



ComLine

Adult Children of Alcoholics
Experience, Strength & Hope

Volume 26, Number 7

June 2010

ACA 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, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

“As individuals, many of us can and do offer much to many non-ACA programs. We volunteer our time and contribute to the outside group as individuals. The problem arises when we try to identify such programs with our ACA group. There are many fine community groups, treatment programs, or therapists who would like to link their programs or practices to the ACA program, but we must decline their offers. To accept could eventually lead us into controversy or link us to groups outside of ACA. To be associated with such groups in the public eye can confuse those seeking our help. We could turn people away by appearing to endorse or affiliate with an outside entity.

For example, an ACA group may receive an offer from a treatment center to jointly sponsor a community outreach program about dysfunctional families. The center believes in the ACA program and its fine work. With good intentions, the recovery center wants to finance the event and provide the site. In return, ACA gets its name in the newspaper or on television along with the recovery center. Is this a good idea? It is tempting to accept such an offer. We would like the publicity and a chance to reach adult children with our message. However, our Sixth Tradition reminds us of the pitfalls in such joint efforts. In the public eye, we would be linked to the recovery center and in violation of Tradition Six. ACA is not a recovery center program. It is an autonomous Twelve Step program grounded in spiritual principles. It would be better to let the recovery center sponsor its own event, while ACA would remain autonomous and carry the message to clients in the center...

Tradition Six keeps ACA free of outside influences and reminds us not to lend the ACA name to any related facility or outside enterprise. By following this Tradition we also avoid money and prestige issues that would hinder our primary purpose.”

Excerpts from pages 519 to 521 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.

Realizing Boundaries Through Tradition Six

Leo D.

It has taken me some time to understand the subtleties of Tradition Five that spread onto Tradition Six. If Tradition Five reminds me that ACA's primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery to the Adult Children around me, Tradition Six encourages me to let each one find their way into our fellowship without me becoming a pretzel trying to make that happen. In the meantime, I live the ACA life to the best of my ability, and become ready to be a part of the beacon this program is.

I need not develop a *recruiting* campaign, ask my church or my community to have an ACA day to encourage everyone to start their journey of recovery, or invite the fellow travelers in my group to go see a certain therapist, organization or fellowship that supports the ACA philosophy. No. I'm simply asked to remain anonymous, willing to continue my journey, and be there for anyone who may be on the same path. This action, which feels like inaction, brings me back into the spiritual nature of this journey, and the spirituality I slowly uncover as I work my program.

When I examine the ACA way of life a little deeper, I always find that it starts and resumes with nobody else but me: not a loved one, or someone I'm not in relationship with any more, or any organi-

zation I belong to. Tradition Six reminds me of my own work in ACA. Quietly and diligently, through trial and error, asking for help, accepting help, and developing trust for the very first time, I allow this program to work in all areas of my life. The trust that I work at is also the trust that I start to glimpse in every human being, and the possibilities that their lives hold. It does not matter if other Adult Children I know would benefit. It does not matter that my life is much better than I ever dreamed it would be. My purpose is to remain humble and allow everyone who needs it to come to ACA at their own time.

This can be an excruciating decision when I am entangled with someone else, or my fear of abandonment kicks in, but my own experience has shown me that *when I was ready, ACA was there for me*. Why wouldn't I honor that fact in the life of someone I love? I get myself out of the way. There's no need to get frantic about how much I do, and quantifying it as enough or not enough. I don't remain silent, though, because the work I do changes me little by little. I allow life to happen.

Allowing is the key term. I can allow everyone the dignity of their journey. I have asked for it. It is my duty to give it, too.

News from the Fellowship

Recently, my husband and I had a brief visit at the ACA WSO office and warehouse located in Signal Hill, California. The staff there are dedicated to processing and shipping the fellowship's book and literature orders, so we got to see how they manage to send out about 1,300 items – more or less – each month. It was a joy to see all the boxes of books that have been printed sitting on pallets. We have at this time, published 30,000 Big Red Books (the ACA Fellowship Text).

One of the big things we noticed is how well the part-time staff works together. They all come at various times since they are part-time and fit this job in with their other jobs. Another thing we noticed and appreciated is how frugal the staff have been getting used furniture and using coupons for supplies. We also noticed that the staff takes initiative to make things happen, such as ordering items in time to cover needs.

While the office staff cannot take cash for book and literature orders, customers who live near the office can arrange to pick up orders made online or by mail. This is just one way that our office works to better serve our ACA fellowship.

As with any non-profit organization, volunteers are always welcomed. If you live in the Los Angeles area, please consider calling the office to volunteer. Every book is bubble wrapped before shipping to make sure it arrives in good condition. This is a task that needs careful attention, but you will be well trained AND get a chance to do Twelfth Step work!

Yours in service, Scott R. and Phyllis R.

Hospitals and Institutions Meetings– an Introduction

Tradition Six maintains that ACA groups ought never endorse or lend the ACA name to facilities or outside entities. When carrying the ACA message through Hospitals and Institutions meetings, it is important to remember that “We cooperate, but we do not affiliate.”

While we may take a meeting into a facility or make ACA resources available there, we avoid linking our name with these facilities. We work cooperatively with staff, but avoid situations which might imply a partnership or endorsement of any facility. We also ask that facilities avoid any implied affiliation with Adult Children of Alcoholics.

The following guidance on Hospitals and Institutions meetings is quoted from pages 614 and 615 of the ACA Fellowship Text.

“The disease of family dysfunction is a progressive disease that forces some adult children to seek help in a treatment setting or psychiatric hospital. Other adult children are sentenced to prison for crimes they have committed while acting out with addiction or codependence. These adult children often form an ACA meeting in their facility. ACA members from the outside attend the meetings, carrying the message to the adult child wherever and whenever they are asked.

Adult children in these facilities are grateful for the outside support. Many attend ACA meetings once they are released. They become group members, carrying the message of hope that was carried to them.

It is recommended that ACA members carrying the message into one of these facilities have a clear understanding of the ACA program. The suggestions for how to share or talk in an ACA meeting apply here as well. We identify as an adult child and explain our recovery and the ACA program with clarity and honesty...

We also abide by all facility rules and guidelines. We do not fraternize with or become romantically involved with adult children in these settings. We are there to carry the ACA message of recovery.

For prison meetings, we do not give out our telephone number, pass notes or letters for inmates, or correspond with an inmate. Women should work with women, and men should work with men on Step work or other ACA recovery work.

If we will honor these guidelines and practice the principles of the program, we will help ourselves and the adult child within these facilities. We will be living the Twelfth Step.”

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

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

just go to www.adultchildren.org and select “ComLine” from the options menu.

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

Learning Fellowship Identity from Tradition Six

Omer G.

As a fellowship, I have observed that when we honor Tradition Six by not affiliating our name and groups with outside entities, we strengthen our fellowship purpose and avoid diffusion of the ACA message. We embrace our identity as Adult Children of Alcoholics.

Tradition Six states that ACA should not lend the ACA name to outside entities no matter how worthy an outside cause might be. In my observances, the actions of affiliation can be clear or they can be subtle. A clear example of affiliation that violates Tradition Six would involve an ACA group calling for its members to rally at the state Capitol to support legislation to curb child abuse. While this is a noble cause that the individual can be involved in, an ACA group cannot lend the ACA name to such activity.

I have learned a lot from the ACA Twelve Traditions through the years. I found ACA in about 1986 by luck and by desperation. I was sober and clean from drug addiction but I was needing more from the Twelve Steps. I needed to do family-of-origin work through the Steps. But in my home town in the central United States, there were no ACA meetings. I had to drive 45 miles (about 70 kilometers) to find a meeting in a larger city. I also attended counseling sessions by driving to this city. My Higher Power guided me to one of the first counselors in my area to address adult child issues.

The ACA meetings and counseling were separate, which is required by the ACA Twelve Traditions. In addition to keeping a clear boundary with counseling, the ACA meetings I attended in this city also kept the meetings free of affiliation with outside entities such as other Twelve Step fellowships. We cooperated with these fellowships but we tried not to mix the ACA message with their messages. I appreciated this because I needed to focus on myself and the effects of being raised in an alcoholic home.

While my current ACA group followed the Traditions by not lending the ACA name to an outside entity, looking back I can see that the group violated Tradition Six by affiliating our meetings with outside authors. The group had misinterpreted the ACA Literature Policy in my opin-

ion. Group members had good intentions and sincerity, but they promoted books that diverted the meeting focus away from the Twelve Steps or which omitted details on the ACA Solution, Laundry List and the ACA Traditions. While the literature was well written, it supplanted ACA's identity by focusing on the author and his or her views. ACA's own experience, strength and hope subtly took a back seat to the views of the author. As a result, it seemed like my group members could share about an author's views on toxic shame or family roles, and we could talk about insights into our family-of-origin, but we could not tell you what ACA stood for or its core message.

We understood powerlessness, turning it over, self-inventory and carrying the message. But we did not seem to understand the importance of ACA identity and our primary purpose. In my opinion, my ACA group was still dependent on outside sources to tell us what we already knew but which we failed to embrace as long as we looked outside ACA for solutions. This was not intentional nor was it rebelliousness. Looking back, there was a lack of ACA literature coming from ACA World Services at that time. So the group did its best to hold interest in the meeting and to stay focused on recovery. Today my home group uses only ACA Conference Approved Literature, and we have enjoyed a dramatic rebirth of the fellowship.

I have learned a lot from adult child authors and I still read their books. And these authors remain supportive of our fellowship. They have offered help when asked, and we appreciate that. But I can now see that ACA's identity is diffused when my home group affiliates itself with an author's book.

ACA literature is developed anonymously from fellowship input by ACA members serving on the ACA WSO Literature Committee out of gratitude to the fellowship. The literature is the fellowship voice from the ACA members themselves who attend meetings and who work the ACA program in their lives. By studying the ACA Traditions, I have learned that Twelve Step programs that survive and grow write their own literature and avoid diffusing their fellowship message with outside entities.

Sixth Tradition Meditation

ACA Fellowship Text, p.521

Higher Power. Grant me the wisdom to know when a group project will carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer, or will direct group energy away from carrying the message. Guide us away from discussions about property, prestige, or endorsing causes that are not ACA. Give me the courage to speak clearly and thoughtfully for what I believe honors Tradition Six.

Seventh Tradition Contributions– April 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.*

TEL 009 - Maple Shade, NJ	12.00
CA 510 - Pasadena, CA	200.00
NV 028 - Reno, NV	30.00
OR 079 - Portland, OR	28.00
GER 016 - Frankfurt, Germany	134.00
IL 147 - Bolingbrook, IL	50.00
CA 915 - Arroyo Grande, CA	84.30
CA 612 - San Leandro, CA	300.00
NJ 015 - Princeton, NJ	165.00
NM 015 - Albuquerque, NM	200.00
HI 016 - Hilo, Hawaii	50.00
LA 016 - Lake Charles, LA	45.00
NC 012 - Asheville, NC	80.00
BEL 005 - Brussels, Belgium	55.00
TX 082 - League City, TX	60.00
Anonymous	1,097.55

TOTAL 7th Tradition 2,590.85

ACA WSO Committee Highlights

George S. (ACA WSO Board of Trustees Vice Chairman and H&I Committee Chairperson)

We are continuing our research for the upcoming pamphlet on Hospitals & Institutions meetings. The goal is to develop a complete pamphlet with guidelines for interacting with hospitals and institutions while carrying the message of ACA recovery. Our Literature Committee has suggested creating a tri-fold brochure first. We are working on those details now and plan to have a rough draft available by the November teleconference.

To gather ideas and experience, I have been reaching out to ACA members coast to coast who are facilitating meetings in hospitals and institutions. I’ve discovered that under the term “Institutions” there are even more types of facilities than expected where we may carry the ACA message, supply literature, and offer meetings. For example, half-way houses and small clinics are facilities which may appreciate H&I outreach.

I know that in past years the Hospitals and Institutions Committee has requested books for some facilities. I can imagine doing the same, but I will develop specific criteria and make up-front connections before doing so. I’ve previously had very few calls about H&I from the front office, and those came through outreach. However, in the past month I have received two e-mails about starting H&I meetings.

In addition, our current H&I “committee of one” may be growing, as a couple of prospective committee members have shown interest this month!

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: April 2010

Bank Balances

<u>March 31, 2010</u>	
Checking Account	29,054.91
Pay Pal Account	2,021.09
Savings Account	60,023.89
<u>April 30, 2010</u>	
Checking Account	26,726.19
Pay Pal Account	1,000.25
Savings Account	60,033.89

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

\$14,500 was transferred from Pay Pal to the checking account during the month.

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

April 2010 Profit and Loss

Income

7th Tradition	2,590.85
ACA Text purchases	10,804.75
Bank Interest	9.87
California Sales Tax	209.74
ComLine Subscriptions	32.00
Fellowship Text index	27.50
Literature Sales	1,397.05
Workbook Purchases	3,700.75

Total Income **18,772.51**

Expense

ABC Committee	1,164.74
Fellowship text expenses	796.99
Literature Committee	4,859.73
Office Expenses	7,454.02
Pay Pal Fees	505.35
Payroll Expenses	7,129.38
Tax	25.00
Web and Support	177.02

Total Expense **22,112.23**

Net Income **-3,339.72**

Year to Date Summary: January-April 2010

Income

7th Tradition	6,168.01
ACA Text purchases	46,571.40
Bank Interest	38.77
California Sales Tax	1,049.14
ComLine Subscriptions	304.00
Fellowship Text index	201.25
Handbook Contribution	27.73
Literature Sales	6,263.50
Workbook Purchases	18,921.30

Total Income **79,545.10**

Expense

ABC Committee	2,029.61
Bank Fees	35.00
ComLine Expenses	760.90
Fellowship text expenses	9,280.78
Insurance	970.00
Literature Committee	4,904.93
Miscellaneous	0.00
Office Expenses	24,154.62
Pay Pal Fees	2,318.19
Payroll Expenses	19,791.38
Tax	25.00
Web and Support	329.14

Total Expense **64,599.55**

Net Income **14,945.55**

From the Treasurer:

This is my first report as your incoming Treasurer. Expenses were high this month due to replenishment of our Newcomer Pamphlets inventory (the Literature committee expense) and the ABC Transportation expenses. However, we are still ahead for the year, so that is good. We'll also be restocking our Fellowship Text inventory in May, so I anticipate a negative net income for that month as well. The good news is that we have the funds!

As discussed at the ABC, I am working 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). I project moving the WSO QuickBook financial records to that agency in time for the May 28 payroll processing. Time is of the essence in order to ensure our June payrolls can be processed as required while Phyllis and I are unavailable (on a church mission trip – and without a computer!).

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 ABC. My goal during this year is to migrate the accounting functions to our accounting service, meeting tracking functions to our Signal Hill office, reducing the Treasurer's role to the essential Treasurer functions. This will also include updating the impacted areas of the OPPM to ensure it reflects the actual treasurer functions. I also intend to work closely with the WSO board to gain their approval on all significant process changes.

In closing, I also must affirm and thank Phyllis R (past Treasurer) and Laurie B (retiring Bookkeeper) for their help in preparing this monthly report.

Scott R., ACA WSO Treasurer

ComLine

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

**Return Service
Requested**

