

The Loving Parent Guidebook

Sample ACA Study Group – Virtual or In-Person

This sample is from a study group that met for one year, every other week, with the expectation that members would read the chapter and do the exercises beforehand. Some members found this more doable than others due to commitments and inner family members' fears/concerns. Feel free to adapt this format to your group's preferred pacing and meeting frequency. For example, groups wanting to meet weekly rather than every two weeks could cover half a chapter each week or one chapter a week.

The co-chairs led the meetings for the first few months. Then members signed up in a shared online document ahead of time to chair. If a group wanted to ensure that the reading and exercises happen, they could choose to read and complete exercises during group meetings. There are pros and cons to each style.

Timeline

7:00 – 7:05 Opening

7:05 – 7:55 Middle Section:

7:05 – 7:20 Reading and Sharing

7:20 - 7:55, Chair's Choice: Shares/Activity/More Reading

7:55 – 8:00 Close the meeting

OPENING

Welcome to *The Loving Parent Guidebook* group. We are a closed group of fellow travelers who wish to create a safe and supportive environment to work through *The Loving Parent Guidebook*. Our goal is to gain greater emotional and personal freedom in our lives today by becoming our own loving parent. We will open the meeting with a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer.

____ [god, higher power, life, universe, etc.], grant me the **serenity** to accept the things I cannot change, the **courage** to change the things I can, and the **wisdom** to know the difference.

The ACA Solution states, “The solution is to become your own loving parent. As ACA becomes a safe place for you, you will find freedom to express all the hurts and fears that you have kept inside and to free yourself from the shame and blame that are carry-overs from the past. You will become an adult who is imprisoned no longer by childhood reactions. You will recover the child within you, learning to love and accept yourself.”

In keeping with The Solution, we will take a full minute to check in with our inner landscape, including our bodily sensations and emotions. You might choose to pay attention to your inner family members and practice becoming aware of what you are feeling. There is no right or wrong way to do this. *Chairperson times one minute.*

MIDDLE SECTION

Chairperson either:

- Picks a section from the current chapter to read
- Asks members to select what stood out to them from the chapter or set of pages and reads that, sharing the page number so that people can follow along

Our reading selection begins on page _____. Who would like to start reading?

It is now time for sharing for _____ minutes each (*chairperson picks between 3-5 minutes and keeps time*). Who would like to begin?

The chairperson decided ahead of time what to do next. It differed each time:

- More reading and sharing
- Doing an exercise together from the current chapter and sharing
- Leading a non-dominant handwriting exercise followed by sharing
- Leading a guided meditation related to the chapter, followed by sharing.

Options: break-out rooms with a bigger virtual group, breaking into small groups for in-person meetings.

CLOSING

It is now time to close the meeting, beginning with our checkout process. Please say **1 or 2 words** as a check-out. It is always OK to pass. Who would like to begin?

Any housekeeping issues from chairs or group members? [*consider monthly WSO 7th Tradition contribution*]

Be gentle with yourself this week and remember: asking for help is a sign of strength. Recovery happens in community.

We will now close with the revised ACA version of the Serenity Prayer:

_____ [*god, higher power, life, universe, etc.*], grant me the **serenity** to accept the people I cannot change, the **courage** to change the one I can, and the **wisdom** to know that one is me.

For a sample spreadsheet sign up form and schedule, and other resources, visit <http://lpg.adultchildren.org>.