



# ComLine

Adult Children of Alcoholics  
*Experience, Strength & Hope*

Volume 26, Number 2

February 2010

## ***ACA 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.***

“Many new members of ACA wonder who is in charge of meetings and groups. It is only natural since we have a history of fearing authority figures or being authority figures. We can be hypervigilant about identifying the authority figures in any group so we can survive as we did in childhood. By identifying what we believe to be the authority figures, we reason we can adapt as we did as children in a dysfunctional home. But ACA is different than other groups or organizations. We don't have rules that delegate powers or a structured chain of command. ACA is different than our families.

For those of us who are new, it is easy to make wrong conclusions about ACA's benign organizational structure. If there are numerous newcomers at a meeting, it is easy for them to assume that older members know everything and are in charge. If it is not the older members, then we conclude it must be the chairperson of the meeting. But the chairperson changes frequently. Maybe the secretary is the one in charge since he or she unlocks the meeting door, orders literature, and takes minutes at the business meeting. But the secretary takes direction from the group conscience. “Who runs ACA anyway?” some newer members have asked.

Fortunately, our Second Tradition reminds us that our real authority in ACA meetings and service work is “a loving God as expressed in our group conscience.”... Our leaders— chairpersons, secretaries, group representatives and the like— are not in charge. No one is in charge of ACA. We do elect trusted servants directly responsible to those they serve. They have no power. They serve the fellowship from the motives of compassion, love, and humility.”

*Excerpts from pages 498 and 499 of the ACA Fellowship Text*

### About ACA

Adult Children of Alcoholics is a 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](http://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*

## Communicating with WSO

WSO Board and Committee members do their best to be responsive to inquiries. Please be patient with us—we are all volunteers and aren't always able to respond as quickly as we'd like.

E-Mail is usually the fastest and best way to reach us. Various points of contact are shown in the “Who to Contact” section below.

You can also write to us at:  
ACA WSO, PO Box 3216, Torrance, CA, 90510, USA.

**Please do not send Express Mail.** We don't pick up the mail every day, so it's a waste of money for you, plus it requires us to make a special trip to the Post Office during business hours.

Thanks,  
and we look forward to hearing from you!

### Who to Contact

If you 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...

Please go to [www.adultchildren.org](http://www.adultchildren.org), and select “Contact” from the options menu. Comments and requests submitted by this web form will be routed to the appropriate ACA WSO committee for response.

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.

## Finding “a Loving God”

Gayle W.

Part of Tradition Two states that “for our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as expressed in our group conscience.” It seems to follow that if I am part of the group, a loving God can and will be expressed through me. In my personal recovery, I have spent much of the last year trying to understand how a loving God works in my life. I’ve re-evaluated the definition of God from my childhood and continue to search for ways to come in closer contact with a loving God of my understanding. I will share some of that journey with you.

I grew up with an alcoholic father. He was smart, funny, and could be lots of fun. When he drank, he was also physically, verbally and emotionally abusive, and I was afraid to be around him in that condition. Living with this unpredictable behavior was scary and frustrating. During my childhood, my family would have periods where we would regularly attend church. My father was elected to some church committees and did do some good work there. He could quote a lot of the Bible. As is common with alcoholic families, his behavior at home was different than in public. His behavior while drunk was certainly “ungodly”, and he would sometimes include Biblical quotes as part of his regimen of fear to control the rest of the family. As an adolescent, I was sickened by his behavior and wanted no part of this God.

As a younger child, I remember praying to God for the drinking, violence and abuse to stop. It would stop for short periods but would always return. In short, I never felt God came through for me. I remember thinking that God was distant and never seemed to hear me. I thought perhaps my name was not on God’s list.

When I was in my mid-twenties I found ACA. Through working this program, and with the support of other ACA members, I began to ask myself – WHAT IF there is a God who really loves me? I was unhappy with my career at the time and began to take small steps to make a change. I prayed and tried to do the footwork. I was essentially “dipping my toe in” to see if I could trust God. Each time I did, things seemed to work out. I went back to school full time, and I have now been in a career I enjoy for almost 13 years.

Unfortunately, I had moved out of state to go to school and I lost contact with the ACA program. I was focused on my career and that seemed enough. However, the truth is that I felt lonely and fearful, and I had never been able to have an intimate relationship with anyone. From working the program for 6 years before my career change, I still had many of the ACA principles in my mind. The part of recovery that talks about emotional honesty kept speaking to me, and I was finally able to accept that I was a lesbian.

Despite my fear, I came out to my family and was relieved when they were supportive. I also began to explore dating. During that process, I relapsed into codependent relationships in a big way. One day I remember thinking, “this is just like I felt around Dad” – and that realization made me search for ACA again. Much to my delight, ACA was still here, and I have been back in recovery for almost three years now.

My codependence is manifested by obsessive thoughts about the other person, picking people who are emotionally unavailable, and hanging on to a relationship (or fantasizing that one actually exists) in order not to feel abandoned. For me, this results from not feeling loved and valued as a child. As part of my recovery, I need to reparent myself and know that there is a loving God who is my actual parent.

So what does a loving parent/God look like to me? One of the most important things I know today is that I do not have to fear a loving parent/God. I’ve lived in fear most of my life – it’s part of my para-alcoholism. So to recover, I’ve accepted that I WILL NOT BE AFRAID of the God of my understanding. This gives me new freedom. I no longer worry what will happen if I have difficulty accepting the concept of a male God, or that I’ll go to hell if I don’t believe in Jesus. I turn that over to my loving God and let my higher power take care of that for me. That was a big breakthrough for me.

A loving parent would keep me safe from things that could harm me. For example, a parent would gently grab a child’s hand to prevent them from running out into traffic. Today, my higher power gently tells me to let go of my periodic codependent obsessing. A loving parent would teach healthy boundaries and that it’s good to take time to get to know people. Today, I see how my higher power is helping me with this issue.

Finally, a loving parent/God is present for me. In my mind, a loving parent would always be available to support their child. A strong message that I get from my higher power today is to work my program and wait. I picture a parent saying to me “I’m right here” or “I’m still here.” I also hear “I’ll take care of your needs.” This mental image helps counteract the sense of loneliness that I’ve carried around with me and gives me a feeling of peace. Today my God loves me and is watching out for me, even though I may not always understand that at the time.

That’s my journey to this point. As you can see, it didn’t happen quickly, without some footwork on my part, or without the support of my fellow ACA members. The beauty of ACA is that each of us gets to find the God of our OWN understanding. I hope this story gives you hope and encouragement as you work toward finding and knowing the loving God of YOUR understanding.



## An Invitation to Serve

Josie E.

As your chairperson for our ACA World Service Organization, I would like to urge you to take a chance and get involved in serving the ACA fellowship. Come and check out the ACA WSO Board of Trustees... watch for awhile, learn more about our service committees, and consider how you might put your own recovery, experience, strength, and HOPE to work for ACA. Then get involved and stay involved, in this work that is not always easy or convenient, but which MATTERS for our fellow travelers and for ourselves.

I know in my heart that everyone who sticks around and serves on the ACA WSO Board grows in their recovery, just as I have in mine. And today, the "beautiful changes in all my relationships" that the ACA Solution promises are all coming true right before my eyes! First with the God of my understanding, then with myself, and finally with my God-given parents.

So, come get involved and be part of this remarkable journey of recovery and discovery! Be on the next ACA WSO teleconference, attend the next Annual Business Conference, and yes, write your Board members and let us know your thoughts. COME and HELP us, and help fulfill one of my visions... for ACA WSO to be growing, thriving, and SERVING the needs of every single ACA member!

Wanna?

Just write me at [Josie-aca@dryfalls.org](mailto:Josie-aca@dryfalls.org) and come help the ACA fellowship be all our HP created us to be!

## More Tradition Two Insight...

ACA Fellowship Text, Page 501

"In conclusion, no one has authority over another in ACA, but we do have elected leaders who serve those who elect them. They do not govern, but they lead by example. Our group conscience is a spiritual method by which a Higher Power is expressed in our discussions and decisions. Most of our decisions are based on what is best for the most, instead of what is best for the few.

Through humility, we surrender our egos and place the group first in our decisions on ACA matters. Humility does not mean we are a doormat or that we have no opinion. It means we are willing to stay focused on ACA principles. We open the door to listen to direction from our Higher Power. We bring our Twelve Step experience to these discussions. We apply surrender, hope, willingness, forgiveness, and other Step principles in our group business meetings and group discussions. We learn discernment and see that some ideas appear good and appealing; however, they can divert us from seeking the best for ACA. We can expect the best from our decisions and get it."

### \* Tradition Two Questions to Consider \*

- 1) *What is a "loving God"?*
- 2) *What is the process of arriving at a group conscience decision?*
- 3) *Why is the collective wisdom of the group better than the opinion of one person?*

## The ComLine Needs You

Would you like to share about one of the ACA Traditions? Share your experience, strength, or hope in ACA recovery? 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](http://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 who wish to receive 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](http://www.acawso.com/wsobook/literature.php)

The ComLine Archive can be accessed through the ACA WSO forum:

<http://www.acawso.org/ipb/index.php?showforum=40>

ComLine editions published since 2004 are available to read or download, and new issues are posted each month!

## ACA's Annual Business Conference: You're All Invited!

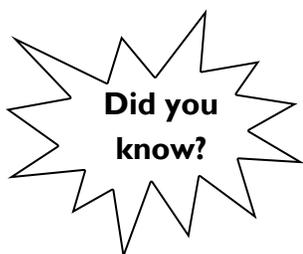
The next Annual Business Conference of Adult Children of Alcoholics will be held April 23-25, 2010, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA. All ACA members are welcome to attend. Each registered ACA group and Intergroup is encouraged to elect one voting delegate to attend the ABC. Only those delegates registering as the authorized representative of their ACA group or Intergroup will be eligible to vote on motions at the ABC.

In early February, all registered ACA meetings and Intergroups were mailed a Group Conscience Survey ballot. This ballot lists four proposed items of business for the 2010 ABC. Every ACA group is requested to discuss these four items and to return their completed ballot to the ABC Committee by April 15th. Items receiving the support of at least 2/3 of the ballots returned will be presented for discussion and action at this year's ABC.

If your meeting has not received this Group Conscience Survey ballot, it is available for download from the ABC webpage. Registration forms are also available on the ABC webpage and can be submitted either online or by postal mail.



For more information about the 2010 ABC, please visit:  
[www.acawso.com/abc](http://www.acawso.com/abc)



An approved motion of the 2009 ABC called for an index to the ACA Fellowship Text.

And now... The sixth printing of the ACA "Big Red Book" contains that new index!

The ACA Fellowship Text (with index) is available for purchase from the ACA WSO website, or you can download the 16-page index of terms for free.

## News from the Fellowship

**From Florida (FL134 and FL139):** "The Brickell ACA group had its first meeting in February 2009. We were inspired by the incredible Big Red Book and the ACA Steps Workbook that we found at the Hollywood ACA meeting. Our meeting has quickly grown to an average of 25 each Thursday. We read and comment on the Red Book, and on the first Thursday we have a speaker share their experience, strength, and hope.

We have a solid core of recovery from AA, AI-Anon and NA that helps us stay focused on the solution. Several of our members have done much ACA work over many years, and that adds great depth to our collective recovery. We started a Workbook meeting on Sunday evening that is steadily growing with over 15 members. *We feel that our meetings are sacred by the depth of sharing and healing. For many, ACA is the missing piece of our true self.*

Since we began, there are two more ACA meetings in Aventura (North Miami), and we believe that many more will appear here in South Florida. We are very grateful for the continuing service of ACA World Service. "

**From Arizona (AZ065):** "The Prescott meeting of Adult Children of Alcoholics averages 10 to 15 people at each meeting. While more would be nice, the small group means that most people get time to share. At every meeting, after reading the usual opening Laundry List, Solution, 12 Steps, and joining in the Serenity Prayer, we go around the circle and read a small portion of the Fellowship Text- the Big Red Book.

It's been interesting to see members come back to ACA. They say things like, "I was in ACA 20 years ago and my therapist told me to find a meeting now." Or, "I lost my inner child and I want her/him back." Of course there are those who have moved or perhaps just live too far away to attend regularly. We encourage them to use the phone list to stay in touch or participate on the ACA forum – [www.adultchildren.org](http://www.adultchildren.org)

Regular attendance at my meeting, no matter how much recovery I may have, continues to make a difference in my ongoing recovery. It keeps me current and on track as I keep note throughout the week of what I might be able to share. And it gives me the opportunity to practice the ACA 12th Step."

## Seventh Tradition Contributions– December 2009

*“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.*

SWE 037 - Lund, Sweden	278.00
CA 920 - Westlake Village, CA	36.00
OK 001 - Tulsa, OK	200.00
HI010 - Honolulu, HI	100.00
CA 218 - Oakland, CA	300.00
MD 024 - Columbia, MD	50.00
FL 125 and FL 113 - Largo, Florida	20.32
AZ 073 - Flagstaff, AZ	150.00
WI 067 - Madison, WI	60.00
NY 071 - Sag Harbor, NY	73.00
IL 147 - Bolingbrook, IL	350.00
FL 132 - Lauderhill, FL	54.00
NY 075 - Bronx, NY	81.00
MI 113 - Westland, MI	10.00
FL 135 - St. Petersburg, FL	25.00
FL 126 - St. Petersburg, FL	25.00
CAN 141 - Nova Scotia, Canada	45.82
Anonymous	109.80

TOTAL 7th Tradition 1,967.94

## Monthly Highlights from your ACA WSO Committees

**The Handbook Committee** and **Literature Committee** received correspondence from Finland, Brazil, Russia, Amsterdam and Germany in November and December. Various phases of translations by each country are now being overseen by ACA WSO.

Finland: The Finnish Translation Committee has been working for the past year to translate the ACA Fellowship Text. The Finns have submitted multiple chapters for verification, and WSO is now verifying the translations at the summary review level.

Russia: Natalia K. from Russia sent drafts of the ACA Twelve Steps and ACA Traditions from the ACA Fellowship Text to be verified. We are also very close to finalizing Russian translations of the Identity Papers.

Brazil: Marcelo requested information about translating ACA pamphlets and other literature and was provided the ACA WSO translation guidelines and translation agreement.

Germany: Christine contacted ACA WSO about a group in Tubingen translating the first 100 pages of the ACA Fellowship Text. The group is registering with ACA WSO, and they have been sent the WSO translation agreement and guidelines.

Amsterdam: Marinde contacted ACA WSO about translating the group format into the Dutch language. They have been sent the WSO Translation agreement and guidelines.

- Projects to translate ACA literature into Spanish, Danish, Polish, and Swedish are also underway. If you would like to be a part of any of these efforts, you may contact the Literature Committee through the “Contact” webform found at [www.adultchildren.org](http://www.adultchildren.org). If no translation committee has formed in your country, but your meeting or Intergroup is interested in translating ACA literature into your native language, please contact the ACA WSO Literature Committee for guidelines on how to begin.



### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO US!



The World Services Office of Adult Children of Alcoholics has now been re-opened for one full year. Special thanks are deserved by the WSO board of trustees, by our “special workers” (DiAnne, Gloria, Taylor, Vivian and Trudy), and by all the other volunteers who have been involved in the daily work of the office. Special thanks are also deserved by every ACA member whose literature purchases and Seventh Tradition contributions support the office and its mission of carrying the ACA message.

Our office staff does a great job each day to serve our growing worldwide fellowship. They continue to ship about 1,000 books a month, in addition to processing orders for other ACA literature. They also mail the monthly ComLine, manage daily requests for information, and keep our ever-changing world meeting database updated.

So, next time you’re in Signal Hill, California, stop by your ACA World Services office and say “Hello”!



## ACA WSO Treasurer's Monthly Report Financial Summary: December 2009

### From the Treasurer:

#### Bank Balances:

##### November 30, 2009

Checking account	5,688.78
Pay Pal account	3,181.77
Savings Account	56,985.29

##### December 31, 2009

Checking account	13,183.92
PayPal account	1,714.59
Savings Account	57,744.99

\$40,000 of the savings account has now been designated for office lease.

\$750 each month is being set aside in the savings account to cover expenses of hosting the 2010 Annual Business Conference of ACA.

\$10,500 transferred from Pay Pal to the checking account during the month.

#### Profit and Loss- December 2009

##### Income

7th Tradition	1,967.94
ACA Fellowship Text purchases	9,257.07
Bank Interest	9.70
California Sales Tax	218.28
ComLine Subscriptions	128.00
Fellowship Text index	75.00
Literature Sales	1,884.64
ACA Workbook Purchases	4,652.00

**Total Income** **18,192.63**

##### Expense

Bank Fees	0.01
ComLine Expenses	201.67
Insurance	274.00
Literature Committee	670.84
Office Expenses	5,463.09
Pay Pal Fees	525.32
Payroll Expenses	4,075.09
Web and Support	44.95

**Total Expense** **11,254.97**

**Net Income** **6,937.66**

#### Year to Date Summary: January-December 2009

##### Income

7th Tradition Contributions	18,249.63
ACA Fellowship Text purchases	124,730.98
Bank Interest	123.62
California Sales Tax	2,161.16
ComLine Subscriptions	1,254.21
Fellowship Text index	490.00
Handbook Contributions	26.31
Literature Sales	12,546.67
ACA Workbook Purchases	50,482.28

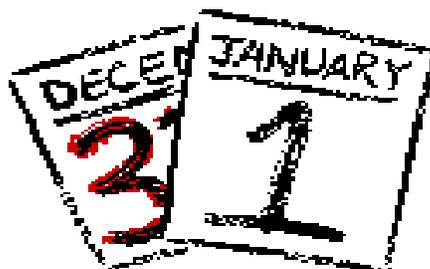
**Total Income** **210,064.86**

##### Expense

ABC Committee	2,833.18
Accounting Services	1,112.50
Bank Fees	376.41
Business Taxes/Licenses	25.00
ComLine Expenses	2,554.12
ACA Fellowship Text expenses	56,569.19
H&I Committee	1,197.59
Insurance	2,256.97
Legal Fees	720.00
Literature Committee	19,352.71
Office Expenses	67,584.48
OutReach Committee	2,781.22
Pay Pal Fees	6,120.43
Payroll Expenses	44,014.23
Refund	66.86
Tax	1,791.35
Web and Support	984.26

**Total Expense** **210,340.50**

**Net Income** **-275.64**



It is a pleasure to notify the WSO Board and our ACA Fellowship that the total amount of 7th Tradition contributions for the year totaled \$18,249.63. To me, that means that the Fellowship is telling us that this work needs to continue and are willing to support it financially. Hurrah for the 7th Tradition and the 12th Step.

This month you will be getting a look at our profit and loss report for 2009. Considering the revenues that have come in, we have a lot to be grateful for because the money is being used to support the ACA Fellowship. That's you!

We have been able to pay all our bills, order additional printings of our Fellowship Text and Workbook, order 'new' chips and new literature, as well as run an office with 5 part time workers.

The year-to-date summary shows a net loss of \$275.64 for the year. However, our accounts of checking, savings and PayPal total \$72,643.50 so we need not worry.

If you have any questions, email me at:  
PhyllisACA@cableone.net

This is my 5th year on the WSO board so I will be 'retiring' in April 2010. The WSO Board would like to have more people join us to work on the various committees, so do consider attending our teleconferences the second Sat of every month. All are welcomed to listen in on the activities of the WSO Board.

Phyllis R  
Treasurer ACA WSO

**You can now write or call our office with any questions.**

ACA World Services — 1400 E. 33rd Street, Signal Hill, CA 90755

Tel (562) 595-7831 Fax (562) 595-7822 — Office hours: Tues - Fri 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. - Sat 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 am.

**ComLine**

**P.O. Box 3216  
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USA**

**Return Service  
Requested**

