



ComLine

Adult Children of Alcoholics
Experience, Strength & Hope

Volume 26, Number 13

December 2010

ACA Tradition Twelve

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

“Anonymity underlined by humility is the bedrock of ACA principles. Anonymity is a spiritual principle that anchors not only the Twelve Traditions, but also the Twelve Steps. Each of the Twelve Steps has an inherent element of anonymity, which diminishes our egos and places God in the center of our lives...

But what is anonymity more specifically? For some ACA members, anonymity is merely stating their first name at ACA meetings to protect their identity. Many ACA members fear repercussions from family members. They fear that family members might find out the person is attending ACA and identifying the parents as dysfunctional. Dysfunctional parents still in denial can act poorly if they find out that a grown child has identified with ACA. Anonymity serves these ACA members well...

Anonymity also means that we do not talk about someone else's story or sharing that occurs during our ACA meetings or events. What is said at meetings stays at meetings... We protect personal anonymity at all costs to keep our meetings safe. By keeping ACA safe, we strengthen our group unity, and we attract new members who are an important life source for the fellowship...

There is a second part of Tradition Twelve, which gives us specific direction in practicing the spiritual foundation that anonymity brings. The Tradition reminds us to place principles before personalities.

ACA is program of people, and therefore a program of diverse personalities. Our membership is made up of people in varying degrees of codependence, addiction, and PTSD recovery. Some of our members are new and still hurting from growing up in a dysfunctional home. Others have worked through some of the effects of being raised in a dysfunctional setting. There will be conflicts, hurt feelings, and differences of opinion in ACA... However, anonymity is there ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. And it works... Held up against anonymity, our perceived wrongs, gossip, and pettiness hold no light. When we place principles before personalities, we change as people, and we honor ACA.”

Excerpts from pages 550 to 554 of the ACA Fellowship Text

About ACA

Adult Children of Alcoholics is an anonymous Twelve Step, Twelve Tradition program of women and men who grew up in an environment of addictiveness (alcohol or other substances) or in otherwise dysfunctional homes. Our willingness and resiliency bring us together.

We share our experience, strength, and hope to validate our experience as well as give some hope to the new member. We take positive action in our lives today. By practicing the Twelve Steps, focusing on “The Solution”, and accepting a loving Higher Power of our own understanding, we find freedom from the past and a way to improve our lives.

For more information, please visit:
www.adultchildren.org

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ComLine is published thirteen times per year by ACA's World Service Organization (WSO). ComLine is intended as a communication line from WSO to the fellowship of ACA around the world, and as a forum for the fellowship to share their experience, strength, and hope in recovery. The opinions expressed are those of the individual writing the article and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the ACA fellowship or WSO.

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ACA WSO, Inc., PO Box 3216, Torrance, CA 90510.

The Twelve Traditions of Adult Children of Alcoholics

“While the Twelve Steps address recovery for the individual, the Twelve Traditions promote group unity and stability. The Traditions guarantee that we will always have a meeting to attend and that the meeting will focus on recovery from the effects of family dysfunction.

The Traditions allow our groups and service structure to remain focused on the primary purpose of carrying the ACA message to the adult child who still suffers.”

From the ACA Fellowship Text, pg. 346

What is ACA WSO?

Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization, Inc. is an organization of volunteer members elected to serve in the capacity of corporate trustees according to the laws of the State of California, U.S.A.

WSO provides a sense of common purpose, stability, and continuity for meetings, Intergroups, and Regions. By serving as a central point of group communication, the WSO encourages unity and similarity among ACA meetings. ACA WSO coordinates meeting information worldwide. It is one place where ACA groups and the general public can find information, literature, and locations of meetings.

The mission, the singleness of purpose, of WSO is to carry the message of recovery to all who suffer from being raised in an alcoholic or other dysfunctional environment.

Contacting Your ACA WSO

Have questions regarding:

Local Meetings...

New Meetings...

ACA Events...

ACA Literature...

Fellowship Text and Workbook orders...

Hospitals and Institutions support...

ACA Outreach...

or Public Information?

Just go to www.adultchildren.org, and select “Contact WSO” from the options menu. Comments and requests submitted by this web form will then be routed to the appropriate ACA WSO committee or board member for response.

You can also write to us at:

ACA WSO, PO Box 3216, Torrance, CA, 90510, USA
(Please do not send Express Mail)

We look forward to hearing from you!

Each 2010 edition of the ComLine will feature one of the ACA Traditions:

January

Tradition One- Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on ACA unity.

February

Tradition Two- For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority— a loving God as expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.

March

Tradition Three- The only requirement for membership in ACA is a desire to recover from the effects of growing up in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional family.

April

Tradition Four- Each group is autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or ACA as a whole. We cooperate with all other Twelve Step programs.

May

Tradition Five- Each group has but one primary purpose— to carry its message to the adult child who still suffers.

June

Tradition Six- An ACA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the ACA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

July

Tradition Seven- Every ACA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

August

Tradition Eight- Adult Children of Alcoholics should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

September

Tradition Nine- ACA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

October

Tradition Ten- Adult Children of Alcoholics has no opinion on outside issues; hence the ACA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

November

Tradition Eleven- Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, and films.

December

Tradition Twelve- Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Anonymity

Eileen W.

In thinking back about this topic, anonymity had more than one gift for me. First, it made it safe for me to be in recovery. The alcoholics in my life wouldn't know where I was going and what I was doing. But the other safety factor was for my personal identity. All I needed to share was my first name. I didn't have to share my family life or my work experience, so the other people in the meetings couldn't know about my sense of worthlessness.

In the beginning I set everyone else up on a pedestal. Some people were so high up on the pedestal that I never dared to talk with them. But I did learn from them and all the others who shared their stories. The time came when one day I realized that I had just spoken with one of the "elevated" women

without remembering that I wasn't worthy. And it had seemed just fine with her to talk to me. And I got it. Somewhere along the way, I had grown and the pedestal had shrunk. We were now all on the same plane.

Anonymity had kept me safe until I got the message from my Higher Power that I was okay. He has created all of us as individuals. I didn't have to be like my brother to curry my Mother's favor. My assignment from God was to become myself. And that was what I was learning how to do in recovery...I was getting acquainted with the true self God made here in me, and I was acting on it. ACA is not only a program of recovery, it's a program of discovery!

More Tradition Twelve Insight...

"Anonymity reminds me to place ACA principles before personalities. To me, some of the principles are surrender, hope, acceptance, courage, forgiveness, and humility from the Steps and unity, compassion, autonomy, and inclusiveness from the Traditions. These principles are underlined by anonymity. My relationships with others in meetings, and even in the work place, go smoother when I keep my personality focused but compassionate through Tradition Twelve principles. I am able to let these principles rise above my wants and personal motives.

I consciously review these principles during the business meeting or a group conscience discussion. They are a measuring stick that help me gauge what I will say. I often ask myself a question before I speak, especially if my Inner Child is getting restless and wants to blurt out something. I ask: 'Will what I say promote unity and clarity, or am I using my personality to control or manipulate others? Do I want to do the most good for the most people, or do I want to help only a few or just myself?'

When I can ask myself these questions, I feel better about what I am doing. I can listen to others without discounting what they say, but I can also state my own opinion."- ACA Fellowship Text, pg. 549

***"A quick thought on anonymity.* A fellow I was dating once sent someone I did not know to a couple of my meetings. He was just enough of a cad to tell me about it later. I can't tell you how unsafe meetings felt for a long time after that. We all need meetings to be safe from those who would use our struggles against us.**

That's why anonymity is the foundation of our trust in the process of recovery." – Marilyn D.

Courage to Trust

Eileen W.

There was no hope for me when I began recovery. My life seemed full of testimony from God that I was a worthless human being and should never have been born. I overheard my Mother one time asking my Dad if there wasn't some boarding school they could send me to, to get me out of the house for good. Then I went out and did the only thing my Mother ever approved of...I married a man who treated me the same way she did. The rejection was the same in both relationships. She kept me because a Mother has to; he kept me for my caretaking.

It wasn't until I got into recovery and worked the first three Steps that hope finally entered into my life. Turning my life and my will over to the care of God was the most difficult thing I had ever done up to that point in my life. God had already given me both my Mother and a husband I didn't know was an alcoholic; then He had taken away my beloved older son in a hang glider accident when he was just 17 years old. I had no idea what I had done to deserve his death when I was trying so hard to be good. How could I willingly turn my life and my will over to the care of Someone like that?

But I did. And then I ducked, waiting to see what

would ensue. Nothing happened. So, I got up off my knees and started to go about my business as usual. Nothing out of the ordinary happened for about two weeks. Then one Sunday, I got dressed in my heels and hose and went out to my car to go to church. The battery in the car was dead. But here was the gift. Instead of looking up to the heavens with a "Why are You doing this to me?!", I looked up with a smile and said, "I see You have a challenge here for me today!"

That Sunday turned out to be one of the most fun days of my life. And hope played a huge part in it. I hoped I would get God's help in solving the several problems that came up that day as a result of my dead battery...and I did. Every time I asked for it, I got a thought that was an answer to a question. Each "What do I do now?" resulted in some positive action to take, including finding a garage open on Sunday morning where I could get a new battery. Some other guy got towed in while I was there, and he was in a complete rage about his tire blowing up and having to be there.

But I was grateful. God had taken care of me because of the hope I had in Him.

The ComLine Needs You

Would you like to share about one of the ACA Traditions? Are you willing to share your experience, strength, or hope in ACA recovery? Want to tell the fellowship about what's going on with ACA in your region? Just send us an article!

ComLine Guidelines

Articles may be submitted for publication by mailing them to ComLine, PO Box 3216, Torrance, CA 90510, or by submitting them electronically through the web form found at www.adultchildren.org. Articles which are not used will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Articles will be selected for publication at the discretion of the editorial staff. Articles which might violate the Twelve Steps or the Twelve Traditions of ACA will not be printed. Profanity, related euphemisms, personal attacks on others, and libelous statements will not be used. Authors will be listed with a first name and last initial only, even if it's a pseudonym.

ComLine Subscriptions

ComLine is mailed to subscribers and to 7th Tradition supporters of ACA WSO. For those subscribing to receive the ComLine via postal mail, we request a donation to offset our cost of printing and postage. Rates shown are in U.S. Dollars:

Inside the US:	\$16.00/ year
Canada:	\$19.25/ year (USD)
International:	\$24.00/ year (USD)

To subscribe, please send your mailing information and donation to: ACA WSO, PO Box 3216, Torrance, CA 90510. Subscriptions can also be processed online at: www.acawso.com/wsobook/literature.php

ComLine Archive

ComLine editions published since 2004 are available to read or download, and new issues are posted each month. Just go to www.adultchildren.org and select "ComLine" from the options menu.

The ACA Promises

1. We will discover our real identities by loving and accepting ourselves.
2. Our self-esteem will increase as we give ourselves approval on a daily basis.
3. Fear of authority figures and the need to “people-please” will leave us.
 4. Our ability to share intimacy will grow inside us.
5. As we face our abandonment issues, we will be attracted by strengths and become more tolerant of weaknesses.
 6. We will enjoy feeling stable, peaceful, and financially secure.
 7. We will learn how to play and have fun in our lives.
8. We will choose to love people who can love and be responsible for themselves.
 9. Healthy boundaries and limits will become easier for us to set.
 10. Fears of failure and success will leave us, as we intuitively make healthier choices.
11. With help from our ACA support group, we will slowly release our dysfunctional behaviors.
12. Gradually, with our Higher Power’s help, we will learn to expect the best and get it.

Hope Precedes Action

Leo D.

I have a friend who says that hope is a futile concept – what really matters and keeps us going is reality, our daily experiences in life. I myself have struggled with the idea of hope. After all, I had hoped and prayed for a long time and nothing ever changed: the alcoholic in my life did not stop drinking and our relationship did not succeed; the new job and new home did not materialize; I still struggled with my undesirable behaviors. I wondered how *hope* could be of any benefit at all.

Hope is still a paradox for me. If it doesn’t exist in my life, I can find myself feeling helpless and without any power over any situation. In those times of hopelessness, I can go back into my victim role. I can shut down all feeling and emotion and become a rock, undisturbed by the crashing water against my soul. However, if I make hope a “goal”, the only inspiration to keep me going, then I can feel cheated and abandoned when things do not materialize as I had hoped they would. Neither one of these approaches serves my recovery.

I try to remember that hope can be a tool. It can help, but not solve, all of my problems. Hope is not a magic wand. Instead, hope is a vision of how things can be, an idea that what is happening in my life right now is bound to change, and unlike when I was a child, I can hope that the newness that will enter my life is going to be good for me.

I still use reality to check my hopes and my vision. Reality may require some adjustments of my vision, and I must be open to those changes, too. But using only reality to guide me strips me of the spiritual connection that I need and that I am developing– the connection with my soul.

Being afraid of hope makes me a child again, living in a world of giants that, regardless of what I do, will always have power over me. When I embrace hope as a friend and ally, I can start seeing those giants for what they have always been: shadows cast by people as common as I am, but that I can only truly see when enough light has emerged. This light, this hope, exists only in my connection to my Higher Power.

Seventh Tradition Contributions– October 2010

“The fund flow model of ACA is based on a 60/40 disbursement. After a group meets its monthly expenses and sets aside money for a prudent reserve, 60 percent of what is left over is usually sent to the local Intergroup and 40 percent is sent to WSO.

A prudent reserve usually is the amount that equals one to two month’s worth of meeting expenses. Meeting expenses would include rent, utilities, and other group expenses.”

** Please note that Seventh Tradition contributions mailed to ACA WSO take approximately 3 months to appear in this ComLine report.*

CA218, San Francisco, CA	300.00
NY038, New York, NY	200.00
CA510, Pasadena, CA	150.00
OK022, Oklahoma, City	110.00
Anonymous, Schaumburg, IL	100.00
OK001, Tulsa, OK	100.00
CA717, Los Angeles, CA	75.00
CA939, Mission Viejo, CA	75.00
VT001, Cherry Plain, NY	75.00
CA682, Palo Alto, CA	60.00
CA829, La Mesa, CA	60.00
Anonymous, Leland, MS	50.00
CT076, Manchester, CT	50.00
HI013, Keaau, HI	50.00
WI061, Oshkosh, WI	43.00
PA083, Oaks, PA	30.00
Anonymous, Estes Park, CO	25.00
Anonymous, Johnson City, TN	25.00
Anonymous, Mission Viejo, CA	25.00
MA035, West Roxbury, MA	25.00
MD024, Elkridge, MD	25.00
MN115, 121, Edina, MN	25.00
IL195, Forest Park, IL	24.00
CA477, Los Altos, CA	20.00
VT004, Battleboro, VT	20.00
AK018, Fairbanks, AK	17.00
TEL008, Washington, PA	15.00
MA036, Shrewsbury, MA	10.00
Total 7th Tradition	1,784.00



The 2011 Annual Business Conference of Adult Children of Alcoholics

will be held April 29-May 1 in Smyrna, Georgia, USA.

All ACA members are invited to attend.

Registration forms and additional details about the conference are available on the ABC webpage:

www.adultchildren.org/abc/

World Service Organization Business

The monthly teleconference of the ACA WSO Board of Trustees is held on the second Saturday of each month at 1:00pm Central time (11:00am Pacific time). Visitors may introduce themselves and then listen for the next hour and a half as the Board conducts business for the ACA Fellowship.

To participate, call **712-432-0075**, and when prompted, enter the access code **427266#**. It is also now possible to connect to the teleconference through Skype. Details about this option can be found on the ACA WSO forum.

ACA WSO Treasurer's Monthly Report - October 2010

Bank Balances as of October 30, 2010:

ACA WSO Checking	19,014.30
Pay Pal Account	9,563.00
ACA WSO Savings	60,084.11
Petty Cash	300.00
Total Current Assets	88,961.41

The balances above include transfers of \$21,000 of accumulating funds in the Pay Pal account to the ACA WSO Checking account.

\$40,000 of the ACA WSO Savings Account remains designated for office lease prudent reserve.

Profit and Loss Summary: October 2010

Income

7th Tradition Contributions	1,784.00
ACA Fellowship Text Purchases	15,533.97
Bank Interest	7.65
California Sales Tax	331.27
ComLine Subscriptions	80.00
Fellowship Text Index Sales	377.25
Literature Sales	1,533.14
Medallion Sales	647.45
Miscellaneous Income	22.00
Workbook Purchases	5,961.50
Total Income	26,278.23

Expense

Accounting Services	1,450.00
Bank Fees	45.00
Fellowship Text Expenses	7,868.04
Office Expenses (total)	6,772.07
Office Equipment	232.67
Office Supplies	955.57
Postage	3,572.79
Rent	1,633.00
Utilities	378.04
Pay Pal Fees	794.61
Payroll Expenses	8,178.59
Tax	1,099.00
Web and Support	25.00
Total Expense	26,232.31

Net Income **45.92**

Year to Date Summary: January - October 2010

Income

7th Tradition Contributions	17,143.51
ACA Fellowship Text Purchases	128,375.89
Bank Interest	96.77
California Sales Tax	2,982.98
ComLine Subscriptions	800.00
Fellowship Text Index Sales	788.50
Handbook Contribution	27.73
Literature Sales	15,175.24
Medallion Sales	2,622.70
Miscellaneous Income	222.83
Workbook Purchases	54,815.05
Total Income	223,051.20

Expense

Lodging/Travel	1,850.00
Repairs & Maintenance	171.15
ABC Committee (total)	3,776.74
Meals/Drinks	55.00
Miscellaneous	81.91
Room Rental	272.23
Transportation/Lodging	2,925.29
ABC Committee - Other	442.31
Accounting Services	6,800.00
Bank Fees	175.33
Business Taxes/Licenses	50.00
ComLine Expenses	958.21
Fellowship Text Expenses	49,132.01
Insurance	2,718.93
Literature Committee	7,924.74
Miscellaneous	0.00
Office Expenses (total)	65,132.68
Office Equipment	497.34
Office Supplies	9,319.52
Postage	34,642.73
Printing	1,305.73
Rent	16,364.32
Utilities	2,996.78
Office Expenses- Other	6.26
Pay Pal Fees	6,689.63
Payroll Expenses	53,642.92
Tax	4,290.00
Web and Support	914.84
Total Expense	204,227.18

Net Income **18,824.02**

ComLine

**P.O. Box 3216
Torrance, CA 90510
USA**

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Requested**

