

Awareness, Courage, Action ACA Meeting Format
Saturday, 12:00-1:30 ALANO CLUB, LOFT (currently via Zoom)

Hello, my name is _____, and I am an Adult Child. Welcome to the Awareness, Courage, Action Meeting of Adult Children of Alcoholics.

Before we begin the meeting, there are a few reminders for this digital meeting space:

- Please keep your microphone muted onscreen to reduce background noise and so the person sharing can be heard well by everyone. If your mic is on by accident you may see a pop up letting you know we have muted you. Feel free to unmute when you are ready to share. Please re-mute your microphone when you are finished.
- If you need to do things you wouldn't normally do in person during the meeting, please mute your video as well and feel encouraged to unmute when you are done doing so.
- Out of regard for our anonymity all recording has been disabled;
- To support confidentiality and anonymity for all attendees, please refrain from taking screenshots or photographs during the meeting
- Complete phone numbers for those who call in, will not be displayed.
- Please refrain from using chat until after the meeting (to honor no-crosstalk)
- Please check the Participants list: [see button at bottom of screen] to remove your last name
- For additional quiet from others such as family, roommates, animals, and privacy for other members, headphones are a suggested option
- If your screen name includes your last name, you can change it to protect your anonymity and online security. If you do not know how to change your screen name, ask in the chat and the host or a co-host will help you.

We meet to share the experiences we had as children growing up in an alcoholic or dysfunctional home. That experience infected us then, and it affects us today. By practicing the Twelve Steps and by attending meetings regularly, we find freedom from the effects of alcoholism or other family dysfunction. As ACA members, we identify with the Laundry List traits. We learn to live in The Solution of re-parenting ourselves, one day at a time.

ACA is an inclusive organization and open to all affected by family dysfunction. We strive to create an atmosphere that reflects the diverse communities we serve and where everyone feels empowered to be their full, authentic selves.

Please turn off your cell phone sounds or distracting features.

Also, a special note: Due to the adult nature of this meeting, we discourage pre-teen children from attending.

Will you please join me in a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer to open the meeting?

**God, 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.**

- Will a Volunteer please introduce yourself and read The Problem?
- Will a Volunteer please introduce yourself and read The Solution?
- Will a Volunteer please introduce yourself and read either The ACA 12 Steps or Tony A's 12 Steps

You may have related to our readings even if there was no apparent alcoholism or addiction in your home. This is common because dysfunction can occur in a family without the presence of addiction. We welcome you. If you are attending an ACA meeting for the first time ever, please introduce yourself by your first name and, if you wish, share why you are here today. (pause)

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We're glad you're here, keep coming back. **(pause to distribute Breaking the Bonds)** This meeting celebrates milestones in recovery. Are there any ACA Birthdays? We have 1month, 6 consecutive meetings, 2 months, 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, 1 year or multiple years?

Now we will go around and introduce ourselves by first names. We will start with A and work through the alphabet.

(Read only if new members are present) For newcomers, the ACA program is not easy, but if you can handle what comes up at six meetings you will start to come out of denial. Confronting your denial about family addiction or dysfunction will give you freedom from the past. Your life will change. You will make friends and truly learn how to live with greater choice and personal freedom. You will learn to focus on yourself and let others be responsible for their own lives. There is only one requirement for ACA membership: the desire to recover from the effects of family dysfunction. In the beginning, many of us could not recognize or accept that some of our attitudes or behaviors result from being raised in an alcoholic or other dysfunctional family. We behave as Adult Children, which means we bring self-doubt and fear learned in childhood to our adult interactions. By attending six meetings in a row and attending regularly thereafter, we come to know and begin to act as our True Selves. Would someone like to take 2-3 minutes to share how ACA has helped them?

For those who would like to share or seek phone numbers to connect with fellow travelers after the meeting, we will leave the Zoom session open with chat enabled for 10 minutes after the meeting ends. If you are interested in leading next week's meeting, we will seek a volunteer near the end of today's meeting; we also have a google doc sign-up calendar. We ask that you be active in the program to lead meetings. We have our business meeting on the 3rd Saturday of each month and we end our sharing 10 minutes early that day. All are welcome to attend.

We encourage each member to share openly about his or her experiences as time allows.

As we practice healthier connections in ACA, we monitor our motivation to connect with the newcomer or other members. We strive to respect one another's boundaries. We avoid using the fellowship to solicit emotional gratification, personal or financial favors, or romance and sexual encounters. We refrain from taking advantage of perceived authority positions, such as service roles or long-time membership within the fellowship, to assert control over other members. If you feel uncomfortable about the approach from a member, before, during or after the meeting, we suggest you speak up!

This is a safe place to share your adult and childhood experiences. What you hear at this meeting should remain at the meeting. We do not talk about another person's story or experiences to other people. Please respect the anonymity of those who share here today.

To allow everyone a chance to share during the meeting, we ask each person to limit their sharing to 4 minutes. This group has elected to use a timekeeper to help with this. Would somebody volunteer to be the timekeeper? A chime will go off when 4 minutes are up. The chime does not mean you should immediately stop talking; it is meant as a gentle reminder to finish up. We also ask that you do not share twice until every member has shared or has been given a chance to do so.

Cross Talk - Before we begin sharing, I'd like to mention that we do not "cross talk" in this meeting. Cross talk means interrupting, referring to, or commenting on what another person has said during the meeting. We do not cross talk because adult children come from family backgrounds where feelings and perceptions were judged as wrong or defective. In ACA, each person may share feelings and perceptions without fear of judgment. We accept without comment what others say because it is true for them. We work towards taking more responsibility in our lives, rather than giving advice to others.

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Fixing Others: Learning to Listen - In ACA, we do not touch, hug, or attempt to comfort others when they become emotional during an ACA meeting. If someone begins to cry during a meeting, we allow the person to feel his or her feelings without interruption. To touch or hug the person is known as “fixing.” As children we tried to fix our parents or to control them with our behavior. In ACA we are learning to take care of ourselves. We support others by accepting them into our meetings and listening to them. We allow them to feel their feelings in peace.

Topic: (This information is for the group leader) 1st week of the month is a step or tradition meeting. Group reads 5 minutes of the step of the month from the Red Book, then the leader shares on step or their choice and opens meeting.

- Other meetings are Leader’s Choice, open topic. Note: if the lead wishes to use a reading in their opening, please use ACA conference approved literature (by group conscience decision July 2020).
- 3rd Saturday of the month is a Business meeting after the meeting ends.

Today’s meeting is a _____ meeting. (open with a share or reading on your chosen topic, or by reading on this month’s step or tradition) The meeting is now open. Again, the topic is _____, or please feel free to share on whatever you would like.

1:20 PM – 7th Tradition (1:10 on the third Saturday of the month) Now it’s time for our 7th Tradition. Our 7th tradition, states that “Every ACA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” By group conscience, this group is not currently taking direct contributions but encourages fellow travelers to make a contribution to ACA WSO. The link to WSO donations will be posted in the chat.

[SKIP FOR NOW: The suggested donation is \$2. Newcomers are encouraged to buy literature and need not contribute at their first meeting.]

Next Week, Announcements, Traditions:

- May we have a volunteer to lead next week’s meeting? **(pause)**
- Do we have a Tech Host and co-host for next week’s meeting? **(pause)**
- Will a Volunteer please introduce yourself and read the ACA Traditions?
- Are there any ACA announcements? **(pause)**

Closing:

That is all the time we have. Thank you for joining us and keep coming back. Now it’s time to read the ACA Promises. We will go around in a circle, each person reading one.

Will all who care to, please join me in the Serenity Prayer to end the meeting.