



ComLine

Adult Children of Alcoholics

Experience, Strength & Hope

Volume 26, Number 8

July 2010

ACA Tradition Seven

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

“Most adult children fall into three main categories when it comes to handling and spending money. Some are financial wizards, spending much of their time chasing stock trends. Others may struggle between paychecks, wishing they could earn more money, while sinking deeper into debt. At the same time, some adult children live within their means and know when enough is enough. They tend to delay gratification and can avoid seeking outside financial help to bail them out. When things sour financially for them, their lives tend to work out. They have resources and options by living modestly. The money or resources show up, and they move on.

This is one of the principles of the ACA program. We don't have a lot of money, but membership donations show up when there is a need. Group members respond and believe in what their group is doing for ACA and its members. In ACA, we don't hoard excessive amounts of money. But we do need cash to pay the rent, order literature, and fund helplines and ACA events. Our members give donations because they know they are helping themselves by giving the right way. Before ACA, many of us gave our bodies, minds, or souls for the wrong reasons. In ACA, we learn to give for the right reason, and we learn the right amount to give. We give our fair share and let others give their fair share, so we all take ownership in ACA.

...Tradition Seven instructs ACA groups to be fully self-supporting and to decline outside contributions. The Tradition also reminds us of the spiritual principle of giving, and of giving with a willingness to help another. Some members give their time in sponsorship, while others give their talents in the service structure. We all try to support our group and the service structure as best as we can. Tradition Seven teaches us how to give and how to handle money in a spiritual manner.”

Excerpts from pages 523 to 525 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.

Financial Wisdom from the ACA Fellowship Text

pages 609-611

ACA Group Funds– Seventh Tradition

Every meeting should have a trusted servant, a treasurer, to maintain a record of all income received by the meeting and keep all receipts for disbursements by the meeting. The group treasurer should make a monthly report to the group and calculate the amount of the Seventh Tradition donations being sent to their Intergroup and the World Service Organization. This is sent monthly or quarterly.

The fund flow model of ACA is based on a 60/40 disbursement. After the 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 two month's worth of meeting expenses. The meeting expenses would include rent, utilities, and other group expenses.

The most effective and efficient way to protect the finances of a meeting is to have a bank checking account that requires two signatures on each check.

Accountability

Accountability and responsibility go together in ACA. A group's financial report should be on hand and current. This is the treasurer's responsibility. Some group treasurers or secretaries offer a monthly report. This is recommended. Most ACA groups handle their funds with good conduct; however, there have been isolated events of stolen or "lost" money. Requiring a monthly report is one way of keeping track of fellowship funds.

Some ACA meetings have established simple guidelines for financial protection. It is a sound procedure, when selecting a trusted servant, to ask for the person's full name, address, and telephone number. It is advisable to make every effort to contact the trusted servant responsible for the treasury if he or she has not attended two consecutive business meetings. We do not overreact and wrongly accuse someone of improper conduct; however, we are mindful of the group treasury and the need to protect fellowship funds.

Guidelines should be established for handling meeting funds when the treasurer is unable to attend meetings regularly. At the minimum, the treasurer must attend business meetings regularly and should attend regular ACA meetings. Groups need a treasurer who is active and who is available to keep the members updated on group funds.

Seventh Tradition funds are every member's responsibility. When ACA funds have been mishandled, ACA groups have taken a variety of actions that show our fellowship maturity and common sense. All efforts should be made to obtain the return of the funds. The treasurer or person responsible for the missing money should be contacted and asked to give back the money. If the person is willing, he may admit his behavior and ask to be allowed to pay the money back. In this case, the group sets up a simple but clear method of repaying the money. This method usually works best with lesser sums of money. It must be made clear that the person must be responsible and follow through on returning the money in a timely manner without delays or excuses. All such decisions are usually handled at a group conscience where financial records and statements can be looked over to determine the facts of the matter.

In matters of larger sums of money being stolen or group checks being written for personal use, the group must decide on whether to seek legal action or to allow the person to pay back the money. A group conscience should be taken to determine the best course or action. We must consider all the facts. We balance our decision to protect group funds with our compassion for the errant ACA member, who may be suffering from failing to work an ACA program. We can balance giving a member a second chance with our responsibility to recover lost or stolen funds.

It is rare that the local law enforcement authorities are contacted or that other legal action is pursued, but these are options for consideration.

Knowing Where My Dollar Goes

Rachele V.

The Twelve Traditions give our groups clear guidelines on the collection and use of fellowship funds. They also give our groups autonomy and the freedom to make the most responsible decisions about the dollars contributed in our meetings each week.

Of the three ACA meetings I attend, each handles its funds in a slightly different manner. The oldest and most established meeting maintains its own checking account. Deposits and payments are made by the meeting Secretary, and written reports of the treasury are provided to group members quarterly. Our other two local meetings manage group funds in cash, using the treasurer's log provided in the fellowship's New Meeting Packet. Income and expenses are reported verbally each month by each group's elected Treasurer. In all cases, group funds are responsibly held and accounted for.

In being "fully self-supporting", each group has also had to decide the expenses we will consider reasonable. One meeting I attend decided by group conscience to raise its own rent after having paid the same monthly amount for nearly 20 years. It seemed appropriate and responsible. Another meeting decided by group conscience to move locations after rent climbed to an unreasonable rate. Members decided that group funds could be spent more wisely on fellowship literature than on excessive rent.

One meeting I attend purchases Birthday medallions from group funds. Another meeting pays for coffee

supplies but not medallions. The largest of our meetings pays the annual expenses of a local ACA phone line but does not offer coffee each week. In other words, each of our groups has decided for ourselves the reasonable and necessary expenses we will pay from group funds.

In supporting our ACA service structure, each meeting has also determined its own best approach. Each has established a "prudent reserve" which equals about two months of meeting expenses. In each meeting, funds above the prudent reserve are willingly contributed to the support of our ACA World Services Organization. One meeting I attend decided to send a small amount to WSO each month. Another sends a set percentage of income every quarter. The largest of our meetings sends \$200 to WSO whenever that amount of excess funds has accumulated. Each approach was determined by the group conscience of group members, and each approach works because of our collective commitment to the singular purpose of our fellowship.

At every ACA meeting I attend, I know that when a basket is passed for contributions, it's done for two important reasons: so that our meeting may be fully self-supporting (paying reasonable rent and expenses), and so that we may continue to carry the ACA message in our own community and around the world. I give with the confidence that my contributions are used wisely at all levels of our fellowship.

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 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

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.

Discovering Financial Sobriety

Leo D.

Several questions come to mind when I read Tradition Seven: Am I self-supporting? Can I own my way in the world by paying the credit I have been given? Am I true to myself and my spiritual path when it comes to money?

Like with many other things in my recovery, it has taken me a lot of time to untangle the flawed thinking behind my money issues. I know the origins are in the roles my parents played: my father was greedy; my mother saw herself as the victim of everyone else's pettiness. The origins are also in the secret family messages we were given: "It is ok to steal from those who have more or are mean to us". But as I am faced with my recovery, these issues become mine alone if I want a healthy life. As I work the ACA Steps, I uncover and clear the way to healthier living with others and with money.

Tradition Seven brings monetary issues to the forefront of my spiritual work every time I attend a meeting. When we pass the basket, I am reminded

that being self-supporting, without the need for outside contributions, is part of recovery and spiritual growth. We are not saying that we don't need money, because we actually do. But we are encouraged to live according to our means and prosper. I remember that nobody else but me is responsible for my life and that I am not owed anything. By applying these principles, I grow.

What I learn in my fellowship guides me in the world. Sometimes, I honor Tradition Seven with what I can give. Sometimes, I honor it with nothing but my intention to contribute later. Then I make an effort not to forget.

In my own life, when money is available, I can make more contributions to reduce my debt or to save for a personal project. When it gets tighter financially, I find ways to still be trustable with my obligations. It is a creative process, always changing and transforming. With recovery, I can play it with ease. Tradition Seven reminds me of all of this.

Seventh Tradition Meditation

Higher Power. I am here to do your will. Help me give for the right reason with the right amount.

Help me remember that I have a different life today because of ACA.

May I be willing to give back what was freely given to me.

May I claim spiritual ownership in this fellowship.

More Tradition Seven Insight

(from the ACA Fellowship Text, pgs 522-523)

"Self-supporting means that we, the members of ACA, contribute to our own support, and we rely on no other person, agency, or outside influence for financial assistance.

Fully self-supporting means that we, the members of ACA, support all of ACA, including rent, refreshments, literature, Intergroup and World Services, and any other miscellaneous expenses we incur.

The Seventh Tradition contributions are the collective offerings of our members to support ourselves, independent of any, and all, outside contributors. We refuse outside contributions, so that we will be free of any outside pressures, influences, or control that could contaminate our ACA goals. We are independent of non-ACA contributors.

A group is to pay for its basic meeting expenses and

keep a prudent reserve to pay meeting expenses during difficult times. When that is taken care of, a percentage of what is left is sent to World Service Organization and to your Intergroup. The service boards, Intergroup, and WSO use these group contributions to support ACA literature development, coordinate treatment center meetings, and support other ACA efforts here and abroad.

Using Seventh Tradition contributions for a pizza party would be a misuse of the contributions intended for ACA's operating expenses. Group celebrations should be funded by the function's participants.

ACA groups decline outside contributions to keep the control of our ACA program in our own hands. Accepting outside contributions could lead to interference, even though some donors mean well. We must pay our own way to keep free of entanglement."

Seventh Tradition Contributions– May 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.*

CA 428 - Norwalk, CA	39.00
CA 717- Los Angeles, CA	175.00
CA 898 - San Diego, CA	95.00
CA 915 - Arroyo Grande, CA	17.00
CA 941 - San Diego, CA	95.00
CA 959- Signal Hill, CA	30.00
CA829--San Diego, CA	60.00
CA864- West Lake Village, CA	100.00
CAN020-Toronto, Canada	75.21
GA020-Ridgeview,GA	60.00
GA021- Marietta, GA	105.00
ID028- Twin Falls, ID	56.00
IG-040, Denmark	166.00
IL 004 - Wilmette, IL	35.00
MI 113 - Westland, MI	25.00
MI 114 - Detroit, MI	100.00
MI061-Westland, MI	25.00
MN115,121 -Edina, MN	150.00
NJ019 Hoboken, NJ	25.00
NM 022 - Albuquerque, NM	19.10
NY070- Bronx, NY	95.00
OK019 - Oklahoma City, OK	50.21
TX 081 - San Antonio, TX	67.50
TX074-Mc Allen,TX	25.00
Anonymous	336.94
Total 7th Tradition	2,026.96

ACA WSO Committee Highlights

We continue to see progress in the translation of Adult Children of Alcoholics literature in the United States and overseas. The various committees actively translating ACA Conference Approved Literature include:

Spanish- The Spanish Translation Committee continues to meet by teleconference to review a draft of Twelve Steps of Adult Children (yellow book) which has been translated into Spanish by the Spaniards. We are having North American Spanish speakers review it before submitting it for verification. Committee members are Lucia C. of Texas; Leo de A. of Oklahoma; Larry A. of New York; Karla De V. of Florida; Ines Z., and Viviana.

Danish- The Danish Red Book Committee submitted additional writing from the ACA Fellowship Text (red book) for verification. The Danes submitted Steps Eight through Twelve (from Chapter 7). The translation agency we have contracted with says the translation is a good one. Verification of this work took about 12 hours.

Swedish– Jesper N. from the Swedish ACA fellowship contacted ACA WSO. The Swedes are interested in translating the Twelve Steps of Adult Children (yellow book) before tackling the ACA Fellowship Text. The Swedes will be signing the translation agreement soon.

In addition, Irma from Lithuania contacted ACA WSO expressing an interest in translating ACA literature into her language. Irma’s email lets ACA WSO know that ACA literature is making its presence known throughout Europe and its many countries. Lithuania has the ACA Fellowship Text, and they are seeking to carry the ACA message in their country.

In Service, Omer G., ACA WSO Handbook Committee Chair

ANNOUNCEMENT:

The monthly teleconference of the ACA WSO Board of Trustees is held on the second Saturday of each month at 1:00 pm Central time (11:00 am Pacific time). Visitors are given a few minutes to introduce themselves and are then invited to 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#**. *Please note that this is a new phone number and code.* 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

Financial Summary: May 2010

Bank Balances

April 30, 2010

Checking account 26,726.19
 Pay Pal Account 1,000.25
 Savings Account 60,033.76
 Total 87,760.20

May 31, 2010

Checking account 20,815.38
 Pay Pal Account 5,364.93
 Savings Account 60,043.96
 Total 86,224.27

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

ACA World Services Office

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 a.m.
 Closed Sunday and Monday

Contacts: DiAnne and Vivian

May 2010 Profit and Loss

Income

7th Tradition 2,026.96
 Fellowship Text Purchases 12,540.77
 Bank Interest 10.20
 California Sales Tax 291.60
 ComLine Subscriptions 128.00
 Fellowship Text index 86.00
 Literature Sales 1,846.70
 Medallion Sales 509.20
 Miscellaneous Income 200.83
 Workbook Purchases 5,608.56

Total Income 23,248.82

Expense

ABC Committee 81.91
 Bank Fees 76.68
 Fellowship Text Expenses 12,035.00
 Literature Committee 1,694.81
 Office Expenses 5,120.21
 Pay Pal Fees 680.60
 Payroll Expenses 4,783.76
 Web and Support 311.78

Total Expense 24,784.75

Net Income -1,535.93

Year to Date Summary: January-May 2010

Income

7th Tradition 8,194.97
 Fellowship Text Purchases 59,112.17
 Bank Interest 48.97
 California Sales Tax 1,340.74
 ComLine Subscriptions 432.00
 Fellowship Text index 287.25
 Handbook Contribution 27.73
 Literature Sales 8,110.20
 Medallion Sales 509.20
 Miscellaneous Income 200.83
 Workbook Purchases 24,529.86

Total Income 102,793.92

Expense

ABC Committee 2,111.52
 Bank Fees 111.68
 ComLine Expenses 760.90
 Fellowship Text Expenses 21,315.78
 Insurance 970.00
 Literature Committee 6,599.74
 Miscellaneous 0.00
 Office Expenses 29,274.83
 Pay Pal Fees 2,998.79
 Payroll Expenses 24,575.14
 Tax 25.00
 Web and Support 640.92

Total Expense 89,384.30

Net Income 13,409.62

From the Treasurer:

May was a busy month establishing a variety of changes. On May 24, we signed a contract with the Wilshire Financial Services Agency in Huntington Beach to move the accounting function from our personal computers to their agency (while retaining all funding approval processes with the Treasurer). They will thus assume the daily accounting for the WSO, including the printing of outgoing checks. Meanwhile, the processing of incoming checks is being transferred to the Signal Hill Office staff. Payroll timekeeping and reported hours worked are now being inputted and tracked through GetMyTime.com, and Payroll Stubs are available to the employees through a ViewMyPaycheck application. Meanwhile, as Treasurer, I will be continually monitoring the process and remain part of the approval process for major and non-recurrent expenses. While it's been a bit hectic getting all this set up, the changes will ultimately simplify the overall accounting and payroll functions.

As your Treasurer, I continue to define roles and duties in the new environment, while also getting up to speed on the many facets of this growing fellowship. While we're all still in somewhat of a learning curve, I hope to have both the accounting and payroll functions well defined and running smoothly by early July.

The IRS Form 990, detailing the WSO income and expenses for 2009, was completed in May and forwarded to the IRS and State of California as required. The Financial Audit for 2009 was also completed in May without incident.

I still need to have the WSO board assign an Assistant Treasurer to work with me this year, covering approval processes when I'm unavailable, and in preparation to be elected the Treasurer at next year's Annual Business Conference.

Scott R., ACA WSO Treasurer

ComLine

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

**Return Service
Requested**

