

(Revised Jun.13`26)

MEETING ZOOM

<https://sites.google.com/view/bellingham-aca/friday-big-red-book?authuser=0>

DONATIONS

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=ZULLV7L5L3A6G

ACA Daily Affirmation Reader

(often a day ahead):

<https://adultchildren.org/daily-affirmation/aca-daily-affirmation/>

ACA Fellowship Zoom Meeting Format (Fridays - approx. 1 hr, 15 min)

Hello, my name is _____[first name only]. Welcome to the New Beginnings meeting of Adult Children of Alcoholics and Dysfunctional Families. Please be sure all cell phones and other electronic devices are silenced or cannot disturb the meeting.

If you would like, please join in a moment of silence to remember those who still suffer, inside or outside these rooms, followed by the Serenity Prayer:

**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.**

Growing up in the unhealthy environment of an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional home harmed each of us as children, and still impacts us as adults. In an atmosphere of mutual respect, we meet to find freedom from these effects. We share our experience, and identify with The Problem, and The Laundry List of Traits. One day at a time, we gently re-parent ourselves by attending meetings, practicing the Twelve Steps, and living The Solution.

Someone please read, at your choice, either the Problem or the Laundry List... (BRB p.587 or p.589)

Leader Resumes: We may relate to this reading even if there was no apparent alcoholism or substance abuse in a childhood home. This is common because dysfunction can occur in any childhood home without the presence of addiction. We welcome you.

Someone please read The Solution... (BRB p.590)

Leader Resumes: This program works if we work it—and, as we say, “You are worth it!”

Someone please read either the 12 Steps (BRB p.586) or Tony A’s 12 Steps, at your choice... (located at end of script)

Leader Resumes: Confronting our denial about family addiction or dysfunction will give us freedom from the past. Our lives will change. We will make friends and learn *how* to live with greater choice and personal freedom. We will learn to focus on ourselves, letting others be responsible for their own lives. We can begin to *truly* live, having that choice and freedom.

Since ACA is an anonymous 12-step program, we do not have a phone list. However, you can put your first name, last initial, and contact information into the chat window if you wish to be a sponsor, get a sponsor, or speak with a Fellow Traveler about working the steps, doing a fifth step, or working a workbook. Information in the chat window will disappear at the close of the meeting as **no chats are recorded** and the meeting itself is also not recorded.

Are there any here for their first ACA meeting, or first meeting with this group? If so, please raise your hand and say your first name, so that we can welcome and get to know you.

IF SO, THEN the Leader reads the following blue paragraphs:

- *We are glad you are here. In the beginning, many of us could not recognize or accept that some of our attitudes and behaviors result simply from being raised in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional family. We behave as Adult Children, which means we bring self-doubt, fear and anger learned in childhood to all our adult interactions. By attending meetings regularly, and working the program, gradually we come out of denial, and come to know – and begin to act as – our True Selves.*

- *The program is not easy. We suggest you attend at least six meetings close in time before you decide if it is for you, and we encourage you to read the available Program literature.*
- *Newcomers need not contribute to the 7th Tradition at their first meeting. If you have attended six meetings with this group and are unable to afford the Fellowship Text, or “Big Red Book,” a copy can be provided.*
- *A word on safety: Adult Children may not have grown beyond their victim or victimizer roles. Newcomers can be especially vulnerable to manipulation, including emotional, financial, sexual or other abuse. Engaging in such behavior violates the safety of attendees, as well as ACA’s spirit of mutual respect, and it is not part of our program. The love and respect we offer to newcomers is a reflection of the love and respect we are learning to offer ourselves through our gentle re-parenting of ourselves.*
- *While many ACA members make fine use of therapists and counselors, our meetings are not therapy sessions. We don’t discuss therapeutic techniques. While we might share about our counseling work, the focus of an ACA meeting is The Twelve Steps and The Twelve Traditions. Therapy is not a replacement for the ACA meetings, or for working a program.*

The Leader Continues:

On Zoom, all our names are in each Zoom window.

If someone is using a phone with only a number, the Leader then says:

Will the person whose name appears in Zoom only as a phone number, please change that so that it has your first name only—someone will assist you if necessary.

We will now go around the physical meeting room and introduce each of yourselves by your first name only... ***(If also in the physical meeting room, the Leader again says their own first name...)***

Leader Continues: Could someone please volunteer to read today’s affirmation from Strengthening My Recovery, the ACA [Daily Reader](#)...

<https://adultchildren.org/daily-affirmation/aca-daily-affirmation/>

(The day's literature reading usually lasts 7 minutes, more or less depending on group-size—please pick a time, and ask for assistance if unsure of a good amount.)

Leader Resumes: In this meeting, we commonly use a format that has proven to be very effective for other Adult Children. We will read from ACA's Big Red Book for ____ minutes. Afterwards we write about, or meditate on, any of the readings, or any other topic of your choice for the same ____ minutes. Then we open the meeting for sharing, followed by any brief announcements.

Would someone please volunteer to be our timekeeper for the reading, the meditation, and later for the sharings?

Leader Resumes: We will now begin the reading and read for the announced ____ minutes. When you wish to stop reading, please say "Pass" to let us know that the next person can begin reading. Who would like to begin reading?

.....

After the Reading, Leader Resumes: We will now meditate on the readings or any topic of your choice for the announced ____ minutes. We usually shut off our cameras during meditation, but that is not required.

.....

(After the day's reading and meditation, sharing begins—shares usually last 3 minutes, but can be shorter depending on group-size, so please pick a time, and ask for assistance if unsure of a good amount. The meeting is scheduled to end at 6:45pm, so close the sharing time about 5 mins earlier to read the closing script.)

After the Meditation, Leader Resumes: We will now open for sharing. We encourage each of us to share about the reading, daily affirmation, or any childhood or adult experiences. This is a safe place to share completely, without being judged. We ask that we be thoughtful and direct in our sharing—limiting ourselves to (the announced sharing) minutes. When you are finished sharing, please say "Pass." The time keeper will give a reminder signal before your sharing time is done to permit you to close your share and allow everyone a chance for their own share.

Time keeper, how much time reminder would you like to give? 10, 15 or 30 seconds is common, but the choice is yours...

If a share is intense, the group conscience may permit some additional time for a first share as you seem to need or as you may request. However, in ACA, we do not attempt to comfort others if they become emotional or begin to cry during a meeting. If someone does become emotional, we simply allow the person to feel their feelings, without interruption. To comfort the person, including touching or hugging, is known as “fixing.”

As children we tried to fix our parents, or to control them, with our behavior. Now, 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.

During sharing we do not cross talk. That means interrupting, referring to, evaluating, or commenting on what another person has said, in words or actions. Cross talk is not respectful. Also, Adult Children often come from backgrounds where honest feelings and perceptions were judged as wrong or defective, or were blocked. Here, we simply accept – without comment – what others say, because it is true for them. We strive to take full responsibility in our own lives, rather than judging or giving advice to others. Response or discussion, if desired, should be had privately, after the meeting.

We will now share in turn, “popcorn” style, which means that when no one is speaking anyone may simply state their first name and begin to share. Each one may share or not. After it seems as though no one else wishes to share for the first time, the group conscience may permit a second opportunity for all to share, at your request and as time allows.

Since the meeting ends at 6:45pm, we will share until about 6:40pm to allow about 5 minutes for closing.

Timer volunteer, please time the shares for ____ minutes, and please remember to provide the time reminder you chose.

The meeting is now open for sharing...

.....

(After Timed Sharing seems done, when close to closing at about 6:40pm, if there is still a bit more time, announce to the group that there's time left for a last brief share, and then close the meeting...)

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After the Last Shares, Leader Resumes: That's all the time we have for sharing. Please read the current three of the Twelve Traditions. The "current three" Tradition numbers are based on the calendar-numbers of the prior month, the current month, and the next month... **(BRB p.592)**

Leader Resumes: As the 7th Tradition states, "every group ought to be self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

Newcomers need not contribute at their first meeting, and the link for online contributions is being posted in the Zoom chat window—since we share that service, do please choose New Beginnings from the drop-down window!

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=ZULLV7L5L3A6G

Literature is available for purchase directly from WSO, and in the physical meeting room.

Please consider chairing a future meeting, which is just to read from the same script I am using. You may volunteer today, or do so at the start of the next meeting you attend. Are there any volunteers today to chair the next week's meeting?

Are there any ACA announcements?

After Announcements, Leader Resumes: Will someone please read, or begin to share reading, the Promises? **(BRB p.591)**

Leader Resumes: In closing, please respect the anonymity of those who have shared with us today. We do not talk with other people about another person's story or experience. This anonymity allows us to safely and freely express our feelings, and experience an identity apart from any labels, without fear of gossip or retaliation. Who we see here, what we hear here, when we leave here, let it stay here. Thank you for being here. We will now close with the Serenity Prayer:

**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.**

Keep coming back, it works if you work it and you're worth it!

Tony A's 12 Steps

1. We admitted we were powerless over the effects of living with alcoholism and that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could bring us clarity.
3. We made a decision to practice self-love and to trust in a Higher Power of our understanding.
4. We made a searching and blameless inventory of our parents because, in essence, we had become them.
5. We admitted to our Higher Power, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our childhood abandonment.
6. We were entirely ready to begin the healing process with the aid of our Higher Power.
7. We humbly asked our Higher Power to help us with our healing process.
8. We became willing to open ourselves to receive the unconditional love of our Higher Power.
9. We became willing to accept our own unconditional love by understanding that our Higher Power loves us unconditionally.
10. We continued to take personal inventory and to love and approve of ourselves.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with our Higher Power, praying only for knowledge of its will for us and the power to carry it out.
12. We have had a spiritual awakening as a result of taking these steps, and we continue to love ourselves and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Source: “*The Laundry List: The ACoA Experience*” by Tony A.