



# ComLine

Adult Children of Alcoholics  
*Experience, Strength & Hope*

Volume 26, Number 11

October 2010

## ***ACA Tradition Ten***

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

“ACA members are a lot alike, but each member is free to believe and to think as he or she wishes. Even though our experiences as adult children are similar, and we work the Twelve Steps to recover, each person is an individual. Each person has ideas and dreams of his or her own. However, stating those ideas as ACA opinion or saying that ACA supports this or that cause goes contrary to Tradition Ten. As a fellowship, we have no opinion on outside issues. We exist for one purpose: To carry the message to those still suffering from the effects of growing up in a dysfunctional family. We avoid public controversy, and some group controversy, by focusing on what we do best.

As we move from isolation into ACA recovery, some of us become more involved in issues that matter to us, including those of political and social natures. We also find ourselves becoming more confident in sharing our opinions with others. However, within the ACA meeting, we also realize that discussions need to remain focused on our individual experiences with ACA recovery. This is a focus of our Tenth Tradition, reminding us to keep personal ideologies apart from the ACA meetings. Our members attend ACA meetings to share their recovery experience and to hear the program experience of others. They rightfully expect to hear discussions on ACA recovery topics.

...ACA groups and our service structure honor Tradition Ten and create a safe and consistent place to discuss ACA recovery. We leave legislation, education, and raising public awareness about family systems, abuse, or neglect to those involved in such endeavors. These are good causes, but they are outside ACA's reach and purpose. Our individual members are free to take on these issues, but as a fellowship we decline.”

*Excerpts from pages 539 and 540 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](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*

## 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](http://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.

## ACA and Outside Issues

### From the ACA Fellowship Text's *"Message to Non-Members"*

"Due to the nature of the Adult Children of Alcoholics program, this book will deal with family matters and family rearing practices. However, nothing in this book is to be construed as ACA taking a position on the family rearing practices or the methods of detecting and treating child abuse.

The primary purpose of ACA is to create a safe setting in which adults who grew up in dysfunctional homes can feel safe and find a way to share their stories with others in a meaningful manner. ACA experience shows that survival traits developed by an abused or neglected child continue to affect the adult in problematic ways that our fellowship understands and addresses. We offer hope and a sense of home for many adult children who live each day in quiet desperation without words to describe such despair. As part of our recovery process, many ACA members take a "blameless inventory" of their parents to understand and stop the generational nature of family

dysfunction. The parents are not blamed. However, the adult child examines how he or she was raised in connection with levels of nurturing, discipline, and feeling safe. In homes where obvious abuse and violence existed, the adult child names the behavior as one of the first steps in removing power from such parental acts.

While our individual members are free to choose their own path in life, ACA has no opinion on outside issues such as child welfare programs, counseling programs, or legislation that might deal with childhood abuse or neglect. There are many legitimate nonprofit and private programs throughout the land which deal with such matters; however, we are not affiliated with such programs.

Finally, this book is not a call to rally against dysfunctional families, parents, or family systems that many would consider problematic. In ACA, we learn to keep the focus on ourselves and live and let live."

### An Update From the Fellowship Office...

The ACA World Service Organization Office has received an unprecedented number of book and workbook orders in the past few months. Office staff are reporting an average of 20 orders per day, and many of those are multiple-copy orders.

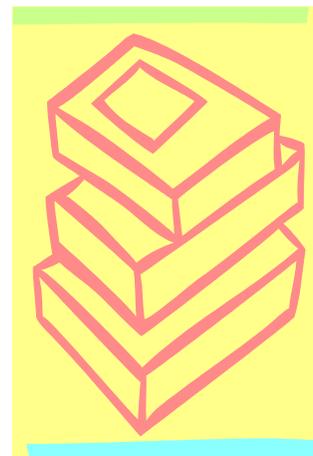
More than 2,500 copies of the ACA Fellowship Text and 12 Steps workbook were shipped out from the Signal Hill, California office between August 1st and October 1st. In fact, a new monthly record of 603 workbooks were shipped in September alone!

Phone calls to the office have also increased dramatically, both in the number of "live calls" fielded at the office and the number of Voice Mails left and returned by office staff.

World Service Organization employees now include:

- + Office Staff: *DiAnne A, Vivian L, and Kimberlee W*
- + Warehouse Staff: *Trudy B, Timar S, and Taylor D* (also assisting with literature orders)
- + Literature Order Fulfillment, Meeting Updates, and in-house Book Keeping: *Gloria D*

***Thanks to All for their continued work  
on behalf of the ACA Fellowship!***



## Finding Hope and Healing in ACA

Angela J.

Four months ago, I found the ACA program and that is when my healing began. Like most of us in ACA, my childhood was difficult. I'm the youngest of three and the only girl. My mother was emotionally and physically distant. She has always been more of a friend than a mother. She placed me in situations that a child should never have been in and allowed me to know things that a child should never know. So, as I grew up, our relationship became full of resentments, anger, pain, and abandonment. By the time I turned 14, she had walked out for the second time, only this time not to return.

My father was always working, and even when he was around, he was sometimes never really "around". That left me feeling more abandonment and hurt. I had played sports but neither parent seemed very interested so I eventually quit. My grades were never good, but with a lack of parenting and guidance I dropped out of school by 9<sup>th</sup> grade. My whole life since has been riddled with substance abuse, violence, and self-destructive behaviors.

When I found ACA I was able to identify with most of the Laundry List traits. I was also able to identify with others who had similar experiences in their childhood. For the first time in my life, I truly

felt accepted and understood. I was able to step back and look at my parents in a different way. I was able to see that, like me, they had been handed a "bundle of dysfunction" from their families as well. The only difference is that I have options that they did not. I have been able to let go of much of the shame and blame and resentments that I carry towards them. I am also becoming more loving towards myself and others.

The ACA program has given me the freedom to express myself, to open up, and to love myself. I have begun to approach relationships with more compassion and acceptance. Doing my family of origin work has given me a chance to really look at my family history and have a better understanding of why my parents were the way they were. It also allows me to see what steps I need to take to break the cycle.

I am so grateful for everything this program has given me and how it has improved my life. With each step and each day, I am given the opportunity to be heard, to listen, love, accept, feel, and be the true person that my true parent, my higher power, created me to be. I owe it all to this incredible and wonderful program of ACA.

### 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](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 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](http://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](http://www.adultchildren.org) and select "ComLine" from the options menu.

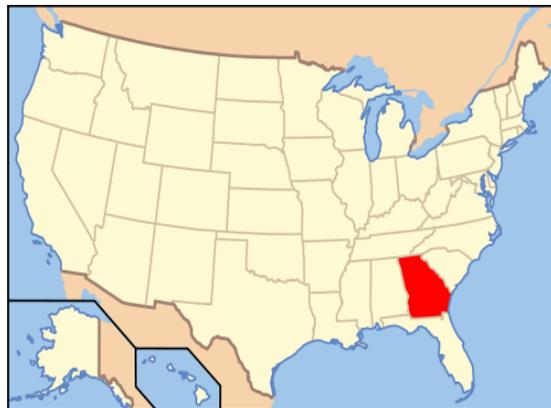
## Save the Date: 2011 Annual Business Conference

The 2011 ABC Committee is pleased to announce that the next Annual Business Conference of Adult Children of Alcoholics will be held in the Atlanta, Georgia metro area.

The conference will be held April 29 - May 1, 2011 in Smyrna, Georgia, USA. All ACA members are welcome to attend.

Each registered ACA meeting and Intergroup will be receiving information by mail in the coming weeks.

And watch for more details in the upcoming November ComLine...



## Tradition Ten: Avoiding Controversy and Emotional Intoxication

Omer G.

While Tradition Ten says Adult Children of Alcoholics has no opinion outside issues, it does not mean that I have no opinion. But my opinions, like everything else when I arrived at ACA, needed work. I found ACA in about 1986. I had done some recovery work in another Twelve Step fellowship so my opinions and ideas were already under review. From this other fellowship, I learned that I needed to help others and to surrender selfishness if I was to remain sober and clean.

But ACA is the program that truly helped me understand the origin of my thoughts and opinions, i.e. my thought life. The origin of my thoughts, beliefs, and defeatism came straight from my internalized parents. As the ACA Fellowship Text says, I absorbed my parents' attitudes, ideas and abuse because I was compelled to rely upon them year after year as a dependent child and teen.

Through the first 18 years of my life, I ingested hateful arguments, cursing, bigoted attitudes, close-mindedness, pettiness, and general verbal abuse. Typically, there was never open discussion on anything. Different views were met with suspicion and scorn. In fact, at my house you could be attacked for differing with the family opinion on race, politics, education, work, or food. Yes. Food. It did not matter.

Coming from their own place of ingested childhood shame, my parents spoke often without thinking (or caring) who they offended or maligned. Like most dysfunctional parents, mine were generally well mannered and could act lovingly toward their children. My parents provided for the family, helped strangers, lent small amounts of money, and even laughed at themselves on occasion. But they also argued regularly because of their addiction to excitement.

Through the years, I heard them create hundreds of petty arguments to get an excitement hit. Each day, they drank deeply from emotional intoxication driven by their

own wounded inner children. They hurt each other, their children and strangers because they were hurting themselves but never acknowledged it. For them, contrived arguments and verbal abuse were their solutions to daily living.

This was the model I was raised with and which I internalized. I could not have turned out differently. ACA made me aware of this and the program also offered a solution to change my thinking and actions. Awareness through the ACA Twelve Steps and a willingness to change were the first steps for change and emotional sobriety.

But what about Tradition Ten? In one sense Tradition Ten, and all the Traditions, are a measure of how well I have expelled my parents from my thought life. For example, if I attend a business meeting and react rudely to someone and argue with them without regard to ACA unity or decency, I am practicing old ways of thinking. If I have not addressed my issues with authority figures, I may create an authority figure in a business meeting and practice dysfunction on someone who does not deserve such treatment. I will invite them to an emotional drunk, so to speak. My behavior can trigger the rescuers in the meeting, who then take sides, and we digress into arguments that divert us from our primary purpose. Perhaps the reader can relate.

But by filtering my opinions and thoughts through the ACA Steps and by practicing ACA recovery, I avoid inciting controversy in ACA meetings or business meetings. I move closer to completing the separation from my internalized parents.

I also develop my own opinions and thoughts on matters. I understand that my opinions matter. But I don't use them to stir controversy on outside issues that are best left outside the rooms of ACA.

## Seventh Tradition Contributions– August 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.*

OK022-Oklahoma City, OK	378.61
CA612- Berkeley, CA	312.01
CN558-Toronto, CN	300.00
DE002-Newark, DE	190.00
IL164-Chicago, IL	120.00
CA920-Westlake Village, CA	100.00
MI115- Traverse City, MI	100.00
PA076-Oaks, PA	100.00
AUS047-Cairns, Queensland	91.00
CA865-Thousand Oaks, CA	75.00
CA915-Arroyo Grande, CA	70.50
NY075-Bronx, NY	67.00
CA428-Norwalk, CA	64.00
CA717- Los Angeles, CA.	61.00
GA020-Smyrna, GA	60.00
CA998-San Juan Capistrano, CA	55.05
HI010-Honolulu, HI	50.00
MI077-Bloomfield Hills, MI	50.00
LA016-Lake Charles, LA	45.00
CA1002-Ojai, CA.	35.00
WI076-Madison, WI	30.00
MN096-Burnsville, MN	28.00
MA035- West Roxbury, MA	25.00
NV024- Las Vegas, NV	20.00
WI067- Madison WI	20.00
TEL0009	16.00
OR079-Portland, OR	14.00
Anonymous Donations	135.00

**Total 7th Tradition** 2,612.17

### From the Treasurer:

The WSO income for August exceeded expenses once again for a monthly gain of \$4,105.43 and for a net gain of \$17,916.05 for the year. This includes Seventh Tradition donations in August of \$2,612.17, a growth reflecting the increasing value meetings are finding to support the WSO.

We have ordered additional ACA Workbooks to replenish our inventory, so I anticipate September expenses will increase considerably over August. However, the fortunate thing is that we have the funds on hand to cover this necessary purchase.

Both the online and paper Literature Order forms have been updated to reflect the current California Sales Tax rates, as well as the revised Postage fees approved at the last WSO Teleconference.

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.

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.

## ACA WSO Treasurer's Monthly Report - August 2010

### Bank Balances as of August 31, 2010:

ACA WSO Checking	23,863.99
Pay Pal Account	6,792.40
ACA WSO Savings	60,074.23
Petty Cash	300.00
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$91,030.62</b>

The balances above include transfers of \$22,000 of accumulating funds in the Pay Pal account to the ACA WSO Checking account.

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

### Profit and Loss Summary: August 2010

<u>Income</u>	
7th Tradition	2,612.17
ACA Fellowship book purchase	13,171.75
Bank Interest	10.20
California Sales Tax	316.36
ComLine Subscriptions	64.00
Fellowship text index	35.25
Literature Sales	1,347.70
Medallion Sales	444.05
Workbook Purchase	5,577.25
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>23,578.73</b>
<u>Expense</u>	
Lodging/Travel	600.00
Repairs & Maintenance	134.00
Accounting Services	1,450.00
Business Taxes/Licenses	50.00
Fellowship text expenses	585.00
Insurance	1,750.00
Literature Committee	1,325.00
Office Expenses	7,264.20
Office equipment	32.00
Office Supplies	1,561.98
Postage	3,742.23
Rent	1,661.00
Utilities	266.99
Pay Pal Fees	690.89
Payroll Expenses	5,574.21
Web and Support	50.00
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>19,473.30</b>
<b>Net Income (August)</b>	<b>4,105.43</b>

### Year to Date Summary: January - August 2010

<u>Income</u>	
7th Tradition	13,286.85
ACA Fellowship book purchase	98,979.67
Bank Interest	79.24
California Sales Tax	2,355.21
ComLine Subscriptions	624.00
Fellowship text index	397.50
Handbook Contribution	27.73
Literature Sales	12,333.90
Medallion Sales	1,606.95
Miscellaneous income	200.83
Workbook Purchase	43,044.05
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>172,935.93</b>
<u>Expense</u>	
Lodging/Travel	1,850.00
Repairs & Maintenance	134.00
ABC Committee	3,776.74
Meals/Drinks	55.00
Miscellaneous	81.91
Room Rental	272.23
Transportation/Lodging	2,925.29
ABC Committee - Other	442.31
Accounting Services	4,050.00
Bank Fees	124.33
Business Taxes/Licenses	50.00
ComLine Expenses	760.90
Fellowship text expenses	34,178.97
Insurance	2,718.93
Literature Committee	7,924.74
Miscellaneous	0.00
Office Expenses	50,532.84
Office equipment	264.67
Office Supplies	7,167.89
Postage	26,472.90
Printing	1,305.73
Rent	13,093.53
Utilities	2,221.86
Office Expenses - Other	6.26
Pay Pal Fees	5,149.13
Payroll Expenses	39,713.46
Tax	3,191.00
Web and Support	864.84
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>155,019.88</b>
<b>Net Income (Year to Date)</b>	<b>17,916.05</b>

**ComLine**

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

**Return Service  
Requested**

