On the Move

Hello Fellow ACAs! During the week of May 22–26, your WSO headquarters moved to a new home at 1458 East 33rd Street, Signal Hill, California 90755.

This move allows for WSO to expand its fellowship services function, accommodate more office staff (including our new General Manager), provide a little more warehouse space for literature, and even increases the space where volunteers can come and do service work to support ACA’s growth.

The move was coordinated by the Board of Trustees and costs were kept low. We planned for three days of office closure to move the inventory, furniture, computers and related equipment, and furnishings. It only took two days to be back up running and processing orders.

The staff worked very hard and was a real asset to the board during this transition.

We are all excited at WSO as this takes us to the next level of services that we can offer to our global membership!

In service,
Bill D.
Adult children who give service from a space of love have progressed from hurting to healing to helping (3-H Club).

Service from a space of love usually happens without us noticing it. Some refer to this as “secret service.” It is a secret because the person doing it doesn’t look for any special recognition. Just knowing that we are increasing the likelihood that others may recover is its own reward.

If you’re reading this, you might notice that adult children have written and sent in their contributions, but you may not have noticed that there is an Executive Editor and a host of nameless proof readers and layout trusted servants who give time and effort to make the ComLine possible.

You may have found this at the literature table at your meeting. Perhaps you didn’t realize that a member had to upload it to the ACA website so that the group trusted servant could download it, print it, staple it and bring it to the meeting.

When you attend a meeting, you might be aware that the chair, treasurer and secretary are doing service, but you may have overlooked that someone arrived early to set out the chairs, as well as ordering and bringing literature. At some meetings people bring snacks and/or make coffee. All of them are trusted servants doing “secret” service all in the name of sharing the message anonymously.

As we walk around our neighborhoods, we might see folks who might one day be members of the ACA fellowship. You may be the person that helps to carry the message to them by ensuring that your group is open and inviting to new members.

Going on vacation? Nice! How about taking some trifold or a BRB to leave behind? This could plant a seed of recovery in places you may not be able to imagine – secret service is like that.

Every adult child can help carry the ACA message to the sick and suffering adult child, and we can do it in an anonymous way that enriches our collective spirits.

You’re invited to join the 3-H Club in spreading the message of Experience, Strength, and Hope.

Promise Seven

“We will learn how to play and have fun in our lives.”
I have found that developing a world-class Loving Inner Parent has been perhaps the single most important component of my ACA program.

Our literature suggests that most ACAs don’t know what a Loving Inner Parent is, or what the concept even means. So, facing that dilemma, here’s how I proceeded.

I Asked for Help

I asked my Higher Power for help. Soon I had the intuitive thought that I would go to the Loving Inner Parent Olympics. In my imagination I went to the Loving Inner Parent Olympics, and walked up to the medalist ceremony. Standing on the medalist podium were three people. I went up to the guy who was standing in the middle, on the block that had a Number One printed on it. He was standing on that block because he had won the gold as the top Loving Inner Parent in the world.

I asked him if he would be my Loving Inner Parent. He was the top Loving Inner Parent in the world, having just won the gold, and he said yes. So he came back with me, and I introduced him to my Inner Child. My Inner Child told this world class Loving Inner Parent to buzz off. (Actually, the Inner Child used a cruder expression than “buzz off.”) Then my Inner Child ran down to the river.

My world class Loving Inner Parent had seen this behavior before, since he is the top Loving Inner Parent in the world, and understands children. Thus he was not surprised or agitated. He sat down and kept an eye on my Inner Child, who was down by the river, and now surly, throwing rocks into the water.

After some time sitting patiently, enjoying the landscape, my world class Loving Inner Parent called to the child, and told him he’d be there if the child needed anything. The child said nothing, and continued to throw rocks into the water.

Sometime later, my world class Loving Inner Parent told the child he was going to get ice cream. He asked my Inner Child if he wanted to go get ice cream. My Inner Child said nothing for a few seconds and then agreed to go get ice cream. After ice cream, my world class Loving Inner Parent asked my Inner Child if he would like to go to Disneyland. My Inner Child said yes.

So the two drove to the airport. They went to the airline ticket counter and bought tickets to Anaheim. They did not wait and buy half-price tickets for a month later, the way my economically-challenged family of origin might. Instead, they caught the next plane; flew to Anaheim; checked in at the Disneyland Hotel; and went out into the park.

It was early evening; and the cartoon characters were parading through the park singing. My Inner Child was in heaven.

That is how I found my world class Loving Inner Parent. I asked my Higher Power for help, and my Higher Power assisted me in creating this story.

My inner child said “yes”.

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Occasionally in our meetings we have members of the fellowship who share about the progression of their failing health with the expectation of dying. Depending on the level of recovery we have achieved, we hear the news through our current filters. Beginners may still believe what their dysfunctional parents believed about death and dying, perhaps that it is final, that it is not to be discussed, that we are too evil or unworthy to go to Heaven, or that God will punish us. Some of us are cleaning up the wreckage of the past, sorting out what our parents told us and showed us from what we truly believe about dying. Others of us are creating the lives we choose to live, focusing on living, not death. Some of us are old-timers who live in the ACA Promises, and with death closer at hand, our thoughts may touch on our ultimate passing.

I heard someone who was facing his own imminent death share at a meeting, “Eventually, we all die. It’s just a question of how, when, and where.” Yeah. Now, maybe, it’s my turn. The biopsy and the treatment have yet to be experienced, so I may survive after all, but I am 68, so if not now, it’s coming soon.

When my husband died, I had a front-row seat to watching a program old-timer who was living in the ACA Promises deal with the announcement of his oncologist that he had less than six months to live. He had worked hard in program to become happy, joyous, and free. He was living the dream. This did not throw him into the abyss of doubt and dysfunction. In ACA he had achieved responsible adulthood and understood that he needed to accept the things he could not change. So he put his affairs in order, step by step. He said his goodbyes to his loved ones. He shared his understanding of life, death, and the after-life at meetings. He had let go of his life to God; he trusted in God to do the right thing. He showed up for one last Hail Mary attempt to save his life through a new medical treatment. He tried, but he died. It was God’s will for him. I suspect God had another job for him to do.

When I had my first biopsy years ago at the beginning of my recovery, I was devastated that I was dying. I wondered why God hated me so much. I wondered what I had done that was so awful that He was killing me. I cried and cried believing that God had forsaken me. I believed I was unworthy of recovering enough to justify my continuing existence. The biopsy was negative.

Yesterday, I heard the actual words of the doctor as he shared the results of a CT scan showing what he felt were carcinoma nodules in my lungs with a suspiciously large lymph node nearby. The solemnity of the doctor and his nurse foreshadowed the likelihood of metastasized cancer. I sincerely thanked the ER staff for their professionalism and dedication. I shook the doctor’s hand and realized how cold it was. I went home, set the implications aside, ate, and went to bed around 10 pm instead of after the comedians’ monologues at midnight.

I subscribe to the notion that if you know how to live, you know how to die. ACA has taught me to live. This morning I picked up my Basset Hound, Lucy, from Doggie Day Care. I sent e-mails to loved ones letting them know the CT results so I didn’t bottle up the news. I have laundry to do. I have made lists of things I need to do to put my affairs in order. I have begun turning over program responsibilities and outside-of-program commitments. I am considering who can best provide perfect, loving homes for my Basset and my Tuxedo cat as I begin biopsies and treatment. That’s what responsible adults do who accept what is, do what they can, trust in God, and live in the ACA Promises. If it is my time, I will miss you, but I will have rejoined the pulse of all life, the “Over-Soul” as described by Ralph Waldo Emerson, that I call God.

Promise Eight

“We will choose to love people who can love and be responsible for themselves.”
Before the Solution

by Tami F., Florida

Paper Diary cut deep into who I am
Soon I may be gone
And she can stay
That child within, kept in chains
Bound by the self-contempt and shame
She was always sweet and kind
A pure delight, but I never let her shine
Or come out to play
She never knew
So she never grew
No wonder she wasn't all she could be,
she wasn't allowed to dream
I kept her in the darkness feeding her lies
And starving her from affection with why's
I wasted so much time in the pills and cloudy wine
Killing her slowly, and when she didn't die
Again I would try
With quicker methods and a more vicious motive
I am a child abuse, the child is me
Misused all the talents we share
To look at her now, see the damage done
Is almost more than I can bear
Then you shared, hope was there

Too Sick to Love

by Teresa M.

We tried, to be there for each other.
We wanted to be friends.
We were available, empathic listeners.
But we were too sick to love.
We never knew it, no models for it.
We met in 12 steps and in Christ; but we weren't nice.
You felt entitled and you said I controlled.
You were ungrateful, I perceived.
I left abused with my unmet needs.

Goodbye False Construct

My false self was a wounded, desperate, manic/depressive bull in a China shop.
He was an overwhelming waterfall of words with an overbearing push to be seen, heard and understood, or a suicidal husk of shame lying on his face.
Connecticut Innermost Group – The Gathering

Connecticut may be a small state, but it is large in ACA Recovery! Over the weekend of April 14-16, 2017, the East Lyme Connecticut ACA meeting, called the Innermost Group, sponsored our first ACA multi-state conference in Ivoryton.

We filled our reserved slots for 45 attendees with ACA members from Connecticut and Rhode Island. The weekend balanced workshops on topics related to ACA recovery with fun events for our inner children, including dance, yoga and jewelry making.

Ice Breakers

Members were delighted with the two “ice breakers.” Gathered in a large circle, we first danced the hokey pokey to much laughter. Then we tossed or rolled a large ball of multi-colored yarn from member to member across the room, holding on to the end before passing it on. The result was a gorgeous sun catcher that all agreed simply had to be kept in place for the entire weekend, reminding us that we are all connected.

Recovery Workshops

The recovery workshops included one on Love Addiction. Members were so interested in the topic that we continued into Saturday night with a video on the topic.

Another presentation was based on the ACA pamphlet “Good Enough Group” with helpful suggestions to assure emotional sobriety/balance in ACA meetings.

The concept of a good enough group corresponds to the “good enough caretaker,” one who doesn’t have to be perfect—just “good enough” to provide a safe base for an alarmed child to return to for comfort.

We heard a panel on Fellow Traveler v. Sponsor and one on the Inner Child. Finally, there were two creative writing workshops available for participants to try.

What’s In Store for 2018

We were able to book Easter weekend again for 2018, which we did before we left. We hope to double in size next year, and with the positive reaction to this year’s Gathering, we think we just might do it! 🌸

Christine B.
State Intergroup Chair
Over 370 attendees experienced a dazzling two and a half days of non-stop meetings, workshops, panels and special events. Members and members-to-be came from three continents, eight countries, and all across the United States.

Friday night launched the event with marathon meetings, an opening speaker meeting incorporating visuals, and music presented by Jim Y. from San Francisco. The evening finished with a spellbinding spoken word presentation by Beryl V. from England.

Saturday kept up the pace with an opening ceremony offering tokens to all present for the length of ACA participation. Workshops and panels on the many aspects of ACA recovery were very popular with standing room only in some. Marathon meetings on each of the Laundry List Traits continued throughout the day.

The evening banquet featured outgoing Board Chairman Larry A. as keynote speaker. Toronto was announced as the 2018 host city for the ABC and World Convention. Following the banquet, a party and dance capped off the evening.

Sunday offered new opportunities for recovery with more workshops, panels and meetings.

The highlight of the day was the Luncheon with a dynamic presentation by an ACA couple in recovery, Robin T. and Charlie H. After more activities, including an outdoor swim, the closing ceremony was held.

Several new activities added to the success of the event. A Thursday night excursion to Old Town for a delicious Mexican buffet featured singer and songwriter Mardi M. Her performance deeply touched the audience.

An interactive art project entitled “Hopes, Dreams and Aspirations” allowed each person to write his or her own on beautiful paper and hang on the installation. Over 400 were collected. Throughout the convention, doodle tables were available for all the inner children to relax and play.

In an effort to allow the membership greater access to the Board, volunteer activities at the national level, the ComLine, and other aspects of ACA, outreach tables were maintained in main hallway.

On Thursday night the delegates and trustees joined the Host Committee Chair Susan C. and her awesome committee in Old Town at a Mexican restaurant for a wonderful evening of San Diego fellowship and food. Our own ComLine Editor Mardi M. entertained the group with wonderful songs she had written accompanied by her own guitar playing.

There were 12 ballot proposals that received the two-thirds or greater affirmative vote by the fellowship to become motions at the ABC. The motions were all discussed in depth and given due consideration by the delegates and trustees. The minority opinion was heard for each proposal and even affected the final outcome of some of the votes.

A brief summary of how the ABC voted on the ballot proposal motions can be found at http://repository.adultchildren.org/committee-abc. A more detailed report will be forthcoming in the official minutes of the ABC.

Please get involved with your WSO and let’s make ACA available to everyone around the world who needs it!
Member & Public Services (MPS) Outreach

By Christine B.

To enhance ACA WSO communications, we are pleased to announce the launch of an additional ACA Members Email Newsletter, “The Traveler”, which will complement the ComLine with shorter, monthly updates on ACA resources, news, events and other practical information designed for easy access from your in box.

The first newsletter will be available soon to anyone who opts into the mailing list below.

To sign up for “The Traveler”, visit our site at www.adultchildren.org/newsletter.

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Treasurer, Summer 2017

Hello Fellow ACA members,

As your trusted servant and new Treasurer, I am committed to ensuring our finances are transparent and as accurate as possible. To that end, we have begun implementing office procedures which are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and exploring better ways to manage our literature inventory across multiple distribution channels. These procedures are being coordinated by the Finance Committee and the rest of the WSO Board and being implemented with the help of our staff, the outside bookkeeper, and the new general manager.

Just like an ACA group should not rely heavily on book sales to meet its financial obligations, so should WSO not rely heavily on book sales to meet its fellowship services operating budget. Our 7th Tradition states, “Every ACA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

I know we can do a better job supporting our much needed service office through contributions. I am going to make a commitment to encourage my home group to send in contributions more regularly. I hope you all will too.

In service,

Bill D., Treasurer

WSO Board of Trustees

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ACA Haiku ~ by Teresa M.

E-mail from brother;
manipulation again.
Pray mind back to peace.
Service Made Simple

A series of interviews featuring the dedicated Adult Children who serve our Fellowship

By Jim R.

Introducing: Anne K., Brooklyn, New York, USA
Meeting member since summer 2013
“Tuesday Toolbox”, New York 135

Kristian N., Brooklyn, New York, USA
Meeting member since summer 2015
“Steps to Freedom”, not yet registered

I am intrigued by your service of starting a meeting. What inspired you both?

[KN] Going to two to three meetings a week, I heard lots of pain and anger, shame and fear – not lots of “solution”. I have always been a step person and find that my recovery happens best in taking the steps, then taking others through them. So, I started a step meeting in the fall of 2016.

[AK] Truthfully, I wanted a better meeting. For me. I was hearing people’s histories, an important part of recovery, but it felt incomplete. There was a lack of solution. I was looking for tools of recovery. I found a time and place convenient for me, supporting my recovery, with surety that it would also be supportive for others.

What were your challenges at the time? Did any feelings come up?

[AK] It was very easy. I had started meetings in another fellowship. I had a script from another ACA meeting, and our literature. It seems like a big deal, but it’s an easy and simple thing to do. With good intentions, God figures it out. God wants it to happen.

[KN] My personal challenge was finding people in ACA I could relate to. I have also, at times, felt frustrated at the lack of ACA infrastructure and the dearth of meeting choice in NYC, but new meetings continue to get established.

If someone asked about starting a new meeting, what advice would you offer?

[AK] I had a specific vision. It’s hard to let go of direction. I “knew” exactly what was needed for a perfect meeting – others offered different ideas. Like any relationship, we tried out new things and learned from the experience. Remember: Higher Power starts a meeting through you, but may have other plans. Anyway, you can always start another meeting.

[KN] Interestingly, the meeting I started had a big shift. I tried not to be overly-controlling – always an issue for “founders”. As people suggested tweaking the format, I called for a group inventory. We utilized a different twelve-step group inventory materials. The meeting moved away from reading a different step synopsis each week, toward a more “sharing” format. So, now I’m starting a new meeting – a step meeting – with a “special interest” for “creatives.” It’s on the Pratt Institute campus, serving as outreach to students. Of course, all are welcome. It’s exciting.

Promise Nine

“Healthy boundaries and limits will become easier for us to set.”
Delegates Corner

Congratulations and gratitude to Delegates and to the Delegate Training Sub-Committee for their service at Annual Business Conference. The workshops, phone conferences, Delegate Education page and Delegates connecting prior to attending via the “Buddy System” and at the ABC, lent to a more informed event. Knowledge of the Traditions, Concepts, Robert’s Rules of Order and general service experience were also evident. The 2017 conference had a total of 87 delegates, up from 33 in 2016. It is great news to have more and more groups represented.

While often the numbers of Delegates are reflected in how accessible the conference is, there are ways your group can send a Delegate. Among the reasons meetings tend not to be represented is the cost and time away from work. Alongside the Seventh Tradition basket some groups pass a separate basket for a Delegate to attend the ABC. The business meeting is the place to begin this discussion for your group.

From the Delegate Education page ACA Getting Started:

While ability depends on the financial condition of a group or intergroup, it is customary for individuals who travel to serve in twelve step groups to be assisted with the expense. Partial or full reimbursement of expenses by the group or intergroup sending the delegate enables the largest number of members to be of service, thus sponsoring a fuller participation.

You can access this page clicking on Repository, then Delegate Education page. The website is such a wealth of information not always found in our BRB and a great place to begin learning how you can be of service.

Joining a service committee is a way to stay in service and is not limited to being a Delegate. As the fellowship grows, service is necessary and gives back to our personal recovery. Working with people dedicated to recovery can manifest skills we were not able to nourish growing up in dysfunctional families. We learn to care about each other, help each other in a common goal, and hear different ideas and opinions while practicing the Steps, Traditions and Concepts. While it may mean stepping out of our familiar comfort zone, it enables the delivery of The Promises. In addition to the DTSC, other service committees can be found on the Repository.

To our 2017 delegates, the DTSC will be sending out a survey regarding conference experiences and suggestions on trainings. So please be on the lookout and know that your participation will help us serve. As a delegate listening in to the WSO monthly business conference on the second Saturday of each month is another service toward keeping your group informed of the ACA Fellowship. Also more Intergroups and Regions have been forming. You can see if there is an Intergroup near you by clicking on Resources on the ACA/WSO website.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin D.
Vice Chair / DTSC

Healing Pool Exercises, 2017 AWC
European Committee Update

The European Committee is pleased to announce that printing ACA literature in Europe has finally begun and the first piece printed in Europe was the Swedish Newcomer booklet (pictured). 1,000 copies were printed and sent to the Inter-group in Sweden in April.

The Finnish Yellow Workbook is heading to production and should be printed in June. This will be followed soon by reprints of the Danish Big Red Book and Yellow Workbook.

After that we expect the Russian Big Red Book and Greek Meditation book to follow. We are currently estimating that 5,000 pieces of literature will be printed in Europe in 2017.

Attend our 4th Annual European Meeting in Madrid, Spain

Saturday, 16 September is the date for our 4th Annual European Meeting. This year it will be held in Madrid, Spain.

We have chosen a venue which is right in the center of Madrid and surrounded by plenty of restaurants, cafés, and things to see and do with places to stay that cater to all budgets.

In addition to the all-day event on Saturday, we plan to have an informal dinner for all of those gathered both on Friday night and Saturday night.

We are also looking to organize a walking tour on Sunday morning for visitors from out of town.

Visit www.acawsoec.com for updates.

ACA Books Now Available through Amazon in England!

On 20 May our account with Amazon in the UK was finally verified, which allowed us to begin offering books through amazon.co.uk.

This has been a long journey that began back in January 2016 when the green light was given for this initiative. Since October 2016 we have had 700 books sitting in an Amazon warehouse in England waiting for verification from Amazon.

In all, it has taken us about 13 months to get to this point. And while all our books in England can be bought and shipped in the UK, even with Amazon Prime, it will take a while before people in other countries can have a book shipped to them as well.

For example, at the time of this announcement, the BRB can only be shipped to addresses in the UK, Germany, Spain, France and Italy.

Though other books can also be shipped to various countries, this will still take some time to set up, so keep checking online to see when a particular book can be shipped to your country.

Following is a link to the ACAWSO store front so that you can see which books we currently offer and their cost in USD: https://www.amazon.co.uk/s?merchant=A1UOP2JDGT6NQR&refinements=p_0. ✯