



ComLine

Adult Children of Alcoholics
Experience, Strength & Hope

Volume 26, Number 12

November 2010

ACA Tradition Eleven

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

“Many baffled or dejected people who find ACA are amazed at our program and what it has to offer. Even adult children with years of recovery in other Twelve Step programs find our program and new meaning in their lives. They are astonished at the level of identification and understanding found in ACA and not found elsewhere. Newer ACA members have said: “I had no idea that something like this existed...”

It would be tempting to find an important personality to promote ACA or to appear on national television, touting the ACA solution. But is this really okay? It might be great publicity for the individual, but what would it mean for ACA and the principle of anonymity in Tradition Eleven? We have to adhere to personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and other media to avoid entangling the ACA message with individual personalities. At the same time, we must meet the need to inform the public about our program.

In ACA, we have learned that the spiritual principle of anonymity means much more than merely identifying by our first name only at meetings. Anonymity means that we are willing to surrender our notions of personal ambition. Whether we would admit it or not, appearing in the media using our full name sets us apart from other ACA members. By doing so, we begin to feel different and the feeling of isolation creeps in. We also get the feeling that we are required to perform or say the right thing, which is a version of our people-pleasing trait. We can set ourselves up for an ACA relapse by placing ourselves in the public eye...

When we carry the ACA message to those who still suffer, we keep it simple. We share our personal experience about growing up in a dysfunctional home. We share honestly and openly about how we were raised and how we found the ACA program. We may share about The Laundry List (Problem) traits and the Twelve Steps as well, depending on the setting. We don't shy away from our growing-up experiences, but we balance that sharing with recovery experiences as well.”

Excerpts from pages 543 to 547 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.

Gratitude for a Higher Will

Eileen W.

Coming into recovery, I didn't really see anything to be grateful for. I was so preoccupied in thinking about the alcoholics in my life. Here is where I learned to look at the things in my life for which to be grateful. Believe me they far outweighed the things I thought of as problems.

Someone asked me one time what radio stations I had tuned in on my car radio. I never listened to my car radio. I was always busy thinking about what to do to solve the problems in my life: what if I said this? or, what if I did that? Step One was a huge help here. I needed to learn what I was powerless over and let it go. It didn't mean I was helpless, though. Step One was simply giving me permission to take care of myself in the situation. So, even though I was powerless over some of the things my alcoholic relatives were doing, I needed to turn my attention to taking care of myself in the situations. My car radio is now tuned to three different music stations.

Every morning now I combine my Third and Eleventh Steps, saying "I turn my life and my will over to Your care today; grant me knowledge of Your will for me and the power to carry that out." At first I didn't know how I was going to know what God's will would be for me. I finally decided that He would give me a "want" to do, when He wanted me to do something.

One of my favorite examples of this involved helping a woman find her lost dog. I was in Indiana attending my son's wedding. I had driven my car from his house to the

Bed and Breakfast where the rest of our family was staying. When I was ready to go back to my son's house, a "want" showed up. For some reason, I "wanted" to walk back. It was maybe a half mile away down some charming old town curving streets. But my critical parent said I needed to drive back. "What if they all planned to go somewhere, you would need your car, for Pete's sake!" I argued for a few minutes, but the "want" was still there. So, I looked up at my Higher Power and said, "If you want me to walk, I'll walk." And so I did.

Getting close to my son's house, I heard someone shouting. A woman in a car turned the corner ahead of me and came in my direction. She pulled to a stop and called out her window to me, "Have you seen a little brown dog? He got loose and I'm trying to find him..." "No, I haven't," I called back.

She drove off around a curve in the road just as her dog appeared on the street she had just turned from. She wouldn't have seen him in her rear view mirror because of the curve. But she was close enough to hear me call her, and she stopped. They were most happily reunited. One of the things that amazed me the most was how perfect the timing was. If I'd been seconds... seconds... earlier or later, it wouldn't have happened. God knew exactly how long I would argue before I set off to make it happen. The gratitude I now feel for this connection to my Higher Power is overwhelming.

More Tradition Eleven Insight from the ACA Fellowship Text

From page 542:

"I can appreciate that we don't advertise ACA or run television spots promoting the program as a miracle cure for the ages; however, we must do our best to get out the word about who we are and what we have to offer. Adult children are still being misdiagnosed. They are still being overlooked and sent to the wrong places to get help. Some of these adult children will die or go insane without finding us. As much as counseling has improved, it still seems to be overlooking ACA and its 30 years of experience in holding meetings and changing people's lives. This is not their fault. It is our job to tell people and counselors about ACA within the Traditions.

ACA is the real deal. We are a program that offers a proven solution. I have been to other places looking for help. I can tell there is nothing like ACA and our literature and our understanding of one another. This is our attractiveness."

From page 613:

"Ours is a program of attraction, not promotion. There is a difference between making information available and promoting the program.

Attraction means we put information out where individuals seeking it have possible access to it. This may include flyers, brochures, booklets, audio or video presentations, speakers, panels of speakers, web pages, and information booths. The tone of these activities must remain close to supplying information instead of being promotional.

We are not limited to supplying ACA information at Twelve Step events. Meeting directories and literature may be dropped off or sent to schools, medical facilities, therapists' offices, libraries, and any other institution or hospital willing to accept it. We ask for permission before placing meetings flyers or leaving ACA material at these places.

Promotion is different than giving out information about an ACA meeting or event. Promotion involves making promises of results. It has the tone of a sales pitch or a guarantee that cannot be delivered. While miracles and astounding recovery occur in ACA, we don't make promises or grand speeches about ACA in public or at ACA meetings. We can only say how ACA has improved our own lives. We can only extend an invitation to attend a meeting."

Gratitude for the ACA Promises

Leo D.

Gratitude is a concept that has changed in my life since I started my ACA work. At the beginning, I had to force gratitude. By the time ACA came into my life I felt defeated, depressed, and joyless. My fellowship felt safe enough that I could talk about these feelings and emotions and get them out of my head for a while. But I did not have an experience of relief and surrender: it was just a temporary release. When someone shared that gratitude could be found even in our darkest moments, I wanted to just storm out of the room. Couldn't they see how much pain I had? And if they did, how could they even mention being grateful for all that grief? I thought I would only be thankful when I was never feeling that pain again.

However, I kept coming back, trying to listen, share, and be honest, and also be willing to come to a better place in my life. I heard once that someone made a daily list of things that they were thankful for, nothing big or extraordinary, just things from the ordinary life: getting all green lights one morning, really tasting food and finding that it tasted good, a conversation with a friend, a misty morning, a blue sky, a bath... I tried doing this every night before

going to sleep. I set a goal of naming five things and little by little I increased my daily list to ten.

Something else I noticed was how some people in the fellowship could find humor in their adversities, and in their pain. Laughing with them felt good, and I wondered how I would feel if I could find something to laugh about in my own problems. By the time I did it, and everyone else laughed with me, I actually felt relief and decided I wanted more of that.

We are not in control, but when we can open ourselves to something new, whatever it is will find us. Gratitude has been one of those things in my life. ACA helped me discover gratitude and then it expanded in my yoga practice and became part of my daily life. At times, when at the end of a yoga session I find the words "gratitude for my body, mind and spirit", I marvel. Had someone told me at the beginning of my recovery journey that I would say those words, and actually believe them and know them true in my heart, I would have smirked or laughed. But, as it turned out, I didn't need anyone to tell me. I just had to open myself to what my program had promised me: "Gradually, with our Higher Power's help, we will learn to expect the best and get it."

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.

News from the 2011 Annual Business Conference Committee

The next Annual Business Conference of Adult Children of Alcoholics will be held in the Atlanta, Georgia metro area between April 29 and May 1, 2011.

The conference will be held at 3995 South Cobb Drive in Smyrna, Georgia, approximately 15 miles northwest of downtown Atlanta.

Since 1983, the Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization (ACA WSO) has conducted its Annual Business Conference on the 4th weekend in April; however the 2011 ABC is being held the following weekend due to the Easter holiday.

All ACA members are welcome to attend. The ABC provides open forums for communication and service coordination within ACA and improves consistency of service to the Fellowship. Conference proceedings are open to all ACA members, meetings, Intergroups and related service organizations.

Registered ACA meetings and Intergroups may propose items of business for consideration at the ABC. The guidelines for submission are simple:

- Each proposed item must be derived from an informed group conscience discussion.
- Items must be accompanied by a brief written rationale supporting the proposed action.
- Each submission must include the name and registration number of the group or Intergroup submitting the proposal, as well as the name and contact information of the group or Intergroup secretary.
- Each proposed ballot item received by the ABC Committee will be verified.

Proposal forms were mailed in October to all registered ACA meetings and Intergroups. The form can also be completed and submitted online at www.adultchildren.org/abc/. The deadline for submission of proposed items is December 31, 2010. Ballot items will then be compiled and circulated to all ACA groups in February for a collective group conscience vote of the fellowship. Ballot items receiving the support of 2/3 or more of groups responding will be presented for discussion at the 2011 ABC. Approved motions of the Annual Business Conference will then provide guidance and prioritizations to the ACA WSO Board for the coming year.

Each registered ACA meeting and Intergroup has also been mailed an ABC Registration form. The 2011 ABC Committee encourages every meeting and Intergroup to nominate one person to represent their group at this year's ABC. While all ACA members are welcome to attend the ABC, only one delegate from each registered group will be authorized to vote at the ABC. Please submit a Registration Form for each group member who will be attending the ABC and also identify the designated voting delegate for your group.

For conference attendees traveling by air, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is serviced by most major airlines and is located approximately 20 miles from the conference facility. The Committee suggests booking your lodging as soon as possible. Metro Atlanta is a known convention area where rooms can go quickly.

Here are just a few of the hotels located close to the 2011 Annual Business Conference. Please note that these hotel names are offered for information purposes only. ACA WSO is not affiliated with these businesses in any way.

AmeriHost Inn Smyrna (2.3 miles away)
5130 S. Cobb Dr. SE
(404) 794-1600

Comfort Inn and Suites (2.3 miles away)
2800 Highland Parkway
(678) 309-1200

Country Inn and Suites (2.3 miles away)
2175 Church Road SE
(404) 564-1105

Fairfield Inn by Marriott (2.6 miles away)
2450 Paces Ferry Road
(770) 435-4500

Holiday Inn Express (2.5 miles away)
1200 Winchester Parkway
(770) 333-9910

LaQuinta Inn and Suites (2.6 miles away)
2415 Paces Ferry Road
(770) 801-9002



Seventh Tradition Contributions– September 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-717, Los Angeles, CA	75.00
CA825, San Diego, CA	60.00
CA898, La Jolla, CA	120.00
CA925, Ventura, CA	48.00
CA942, San Diego, CA	60.00
CD0075, Luseland, Canada	40.00
DC010, Washington, DC	100.00
FL139, Miami, FL	100.00
GERO16, Frankfurt, Germany	135.00
IL147, Elk Grove Village, IL	25.00
MD026, Columbia, MD	205.00
MN121, Edina, MN	15.00
NC012, Asheville, NC	100.00
NM022, Albuquerque, NM	17.23
NY082, Staten Island, NY	13.00
OK019, Tulsa, OK	52.43
OK024, Oklahoma City, OK	157.00
OR090, Portland, OR	20.00
PA041, Abington, PA	50.00
PA053, Philadelphia, PA	40.00
TEL008, Washington, PA	15.00
TEL015, Los Angeles, CA	5.00
UT027, Moab, UT	20.00
WI076, Madison, WI	30.00
Anonymous Donations (10)	570.00
Total 7th Tradition	2,072.66

From the Treasurer:

Income this month was \$23,837.04. However, expenses were also up. This was one of the months processing three employee pay periods (happens twice a year), plus we ordered more ACA 12 Step Workbooks from the publisher this month. Yet, we still ended up with a nominal net gain of \$862.05. We made the first half payment for the workbook purchases in September, the remainder to be paid on delivery – probably in October. The 7th Tradition donations remain strong, with more than \$2,000 received in September.

We still need to have an Assistant Treasurer assigned to work with me this year, covering approval processes when I’m unavailable, and in preparation to be elected the WSO Treasurer at next year’s ABC. If you are interested in providing service to the fellowship through this role, please attend the next ACA WSO board meeting and introduce yourself!

Scott R., ACA WSO Treasurer

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.

ComLine

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Torrance, CA 90510
USA**

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Requested**

