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# WSO IS...

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## ACA WSO IS

The Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization (ACA WSO) is a non-profit, tax exempt (501.C3) organization, incorporated in the State of California. Our service structures includes Groups (meetings), Intergroups, and emerging Regions. Our trademark is “ACA” and our basic materials are written for use within our fellowship.

## OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE

The primary purpose of ACA WSO is to carry the message to all who may suffer from being raised in an alcoholic or other dysfunctional environment in keeping with the Twelfth Step.

## THE WSO POLICY AND PROCEDURE GUIDE

The *WSO Policy and Procedure Guide* (in continual revision) reflects the recommendations and decisions of our growing fellowship as a whole and provides guidance and direction in keeping with the First Tradition. Each group is autonomous, therefore, WSO does not dictate the “governing rules and regulations” of individual groups. We do request that each group registered with our organization follows the principles outlined by the ACA Twelve Traditions and promotes recovery through the Twelve Steps of ACA.

## WHAT WE CALL THIS ORGANIZATION

ACA WSO, in its efforts to follow the principles of inclusion rather than exclusion, encompasses groups that may identify themselves as “Adult Children Anonymous” as well as “Adult Children of Alcoholics”. Some groups were registered as “Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families (ACDF), however, that name and acronym now belong to a separate professional organization.

## GROUP IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

Each group’s identification number (assigned upon registration) contains their Region, State, and individual group assigned numbers. This number identifies the input of each group through that group conscience decision process, as they choose to participate. It also identifies the delegate from that group who votes in attendance at our Annual Business Conference (ABC).

## THE ANNUAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

The conference is designed to provide a forum for the voice of each group to be heard. “Our leaders are but trusted servants” and follow the directions of the group delegates at this convention. As such, each group is encouraged to accept responsibility for the evolution and continuation of the ACA program to continue “carrying the message to those who still suffer” through their participation in this annual event.

## WHAT THE SEVENTH TRADITION MEANS TO WSO

Following the principles of the Sixth and Seventh Traditions, our primary source of funds for this effort are the donations from our registered groups. Fiscal reports are always available upon request.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR MEETING IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

We suggest that groups use their assigned number on all correspondence and donations, and that as volunteers in service rotate, each service worker pass on to their replacement all copies of correspondence.

In Service,

*The ACA WSO Board of Trustees*

## THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF ACA

TRADITION ONE: Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends on ACA unity.

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.

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.

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.

TRADITION FIVE: Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the adult child who still suffers.

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.

TRADITION SEVEN: Every ACA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

TRADITION EIGHT: Adult Children of Alcoholics should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

TRADITION NINE: ACA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

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

TRADITION ELEVEN: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, films, and other public media.

TRADITION TWELVE: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

## TWELVE CONCEPTS FOR ACA WSO

The Twelve Concepts keep our world services and groups focused on carrying a consistent ACA message while maintaining a service structure responsible to the fellowship voice. The Concepts help trusted servants discern the will of ACA and carry out the responsibilities granted by the fellowship. We bring humility and gratitude to this fellowship work. At times, we act on behalf of the fellowship, knowing our duties are on loan from the fellowship as a whole.

Ultimately, service work demands that we relinquish our individual will and accept God's will to do God's work. The Concepts make it possible for us to operate most efficiently and effectively while we strive to achieve a more perfect union with our Higher Power.

**CONCEPT I:** The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for ACA World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.

**CONCEPT II:** Authority for the active maintenance of our world services is hereby delegated to the actual voice, the effective conscience for our whole fellowship.

**CONCEPT III:** As a means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relationship between the ACA meetings, the ACA WSO Board of Trustees, and its staff and committees, and thus ensuring their effective leadership, it is herein suggested that we endow each of these elements of service with the traditional Right of Decision.\*

**CONCEPT IV:** Throughout our structure, we maintain at all responsible levels a traditional Right of Participation.

**CONCEPT V:** Throughout our structure, a Right of Petition prevails, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of grievances will be carefully considered.

**CONCEPT VI:** On behalf of ACA as a whole, our Annual Business Conference has the principal responsibility for the maintenance of our world services, and it traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Annual Business Conference also recognizes that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters would be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of the World Service Organization when they act among themselves as the World Service Organization of Adult Children of Alcoholics.

**CONCEPT VII:** The Annual Business Conference recognizes that the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws of the Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization are legal instruments: that the Trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all of the world service affairs of Adult Children of Alcoholics. It is further understood that our World Service Organization relies upon the force of tradition and the power of the ACA purse for its final effectiveness.

**CONCEPT VIII:** The Trustees of the World Service Organization act in this primary capacity: with respect to the larger matters

of over-all policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs.

**CONCEPT IX:** Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are, at all levels, indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization.

**CONCEPT X:** Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority – the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description, or by the Operating Policy and Procedures Manual and bylaws.

**CONCEPT XI:** While the Trustees hold final responsibility for ACA's World Service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate trustees, executives, staffs, and consultants. Therefore the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.

**CONCEPT XII:** In all its proceedings, Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization shall observe the spirit of the ACA Twelve Traditions, taking great care that the conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no WSO action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the WSO may act for the service of Adult Children of Alcoholics, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the fellowship of Adult Children of Alcoholics which it serves, the WSO itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

\*The right of decision as defined herein refers to:

- 1) the right and responsibility of each trusted servant to speak and vote his/her own conscience, in the absence of any contrary mandate, on any issue regardless of the level of service;
- 2) the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and the Commitment to Service will be followed by trusted servants in decision making;
- 3) delegates to the Annual Business Conference are trusted servants and therefore equally guided by the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts, and the Commitment to Service;
- 4) standard practice that decisions made by subcommittees are subject to the authority of the service body which creates its mission and defines its parameters.

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Dysfunctional Families  
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