There are two ways to issue invitations – before and during the meeting. “Before” is the preferable way to do this.

First, view the Zoom installation tutorial at

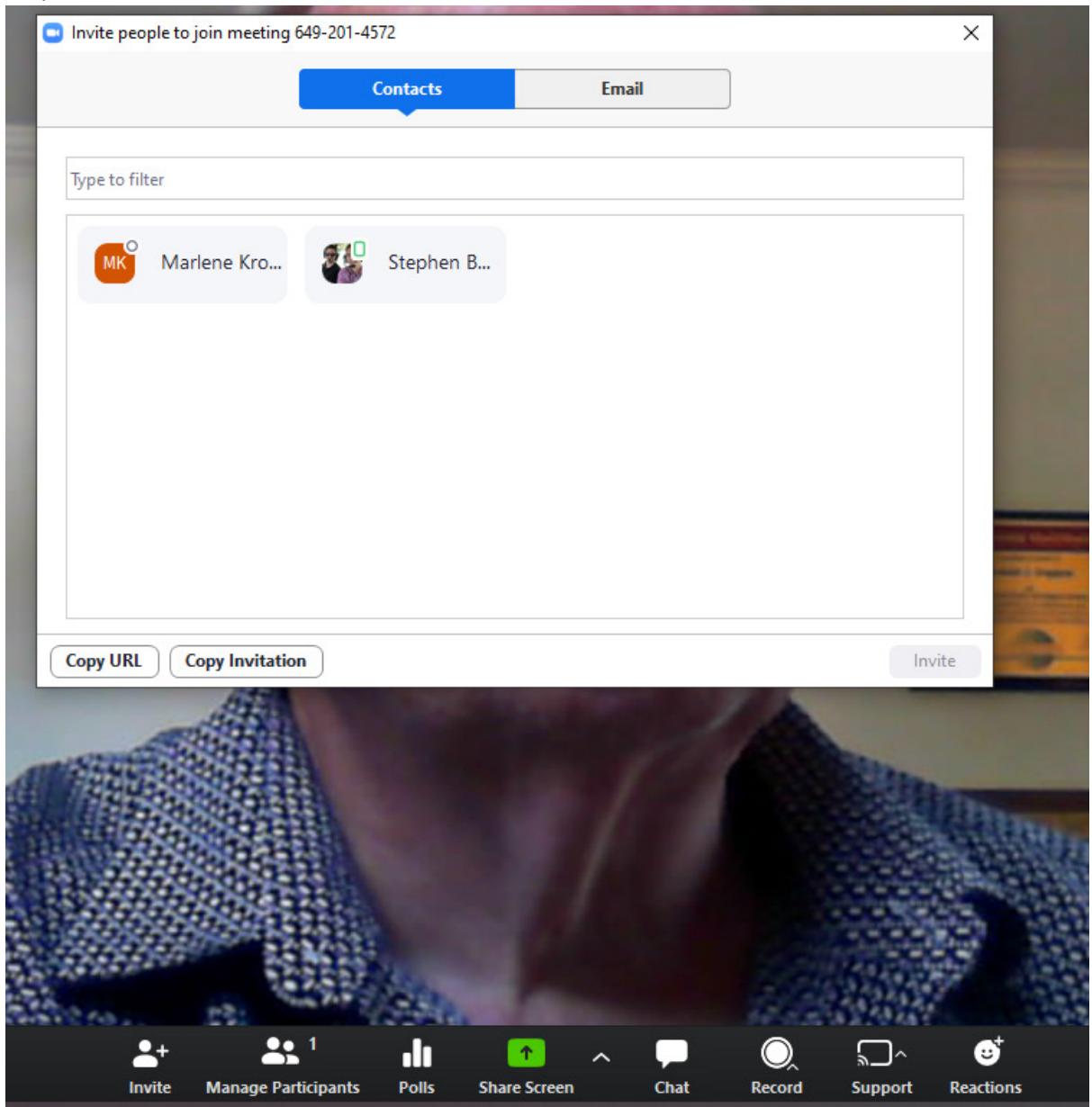
<https://d112tm.org.nz/pathways-champions-programme/help-with-zoom/>

and make sure you know how to get to Zoom’s home screen

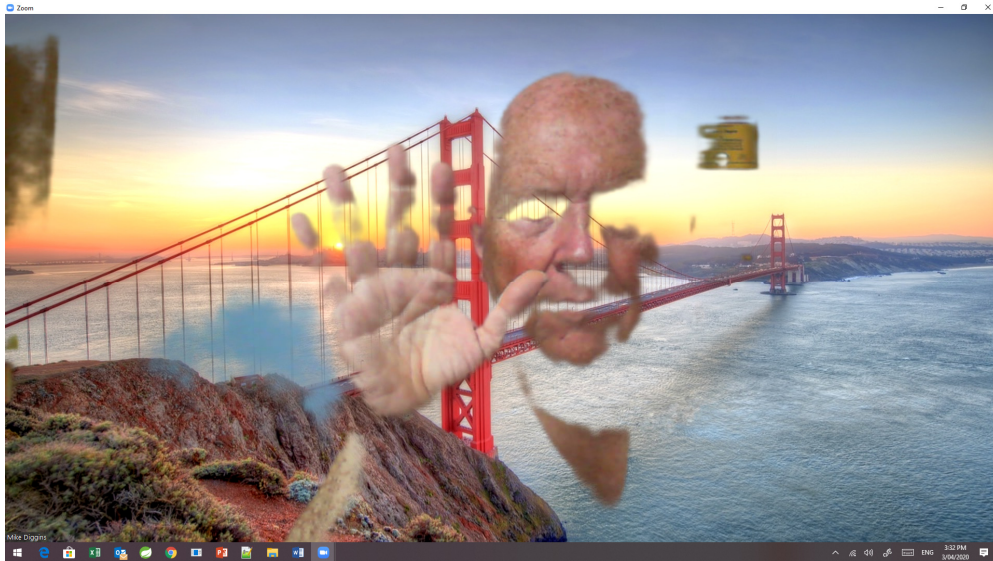


Click the “Schedule” button and set up a meeting; this generates an email in your default email program, which you can send out to anyone you want to invite.

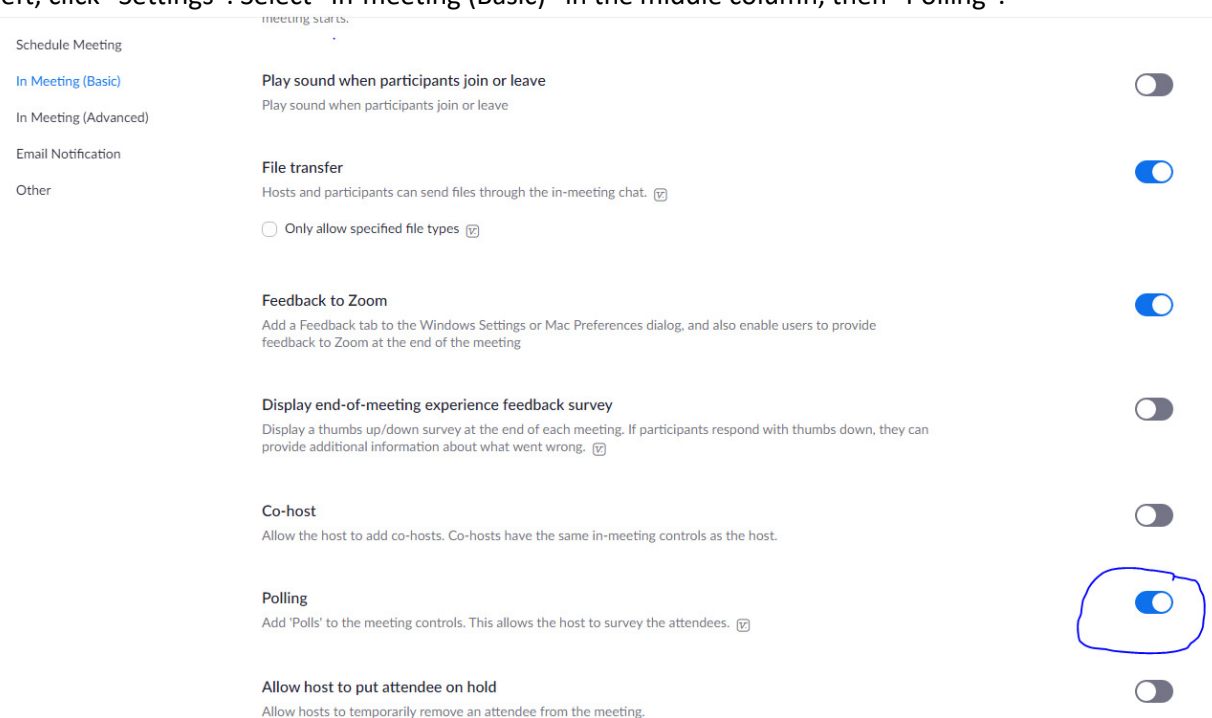
If you miss someone, use the “Invite” button on the Zoom toolbar and either send to those on your contacts, or via email as above.



3. Using virtual backgrounds was raised by several and tried by most. Zoom has an excellent three minute tutorial about what you need to know about setting these up, at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/210707503-Virtual-Background> Scroll down for a list of requirements, with or without a “green screen” – plus a couple of screen suppliers. The key is making sure the background is a uniform colour and has good contrast with the foreground; in the picture below, the shirt I have on is a similar colour to the back wall, so is invisible. No matter how well the subject in the foreground is lit, the result will be as below. Zoom also tells me that I do not have enough machine resources to make a background work without a “green screen” – a good incentive to tidy up the office.



4. Voting in meetings was mentioned and this is a good example of why its important to get to know Zoom’s settings menus. First, go to zoom.us, log in and, on the “Personal” menu at the left, click “Settings”. Select “In-meeting (Basic)” in the middle column, then “Polling”.



When you start the meeting as host, you now see an additional “Polls” item. This has only been recently introduced to meetings from webinars; there is a tutorial on the subject at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-Meetings>

5. The possibility of remote support was also raised. While there are applications such as AnyDesk that allow this, it is also possible to do this over a Zoom link. Again, this needs to be turned on in Settings under Remote Control (participant shares their screen and host can work with the shared application) or Remote Support. The first option is probably the most useful, the tutorial for which is at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362673-Request-or-Give-Remote-Control>

Demonstrating most of these points is outside the scope of a 30 minute meeting; the key point for meeting hosts is to know what you can do that is turned off by default.

Points Raised by the Pathways Section

While the discussion raised few explicit questions, a number of common themes were clear:

1. When members say that Pathways is not easy to use, very often they are referring to either where you go to start a process or something during that process that is obscure. A good example is the storage of evaluation forms. There are no rules for this, members can do as they wish, but if they wish to use their Pathways document library, you have to remember to change the option to “e-Portfolio” after clicking the “My Feedback” tile. If they only do this every few months, they will forget.
The theme that emerged here was that members need to ask if they are not sure. During the training of Pathways Guides in 2017, there was a master list of such questions and answers to them stressed the importance of “talking with your mentor”. This is a good chance to introduce the Pathways Champions Programme on the D112 website – those who appear on the list of Champions have the role of making sure that all Toastmasters know where to find such answers.
2. Its all very well to get the official line from TI, but what about the unofficial one?
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/pathwaysdiscussionforum/>
is just that, a large discussion group where you can go to get your questions about Pathways answered, answer some yourself, and help everyone learn. There may be other groups, but this is where those involved with the LinkedIn members’ group a while back have gone.
Good example of a current thread – issues with level completion awards where the person awarded is in more than one club.
This was also an opportunity to present some of the content on the District 112 Pathways resources page, which is on the menu under Pathways. This contains links to the summary prepared by District 4, which ties much of the information on Pathways together in a format that is easy to follow – and a blog of the experiences of two members who have been with Pathways from the start.
3. There was a “Round Robin” discussion on which projects everyone was looking forward to doing, which showed that reading ahead was a very good idea. Not least, this is so you can help members who haven’t chosen a path yet to do so, because its becoming clear that choosing your first path is best done alongside your mentor.
4. Finally, it is becoming clear that Pathways has, and will continue to, cost us a large number of very experienced members. There seems to be two groups of experienced Toastmasters – those who have worked out why Pathways is a good idea for them, and those who have yet to figure that out. For those members who were around in 2006, we had exactly the same challenge as with the Competent Leader manual – but that didn’t threaten the entire educational program.
In short, the better we can express why we became engaged with Pathways, the better chance we have in persuading others to do the same.

Next Online Meeting

At this stage, the only certainties are that there will be one – and it will be advertised on the D112 website and in the District Calendar. The date is likely to be the third or fourth week of April (before the D112 virtual conference)