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PLEASE NOTE: "Ready Set GO!!" is moving into final phases for publication as ACA WSO Conference Approved Literature. Copy For ACA Use only.ROUGH DRAFT Please send comments: litstaff@adultchildren.org

THIS ROUGH DRAFT IS FOR PARTICIPANTS TO VIEW THE FULL VERSION OF RSG, ALL 3 PARTS.
PART 2 "THE SCRIPT" IS NOT UPDATED FOR THE WEEKLY OR RSG ONE DAY.
UPDATED MATERIAL FOR THE WEEKLY MEETINGS IS AVAILABLE BY EMAILING: acatoni5617@comcast.net.
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Adult Children of Alcoholics and Dysfunctional Families

Ready Set GO!!

An Introductory ACA 12 Steps Starter Guide

Introducing the ACA Program, the ACA 12 Steps
and The Loving Parent/ Inner Child

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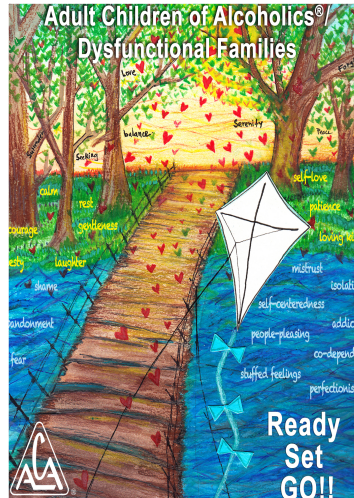
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Part 1

Ready Set GO!! - ACA Readings



ACA Twelve Steps Stages

BRB p.280

Steps One through Three as **“Giving Up”**

Steps Four and Five as **“Fessing Up”**

Steps Six through Nine as **“Cleaning Up”**

Steps Ten through Twelve as **“Stepping Up”**

Inner Child Affirmations

BRB 329

It is okay to know who I am.

It is okay to trust myself.

It is okay to say I am an adult child.

It is okay to know another way to live.

It is okay to say no without feeling guilty.

It is okay to give myself a break.

It is okay to cry when I watch a movie or hear a song.

My feelings are okay even if I am still learning how to distinguish them.

It is okay to not take care of others when I think.

Welcome to Ready Set GO!!

Introductory Meetings of ACA

Ready Set GO!! are closed ACA introductory meetings. We meet to introduce ACA 12 Steps and the ACA program in a structured four week time frame. We recognize all our 12 Traditions for safety within the group.

Ready Set GO!! is an introduction for ACA newcomers to become acquainted with the ACA Twelve Steps and get clarity and an understanding of the ACA Program. Ready Set GO!! Introduces the experienced member to a renewal of their commitment to working their program through the ACA 12 Steps. Ready Set GO!! prepares members for when they will feel ready to go through the ACA 12 Step Workbook. Feel free to leave your fears and anxieties behind you as you experience these introductory meetings.

The material is taken from the ACA Big Red Book, the ACA 12 Step Workbook, and Strengthening My Recovery, the ACA meditation book. It requires those in attendance to listen to the material with an open mind and open heart and in good faith with a desire to learn about ACA recovery and emotional sobriety.

Our objective is simple: to introduce members to the ACA program and introduce the ACA 12 Steps by bringing clarity and awareness to the realization that the ACA 12 Steps offer opportunities for solutions.

Each step will contain a worksheet that may bring more clarity and understanding of each Step. We will set aside a few minutes to fill in the worksheets and to answer any questions. The Appendix will provide a complete version of the worksheets for extra copies. There is no right or wrong way to do the worksheets. They can be done over time as we grow.

Choosing a sharing partner from this group is suggested for support for the four weeks. Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner or sponsor or fellow traveler is recommended. This experience with a sharing partner can give the adult child insight to choosing a sponsor. Sharing partners have some ACA experience

Sponsors may be inclined to introduce Ready Set GO!! to their sponsees to begin their work together in ACA perhaps setting a flexible time frame to accommodate their needs.

In each of the 5 or 6 weeks we encourage you to prepare for these meetings by reading the Laundry List Traits, ACA 12 Steps, ACA 12 Traditions, ACA Solution, and the ACA 12 Promises at the beginning of the book before attending each Ready Set GO!! Meeting.

As we begin, we remind ourselves to have an open mind and an open heart. Be gentle with yourself as you go through this experience of Ready Set GO!!. This brief encounter may prepare you for when you are **Ready**, and you feel **Set** to **GO!!** forward. Remember Ready Set GO!! is an introduction of ACA.

Be in peace and let fear and anxiety leave you for this journey.

How to Use This Book

- Purchase the Ready Set GO!! Introductory ACA 12 Steps Starter Guide.
- This guide is an introductory steps starter guide to the ACA 12 Steps and the ACA program and the introduction to the Inner Child for newcomers and for the experienced members who may want to refresh their program.
- There are 3 parts to this book.
- The 4 dividers contain affirmations to be used to nurture and affirm your inner child.
- **Part 1** will be used to give you a clearer understanding of Ready Set GO!!
 - The Laundry List, The Problem, The Solution and The Promises should be read by participants prior to the RSG weekly meetings.
 - Ready Set GO!! shares are included for inspiration and encouragement.
- **Part 2** is used to guide us through the 5 Introductory Ready Set GO!! face to face meetings, or 6 RSG Telephone Meetings, or a RSG One Day Workshop, suggestions are in the Appendices D and E. Although not listed RSG would be ideal for a 2 or 3 day retreat.
 - It contains a user friendly, structured and detailed format with the script inserted for the leader and the participant to share the readings.
 - The suggested schedule for the five or six 2 hour introductory meetings are:
Week #1 - The Introduction, and Steps 1, 2 and 3, Week #2 - Steps 4 and 5, Week #3 Steps 6, 7, 8 and 9, and Week #4 - Steps 10, 11 and 12, Week #5 or Week #6 RSG Inner Child Workshop.
 - Information about a sharing partner is explained in the format.
 - Each step is followed by a worksheet and during the meeting a few minutes are allotted to fill in the worksheets. Worksheets may be shared during sharing time if you are comfortable. 4th Step Inventories may be preferred to be done privately.
 - Two sharing times and question and answer time will be offered.
 - Introducing a new Closing Prayer "Gathered Together".
- **Part 3** will be used for Ready Set GO!!'s Appendices.
 - Definitions
 - Full blank Worksheets to make copies as needed.
 - Closing Prayer - "Gathered Together"
 - **Suggestions for Ready Set GO!! Telephone Introductory Closed Meetings**
 - RSG Sample Flyer & RSG For Your Information - Readings Before Attending RSG
 - Suggested Workbook Group Format
 - Tony A's 12 Steps/info
 - Continuing Your Journey Toward Recovery After Ready Set GO!!
 - In Gratitude of Ready Set GO!!
 - Ready Set GO!! Acknowledgments
 - Blank Pages for Notes
 - Back Cover (explanation of Ready Set Go!!'s cover)
 - Ready Set GO!! Endnotes

How Ready Set GO!! Came To Be

- In 2010 ACA members went to a program called Back to Basics from AA for OA. The thought came to a few members that could be developed for ACA.
- The concept to create a similar program for ACA using our Big Red Book was brought to the Chicagoland Area Intergroup and was approved.
- A trusted servants created an outline used to develop a script of the ACA 12 Steps.
- It was tested by the RSG Committee of Downers Grove, IL and La Grange, IL with a four week meeting format. Face to face meetings were started after the first test 2011.
- In 2013 it was brought to Denmark at the WSO/ABC and suggested it be tested for another year.
- West Great Lakes ACA Intergroup began sponsoring RSG by funding the printing of the scripts for participants.
- It was officially presented to WSO in August 2014. WSO Literature Committee agreed to put RSG on their website for the fellowship to review early 2015 thus beginning the process for consideration for publication as an ACA Conference Approved Literature.
- The first Traveling RSG was started October 2014 in Lake Barrington, IL. A fellow traveler from Fitchburg, WI asked to do RSG meetings in his area. He then developed RSG One Day Workshop using the same material of the original RSG.
- The RSG meetings continued to be held in La Grange with WGLIG's as our sponsor.
- In 2016 through 2017 we had a face to face RSG meeting combined with teleconference opportunity. Telephone meetings became another source to share RSG in 2016.
- In October 2016, WSO Literature Evaluation Subcommittee returned the material with recommendations for revising purposes to enhance the project.
- Through the assistance of the WSO Literature Evaluation Subcommittee, and the RSG Committee, the script itself stayed the same but other features were added to achieve the recommendations of WSO Literature Committee.
- February 2018, further testing to smooth out the expanded version were helpful in completing the present version of Ready Set GO!!
- Teleconference with WSO Literature Committee proposing RSG goes to this years ABC to become Conference Approved Literature leaving us very excited, 2018.
- April 26, 2018, RSG presented to ABC in Toronto, Canada to be ACA Conference Approved Literature.
- April 27, 2018, Ready Set GO!! was approved to be ACA Conference Approved Literature.
- Final field testing, and preliminary edits for face to face 4 week RSG completed June 28, 2018.
- Draft sent to the ACA WSO Literature Committee June 28, 2018.
- December, 2019 RSG included the RSG Inner Child Workshop for 5 week face to face and 6 week online/phone meetings thus completing Ready Set GO!! We took the lead of RSG One Day Workshop from Fitchburg, WI to include the IC Workshop in our weekly RSG.

Ready Set GO!! Committee

How Does Ready Set GO!! Work?

From the very start I am asked to make a decision, a choice whether or not to go to a meeting that is called Ready Set GO!!.

"I am confused, depressed, scared, angry, anxious, in denial, and fearful and now I am asked to make a decision, a choice?"

I'm told that I will be going through an introduction of the ACA 12 Steps in 5 or 6 weeks.

"Wow!!??" "That seems impossible!" "That ain't going to work for me!" "That sounds overwhelming to me!" "That is too scary for me!" "I want to run away!"

How do I get **READY** for that?

Trust, take a risk, find courage, be honest, be open minded, stop isolating

What will I need to do to **SET** myself up for that?

Trust, take a risk, find courage, be honest, be open minded, stop isolating

What will happen to me when I **GO!!**?

I will begin my ACA Recovery!!

How Does Ready Set GO!! Work? We gather together at a meeting and read together to share the words of Adult Children from our Big Red Book and our ACA 12 Step Workbook. We have some sharing time to use our voice maybe for the first time in our life.

Ready Set GO!! Introductory Meetings are a safe place to seek and learn about ACA without stress and tension. ACA Ready Set GO!! Introductory Meetings help us feel comfortable while dealing with difficult issues that may come up while looking into this process of our recovery.

The Adult Child is encouraged to continue to attend regular ACA meetings while doing Ready Set GO!!. The Adult Child is encouraged to do Ready Set GO!! many times to benefit from all the material that is offered about the ACA 12 Steps and the ACA program and the Loving Parent/ Inner Child. The ACA 12 Steps are our Solution to overcoming the Laundry List Traits. The ACA program will lead us to emotional sobriety. This is a life long process that will heal us and help us grow into the person our Higher Power created us to be.

The decision, the choice we make to go to ACA Ready Set GO!! Introductory Meetings is totally up to each Adult Child. Ready Set GO!! is not magic, and recovery doesn't happen overnight, in a week or a month or a year, it is a lifelong experience. It works if we work it and we are worth it!

Ready Set GO!!

Suggested Preparations For Members

- Read The Laundry List, The Problem, The 12 Steps, The 12 Traditions, The Solution and The Promises on your own the day of your Ready Set GO!! meeting.
- Volunteer to be a sharing partner when you feel comfortable for 5-6 weeks.
- Ask a sharing partner to support you through the 5-6 weeks.
- Volunteer to be the leader for one week of Ready Set GO!!
- Continue to attend your regular ACA meetings.
- Put your mind at ease and understand that RSG is available to be taken as many times as needed. It is a stepping stone to go on to the ACA 12 Step Workbook when you are ready to choose to move onto that.
- Have faith in the process and know that the Steps offer a solution.
- Feel free to ask questions. This is your recovery and questions help us understand and gives us clarity.
- Print out full worksheets that are in Appendix B as needed.
- A few regular ACA meetings would be helpful before attending Ready Set GO!! Introductory Meetings.

It is time for me to focus on my ACA Recovery!

Suggested Guidelines For Leaders

- Pray for guidance to lead a RSG meeting. Some experience leading a meeting will help.
- Volunteer to be the leader for one week of Ready Set GO!!
- Follow Part Two which contains the primary script of Ready Set GO!! inserted into a user friendly format. This is designed to cover the 5 weeks of a face to face meeting, and 6 telephone meetings.
- **Part Two may be followed for telephone meetings with the details that are in Appendix D.**
- **Part Two may be followed for the RSG One Day Workshop.**
- **Part Two may also be useful for a 2 or 3 day retreat with minor adjustments.**
- Sponsors may find RSG helpful to be used with sponsees at a slower pace.
- Pick a location for your meeting.
- Pick a date and time for the meeting.
- Register the meeting with WSO.
- Create a sign-up sheet.
- Make announcements at meetings.
- Create a flyer for the meeting. Sample in Appendix E - RSG For Your Information— Readings Before Attending RSG
- Contact your local Intergroup and WSO to post the flyer on their website for other members to participate from surrounding areas.
- Perhaps offer RSG meetings once or twice a year in place of your regular meeting.



SEEKING HELPFUL GOALS

READY = I will become **READY** to take on the ACA 12 Steps.

SET = I will become **SET** into a new way of living my life.

GO!! = I will become willing to **GO!!** to any length for my recovery.

Ready Set GO!! Shares

Share #1

How Ready Set GO!! has Worked in my Recovery in ACA

RSG has given me an opportunity to give back to ACA what I have been so freely given.

RSG has given me a new understanding of the power of the steps.

RSG has helped me overcome my fears and anxieties to share my experience, strength and hope with others who are still suffering and who deserve the better things life has to offer.

RSG has given me the capacity to know I now have a voice and I am heard when I speak.

RSG has given me the peace and serenity I need to nourish myself with love, kindness and tenderness.

RSG has given me a chance to grow and heal.

RSG instilled in me a desire to ask my Higher Power to help me every step of the way.

RSG has given me courage and willingness to go to any length to share RSG with those who want it.

RSG has given me clarity and awareness of the ACA program.

RSG has given me gratitude and an understanding that all of these gifts were always there, all I had to do was keep coming back.

RSG has humbled me, I am equal with all my ACA friends, I've never felt that in my family.

RSG has given me the security that I am stable and sane.

RSG has given me the ability to stand up for myself and believe I am worthy of good things coming my way.

RSG has paved the way for me to be happy, joyous and free.

RSG extended my love for ACA beyond what I thought was never going to be possible, that is being a sponsor.

RSG has helped me realize that even though my inner child was abused, wounded and confused and rageful she survived and all her pain and suffering has been replaced with loving kindness from her Loving Parent and that is me.

I am not sure, nor could I promise that by letting Ready Set GO!! in to your recovery that anyone will experience what I have experienced in RSG. Releasing the fears and anxieties need a trusting, open heart to find out if this will work for them. The Adult Child, the Inner Child are worthy of the experience.

Be In Peace,

Toni P.

Share #2

The first time I took READY, SET, GO!!, it was in the beginning stages of my recovery, about eight years ago. I was very new to ACA at the time, and didn't quite get it. As READY, SET, GO!! grew so did my understanding. My understanding grew not only about ACA and the 12 steps, but more importantly about myself. It introduced me to the feelings of loss and pain I had not ever felt. It taught me that I could trust the people in my READY, SET, GO!! meeting and maybe could trust other people. It taught me that I was incredibly lost, when I had never known I was lost. It also showed me there was a way to find myself--through the 12 steps.

I have now facilitated several READY, SET, GO!! meetings. This has been almost more valuable than being a participant. Through the participants, I experience their willingness to begin the journey to healing. I see the courage and strength to put aside denial and find their truth. Through this I have learned to look ever deeper in myself to continue finding my truth.

READY, SET, GO!! has helped me as a participant, giving me courage and strength to continue on a long road that lies ahead. I know I am not alone as I travel. Others have shared their journey with me. As a facilitator, I witness the discovery of the 12 steps through newcomers and the resolve in the "old timers". Could I ask for anything more?

Kathy S.

Share #3

Ready Set GO!! Share

Ready Set GO!!(RSG) is an introduction to all Twelve Steps in just four weeks/sessions. As an adult child of an alcoholic, I came to Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA) very afraid and anxious. RSG spelled out all of the steps in a simple way, using material from the Big Red Book(BRB). RSG and it's overview of working the steps was the introduction I needed to begin my recovery. I recommend RSG to all newcomers and any members looking to renew their commitment to the twelve steps and working the program.

Bridget F.

Share #4

A Solid Foundation to Stand On

As a newcomer, I felt somewhat intimidated by the ACA program as I wasn't sure where to start and how to approach my recovery the "right" way. I identified with the adult child description and the Laundry List and I knew this was the place for spiritual healing. After attending my first few ACA meetings, I began to trust the Promises would materialize if I worked for them, but the "how" of getting there felt overwhelming.

Fortunately, I had the opportunity to participate in a four-week Ready, Set GO!! Program that introduced me to the 12 Steps and helped me build a solid foundation for working the program. I was able to gain insights for each of the Steps and how they apply to my recovery. I also began to explore how my childhood experiences shaped the way I coped with life's challenges; and that I did the best I could with what I had. I felt empowered to use the tools offered through ACA and I trusted they would eventually help me find my True Self and a new way to live.

Perhaps the most rewarding aspect of my participation in Ready Set GO!! was having an outlet to share my experience with others who were new to ACA. While I felt safe and supported in ACA meetings, there was an added element of "you are not alone in this" with others who were eager to discover the Steps and prepare to work the program. I gained an appreciation for how much courage it takes to move out of isolation, work through the pain of the past and break out of old thought and behavior patterns. The insights, love and support I received through Ready Set GO!! helped me get grounded in what ACA has to offer and fueled my determination to embark on my journey toward healing.

Kate B.

The Laundry List Traits

- 1 We became isolated and afraid of people and authority figures.
- 2 We became approval seekers and lost our identity in the process.
- 3 We are frightened by angry people and any personal criticism.
- 4 We either become alcoholics, marry them or both, or find another compulsive personality such as a workaholic to fulfill our sick abandonment needs.
- 5 We live life from the viewpoint of victims and we are attracted by that weakness in our love and friendship relationships.
- 6 We have an overdeveloped sense of responsibility and it is easier for us to be concerned with others rather than ourselves; this enables us not to look too closely at our own faults, etc.
- 7 We get guilt feelings when we stand up for ourselves instead of giving in to others.
- 8 We became addicted to excitement.
- 9 We confuse love and pity and tend to "love" people we can "pity" and "rescue."
- 10 We have "stuffed" our feelings from our traumatic childhoods and have lost the ability to feel or express our feelings because it hurts so much (Denial).
- 11 We judge ourselves harshly and have a very low sense of self-esteem.
- 12 We are dependent personalities who are terrified of abandonment and will do anything to hold on to a relationship in order not to experience painful abandonment feelings, which we received from living with sick people who were never there emotionally for us.
- 13 Alcoholism is a family disease; and we became para-alcoholics and took on the characteristics of that disease even though we did not pick up the drink.
- 14 Para-alcoholics are reactors rather than actors.

Tony A., 1978

The Problem

Many of us found that we had several characteristics in common as a result of being brought up in an alcoholic or dysfunction household. We had come to feel isolated and uneasy with other people, especially authority figures. To protect ourselves, we became people pleasers, even though we lost our own identities in the process. All the same we would mistake any personal criticism as a threat. We either became alcoholics or practiced other addictive behavior ourselves, or married them, or both. Failing that, we found other compulsive personalities, such as a workaholic, to fulfill our sick need for abandonment.

We lived life from the standpoint of victims. Having an overdeveloped sense of responsibilities, we preferred to be concerned with others rather than ourselves. We got guilt feelings when we stood up for ourselves rather than giving into others. Thus, we became reactors, rather than actors, letting others take the initiative. We were dependent personalities, terrified of abandonment, willing to do almost anything to hold on to a relationship in order not to be abandoned emotionally. Yet we kept choosing insecure relationships because they matched our childhood relationship with alcoholic or dysfunctional parents.

These symptoms of the family disease of alcoholism or other dysfunction made us “co-victims,” those who take on the characteristics of the disease without necessarily ever taking a drink. We learned to keep our feelings down as children and kept them buried as adults. As a result of this conditioning, we confused love with pity, tending to love those we could rescue. Even more self-defeating, we became addicted to excitement in all our affairs, preferring constant upset to workable relationships. This is a description, not an indictment.

The ACA Solution

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 you have kept inside and to free yourself from the shame and blame that are carryovers 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 accept and love yourself.

The healing begins when we risk moving out of isolation. Feelings and buried memories will return. By gradually releasing the burden of unexpressed grief, we slowly move out of the past. We learn to re-parent ourselves with gentleness, humor, love and respect.

This process allows us to see our biological parents as the instruments of our existence. Our actual parent is a Higher Power whom some of us choose to call God. Although we had alcoholic or dysfunctional parents, our Higher Power gave us the Twelve Steps of Recovery.

This is the action and work that heals us: we use the Steps; we use the meetings; we use the telephone. We share our experience, strength, and hope with each other. We learn to restructure our sick thinking one day at a time. When we release our parents from responsibility for our actions today, we become free to make healthful decisions as actors, not reactors. We progress from hurting, to healing, to helping. We awaken to a sense of wholeness we never knew was possible. By attending these meetings on a regular basis, you will come to see parental alcoholism or family dysfunction for what it is: a disease that infected you as a child and continues to affect you as an adult.

You will learn to keep the focus on yourself in the here and now. You will take responsibility for your own life and supply your own parenting.

You will not do this alone. Look around you and you will see others who know how you feel. We will love and encourage you no matter what. We ask you to accept us just as we accept you. This is a spiritual program based on action coming from love. We are sure that as the love grows inside you, you will see beautiful changes in all your relationships, especially with God, yourself, and your parents.

The ACA 12 Steps

- 1 We admitted we were powerless over the effects of alcoholism or other family dysfunction, that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2 Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3 Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand God.
- 4 Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5 Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6 Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- 7 Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
- 8 Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9 Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- 10 Continued to take personal inventory and, when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
- 11 Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understand God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.
- 12 Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others who still suffer, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The ACA 12 Traditions

- 1 Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on ACA unity.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 Each group is autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or ACA as a whole. We cooperate with all other Twelve-Step programs.
- 5 Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the adult child who still suffers.
- 6 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.
- 7 Every ACA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
- 8 Adult Children of Alcoholics should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
- 9 ACA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
- 10 Adult Children of Alcoholics has no opinion on outside issues; hence the ACA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
- 11 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.
- 12 Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The ACA Promises

1. We will discover our real identities by loving and accepting ourselves.
2. Our self-esteem will increase as we give ourselves approval on a daily basis.
3. Fear of authority figures and the need to "people-please" will leave us.
4. Our ability to share intimacy will grow inside us.
5. As we face our abandonment issues, we will be attracted by strengths and become more tolerant of weaknesses.
6. We will enjoy feeling stable, peaceful, and financially secure.
7. We will learn how to play and have fun in our lives.
8. We will choose to love people who can love and be responsible for themselves.
9. Healthy boundaries and limits will become easier for us to set.
10. Fears of failure and success will leave us, as we intuitively make healthier choices.
11. With help from our ACA support group, we will slowly release our dysfunctional behaviors.
12. Gradually, with our Higher Power's help, we will learn to expect the best and get it.

Twelve Steps of Adult Children

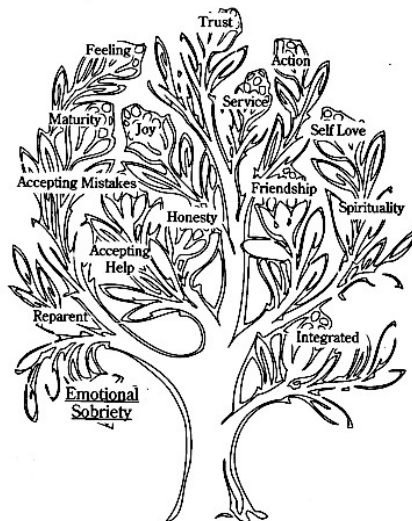


Steps Workbook

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The front cover of the ACA Workbook depicts the Laundry List Tree, which represents the traits of an adult child. The tree also shows the distinction between the traits which are learned in childhood and the defects of character that develop later in life. The Laundry Lists Traits represents the limbs while the character defects are the fruit.

THE ACA RECOVERY TREE



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World Service Organization, Inc.
PO Box 3216
Torrance, CA 90510
<http://www.adultchildren.org>

The back cover of the ACA 12 Steps Workbook depicts the Recovery Tree and the possible results to be realized by working through the ACA Twelve Steps. With recovery, we integrate many of the Laundry List Traits while removing many of the defects of character.

Part 2

The Script



ACA Twelve Steps Stages

BRB p.280

Steps One through Three as **“Giving Up”**

Steps Four and Five as **“Fessing Up”**

Steps Six through Nine as **“Cleaning Up”**

Steps Ten through Twelve as **“Stepping Up”**

Inner Child Affirmations

BRB p. 329-330

It is okay to feel angry.

It is okay to have fun and celebrate.

It is okay to make mistakes and learn.

It is okay to not know everything.

It is okay to say “I don’t know.”

It is okay to ask someone to show me how to do things.

It is okay to dream and have hope.

It is okay to think about things differently than my family.

It is okay to explore and say, “I like this or I like that.”

Ready Set GO!! Week #1

L
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Telephone Meetings will use grayed sections for instructions for telephone meetings.

Give instructions how to mute and unmute. Announce periodically.
If there are any particulars such as recording announce here.

The host will be the leader for week one of Ready Set GO!!

- Hi, my name is _____, I am an adult child.
 - Welcome to week one of a Ready Set GO!! Introductory Meeting offering an introduction of the ACA Program and the introduction of Steps 1, 2, and 3.
 - Will all who care to please join me in the Serenity Prayer?
 - God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.
 - Let's go around and introduce ourselves. I'll go first.
- Telephone introductions go alphabetically: A-G, H-M, N-Z
- Ready Set GO!! are closed ACA introductory meetings. We meet to introduce our ACA 12 Steps and ACA program in a structured 5 to 6 week time frame. We recognize all our 12 Traditions for safety within the group.
 - Ready Set GO!! is an introduction for ACA newcomers to become acquainted with the ACA Twelve Steps and get clarity and an understanding of the ACA Program. Ready Set GO!! introduces the experienced member to a renewal of their commitment to working their program through the ACA 12 Steps. Ready Set GO!! prepares members for when they will feel ready to go to the ACA 12 Step Workbook. Feel free to leave your fears and anxieties behind you as you experience these introductory meetings.
 - The material is taken from our Big Red Book, the ACA 12 Step Workbook, and Strengthening My Recovery, the ACA meditation book. It requires those in attendance to listen to the material with an open mind and an open heart and in good faith with a desire to learn about ACA recovery and emotional sobriety.
 - Our objective is simple: to introduce members to the ACA program and introduce the ACA 12 Steps by bringing clarity and awareness to the realization that the ACA 12 Steps offer opportunities for solutions.

- Each step will contain a worksheet that may bring more clarity and understanding of each Step. We will set aside a few minutes to fill in the worksheets and to answer any questions. Appendix B will provide a complete version of the worksheets for copies as needed.
- There is no right or wrong way to do the worksheets. They can be done over time as we grow.
- Choosing a sharing partner from this group who has some ACA experience is suggested for support for the 5-6 weeks. Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner, sponsor, fellow traveler, or your group is recommended, when you feel comfortable. This experience with a sharing partner can give the adult child insight to choosing a sponsor.
- Sponsors may be inclined to introduce Ready Set GO!! to their sponsees to begin their work together in ACA perhaps setting a flexible time frame to accommodate their needs.
- In each of the 5 or 6 weeks we encourage you to prepare for these meetings by reading The Laundry List Traits, The Problem, The Solution, ACA 12 Steps, ACA 12 Traditions, and The Promises in Part One before attending each Ready Set GO!! Introductory meeting.
- Go to Appendix D for filling in Service Sheets. Ask for volunteers to read The Laundry List Traits, The Solution, a Step, and be timekeeper.
- _____ Please read The Laundry List Traits. BRB 587-588
- _____ Please read The Solution. BRB p 550
- As we begin, we remind ourselves to have an open mind and an open heart. Be gentle with yourself as you go through this experience of Ready Set GO!!. This brief encounter with the 12 Steps may prepare you to do the ACA 12 Steps Workbook when you choose to do it. Remember Ready Set GO!! is an introduction to ACA.
- Be in peace and let fear and anxiety leave you for this journey.
- I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to the Introduction: "On this day I will remember that what I learn through ACA and the Steps is not just for me. My program can affect everyone whose life I touch."
- We will begin with an Introduction to the ACA program. The introduction of Steps 1, 2, and 3 will give us a start to build the foundation ACA offers us as a spiritual program.
- Please do not rush through the readings so we can fully absorb the material.
- _____ Please begin reading The Introduction through Characteristics.
- We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading the Introduction?

INTRODUCTION

The Six Suggestions for Ongoing Recovery

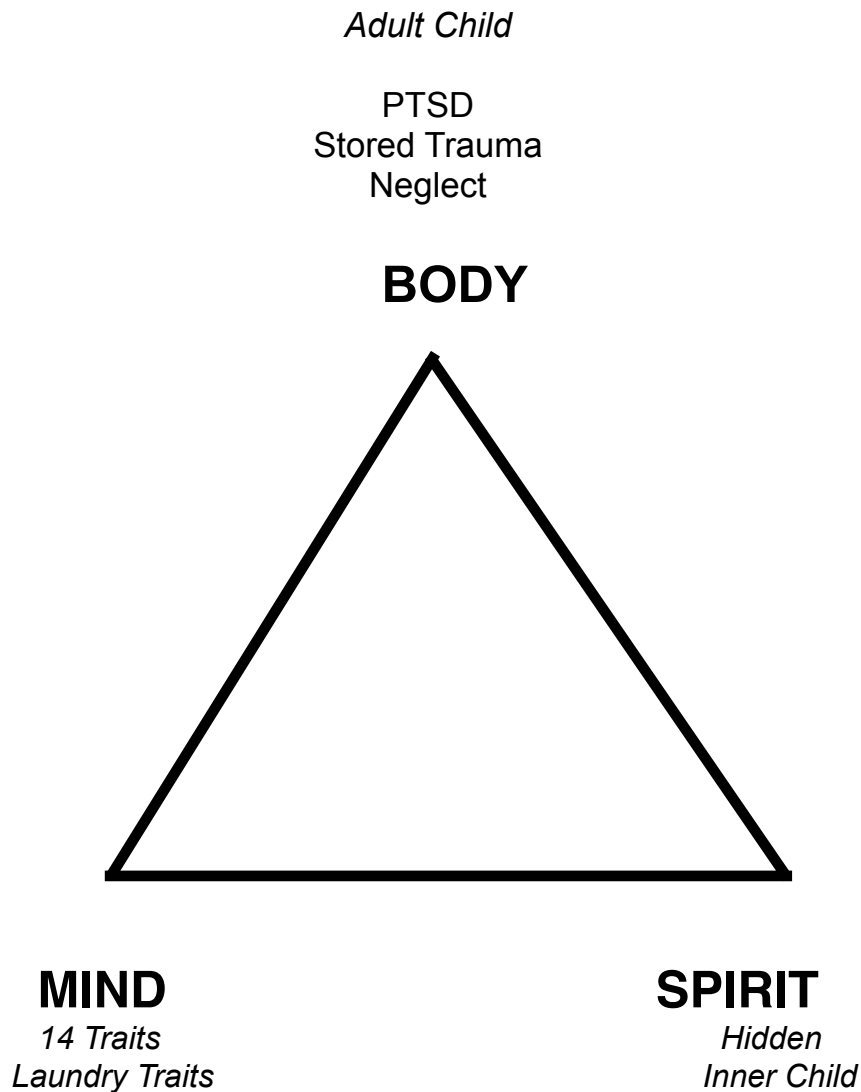
While ACA members avoid giving advice, we can share our recovery experience. These six suggestions of ACA recovery represent the basics whether we are a newcomer or a member with years in the program. These suggestions work in the first year of recovery or the 20th year. We find them helpful in getting the newcomer to focus on him or herself.

1. Stop acting out on food, sex, relationships, gambling, spending, or alcohol/drugs.
2. Go to meetings regularly and break the "don't talk rule".
3. Get a sponsor and work the Twelve Steps.
4. Get the ACA "Big Red Book". Give yourself a break and read it.
5. Get telephone numbers. Don't isolate.
6. Get a Higher Power.¹

ACA is an independent Twelve Step program founded on the principles of the Twelve Steps and The Twelve Traditions. Additionally, ACA focuses on nurturing the Loving Parent within and seeking a Higher Power. In ACA, we believe connecting with our feelings and Inner Child are just as important as working the Twelve Steps and sponsorship. We confront our Inner Critical Parent and allow our Loving Parent to emerge. With our Loving Parent guiding us, we remove ourselves from codependent relationships and stop harming ourselves. We seek help for our addictions if we are acting out with drugs, sex, food, spending, gambling, or another compulsive behavior. We learn that we can recover from trauma and neglect.

Welcome to ACA and the journey.²

ACA Disease Model



This model represents the disease of family dysfunction. The model is a description of our condition and personality. As children, we were affected in body, mind and spirit by alcoholism or other family dysfunction. Our bodies stored the trauma, neglect, and rejection in the form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The mind developed the Laundry List Traits or the false self to survive. The Inner child, the true connection to our Higher Power, went into hiding. ACA recovery can reverse this process.

*Prediction factor:
If you have any two of the three elements of the model,
you have the other.*

Example: Trauma/Neglect + 14 Traits = Hidden Inner Child.³

• Step Study Meeting

The focus of this meeting is recovery, through the study, application, and practice of the Twelve Steps of ACA. As children, we developed behaviors to survive our dysfunctional family. We carried these behaviors, attitudes, and feelings with us into adulthood. They are the source of our pain, unhappiness, and isolation. If we wish to change our lives, we must learn a new way of life. The Twelve Steps are the tools that teach us how to live with a greater awareness. Through a process of awareness, acceptance, and action, we will begin to recover from the effects of family dysfunction.⁴

• A Feeling and an Unfeeling Self

To protect ourselves from the disorienting effects of living with confusion and pain, we divide into a feeling and unfeeling self and isolate ourselves from our own vulnerability. We alternate between the extremes of wanting to escape our isolation and the need to stay securely hidden in our familiar prison of pain. Our beliefs and behaviors become rigid and inflexible, and we swing from the depths of isolated depression to frantic attempts to find help in the outside world. We endlessly repeat the cycle of frustration, rage, and despair, but the goal of the divided self remains the same as it was in childhood: to become whole once again and to find happiness, peace, and joy.⁵

• Characteristics

The Twelve Steps are simple but not always easy; however, they work if a person truly wants to change and can hang on while change occurs.⁶

We find that a difference in identity and purpose distinguishes Adult Children of Alcoholics from other 12 Step Programs and underscores the need for our special focus.

The central problem for ACAs is a mistaken belief, formed in childhood, which affects every part of our lives. As children, we fought to survive the destructive effects of alcoholism and began an endless struggle to change a troubled, dysfunctional family into a loving, supportive one. We reach adulthood believing we failed, unable to see no one can stop the traumatic effect of family alcoholism.⁷

Following naturally from this pervasive sense of failure are self-blame, shame, and guilt. These self-accusations ultimately lead to self-hate. Accepting our basic powerlessness to control alcoholic behavior and its effect on the family is the key that unlocks the inner child and lets reparenting begin. When the "First Step" is applied to family alcoholism, a fundamental basis for self-hate no longer exists.⁸

• **Leader:** _____ Please continue reading through Family Types That Can Create Adult Children.

• The ACA Program

Two characteristics identify the ACA Program. The program is for adults raised in alcoholic homes, and although substance abuse may exist, the focus is on the self, specifically on reaching and freeing the inner child hidden behind a protective shield of denial. The purpose of ACA is three-fold: to shelter and support "newcomers" in confronting "denial"; to comfort those mourning their early loss of security, trust, and love; and to teach the skills for reparenting ourselves with gentleness, humor, love, and respect.⁹

By adapting AA's Steps, ACA is adding its flavor to the Steps while keeping intact the original intent of an admission of powerlessness followed by surrender. Such surrender is followed by a review

of spiritual beliefs, self-inventory, making amends, and seeking conscious contact with a Higher Power. We develop a genuine attitude to live in love and service to ourselves and others.¹⁰

The ACA adapted Steps are designed specifically to help the adult child. They are designed to address trauma and neglect in addition to addressing the addictiveness of the adult child personality. The ACA Twelve Steps address shame, abandonment, fear, and a deep sense of being flawed, while also leading the Step worker to self-worth, self-forgiveness, and a true connection to a Higher Power through the Inner Child.¹¹

In **Steps One through Three**, we will become aware that we are powerless over the effects of the disease of family dysfunction--that our lives are unmanageable. We will come to an acceptance of the fact that only a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity. We make a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care and guidance of a God of our understanding. We see this God as a loving parent who cares for us.

In **Steps Four and Five** we will continue the process of self-discovery and self-awareness by making a written inventory of attitudes and behaviors. We also see the generational nature of this behavior and how it was transmitted to us by our dysfunctional parents or relatives. With ACA, we learn to forgive ourselves and our parents. We change our behavior. In **Step Five** we tell our story with clarity and humility to our sponsor. We will learn to trust ourselves and break down the walls of isolation we have hidden behind.¹²

In **Steps Six and Seven** we will become willing to have God remove our defects of character. We also learn to integrate our Laundry List survival traits. We transform them into spiritual assets when possible.¹³

In **Steps Eight and Nine** we will become willing to make amends for our inappropriate behaviors. We take responsibility for our actions and feelings. We also learn to be gentle with ourselves and to protect our Inner Child during this process. We balance taking responsibility for our inappropriate behavior with being aware that we also are protecting a wounded child within. We do not balk at making difficult amends, but we lovingly reparent ourselves during this process as well.¹⁴

In **Steps Ten through Twelve**, having now begun the process of recovery, we will learn how to make the Steps a part of our daily lives. We will continue to take personal inventory, learning more about ourselves as we grow. We will seek to improve our contact with our Higher Power through prayer and meditation. We seek to learn God's will for us, and we ask for the power to carry that out. Finally, **Step Twelve**, having experienced a spiritual awakening, we learn to practice these principles in all our affairs and to carry the message to those who still suffer. If we wish to keep what we have gained, we must learn to give it away, where and whenever we can. We must get out of ourselves. We insist on enjoying life and being a part of life.¹⁵

Family Types That Can Create Adult Children¹⁶



In the above graphic, we are including the alcoholic family to show how all the families touch the center point of shame and abandonment. This is the commonality of the families.

The five family types that can produce adult children even though alcoholism is not always present are:

- Homes with mental illness in the parent(s).
- Homes with hypochondriac parent(s).
- Homes with ritualistic beliefs, harsh punishment, and extreme secretiveness, often with ultra-religious, militaristic, or sadistic overtones. Some of these homes expose children to battery and other forms of criminal abuse.
- Homes with covert or actual sexual abuse, including incest and inappropriate touching or dress by the parent(s).
- Perfectionistic, shaming homes in which expectations are often too high and praise is typically tied to an accomplishment rather than given freely.

- Are there any questions about what we just read?
 - We will now have our 15 minutes of sharing time with 3 minute shares.
 - We will break up into small groups. Count off as needed. (if needed)
 - I will let you know when the 15 mins is over.
 - Shares need to be kept to 3 minutes with a 1 minute warning, please be considerate of others.
 - Please share on what we just read or what is on your heart. If you feel comfortable you may share your worksheet(s).
 - Please be considerate and give everyone time to share.
 - We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting.
 - Just a reminder what is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
 - Give instructions how to mute.
 - Who would like to share? *List 4 or 5 participants on the Service Sheet for Shares.*(or as many as time may allow) Appendix D
 - Please be respectful of our confidentiality.
- Upon return of small groups ——
- Welcome back. We will go on to Step One.
 - In Step One we will become aware that we are powerless over the effects of the disease of family dysfunction--that our lives are unmanageable.
 - I will read from Strengthening My Recovery which is related to Step 1:
"On this day I see wonderful things happening in my life as I loosen my grip. . . and let go."
 - Please do not rush through the readings so that we can absorb the material.
 - _____ Please begin reading Step One.
 - We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 1?

The ACA Twelve Steps

- **Step One**
- **We admitted we were powerless over the effects of alcoholism or other family dysfunction, that our lives had become unmanageable.**
- ***Spiritual Principles: Powerlessness and Surrender***

Denial, which fosters a lack of clarity, is the glue that allows the disease of family dysfunction to thrive. Cloaked in denial, the disease is passed on to the next generation with amazing consistency. The basic language of denial is: "don't talk, don't trust, don't feel".¹⁷

With Step One we come out of denial and talk about what happened. We bring details to light.¹⁸

Our siblings may have remembered things differently, but we know our own truth. We know what happened and we are breaking our silence.¹⁹

Families without alcoholism have similar situations. These families abuse the children through the use of intellect, manipulation, or silence. We know our truth.²⁰

The roles which are usually present in alcoholic and dysfunctional homes include "family hero, lost child, scapegoat, and mascot."²¹

Many adult children realize they have absorbed generational shame, abandonment, and rage only to grow up and recreate similar families or relationships.²²

We grew up with the same loss, shame, and self-hate as other adult children. Like others, we turned to control in adulthood for a sense of safety.²³

We cannot change anyone. The only person we can change is ourselves, and an adult child rarely changes unless he or she becomes willing to learn a new way to live. The good news is this: There is another way to live.²⁴

Powerlessness in ACA can mean that we were not responsible for our parents' dysfunctional behavior as children or adults. It means that as adults we are not responsible for going back and "fixing" the family unit. We are not responsible for rescuing, saving, or healing our parents or siblings who remain mired in family dysfunction. We can detach with love and begin the gradual process of learning about boundaries. We live and let live.²⁵

By admitting our powerlessness, we take our first step toward reclaiming personal power, which is critical for healing our fractured identities. If we are compulsively self-reliant, we take our first step toward trust and asking for help.²⁶

Like powerlessness, the concept of unmanageability in Step One is often misunderstood by adult children. While some of our families were chaotic and unstable when we were children, many homes seemed manageable and productive. But we learned that productivity does not always equal a manageable, wholesome life. For many of us, what we thought was manageable or desirable in our dysfunctional homes was actually oppressive control.²⁷

The unmanageability that we speak of in Step One involves our desire to control others and ourselves while having a sense that we are not capable or effective. While we have moments of control, we usually experience painful episodes of losing control. We feel hurt when confronted by our loved ones for our controlling behavior. They act out in anger or abandonment to disrupt our attempts to control them. We may be momentarily hurt, but we usually blame others for this abandonment. We blame them for not reading our minds or not acting in a manner that we would approve. We run about attempting to control others and situations in an effort to avoid our own unmanageable lives. Control is an attempt to minimize uncertainty and to avoid our own uncomfortable feelings about the past and present. Yet, our unmanageability, fueled by our fear-based control, inevitably creates what we fear the most: abandonment.²⁸

ACA recovery begins when the adult child gives up, asks for help, and then accepts the help offered. Some adult children call giving up "hitting a bottom".²⁹

Surrender means we become willing to do whatever it takes to recover and find peace and serenity in our lives. We admit complete defeat and give up notions that we can "fix" or control someone else. We become willing to attend meetings, work the Twelve Steps, and break through

the denial of family dysfunctions.³⁰

With feelings, respect, trust, and honesty we no longer confuse love and pity.³¹

FAMILY MEMBER LABELS WORKSHEET

Think about your experiences or what you have heard about relatives in connection with addiction, religion, relationship, food, sex, work, etc.³²
The labels for your family members can include one or a combination of labels.³³

AS I READ

CHECK THOSE THAT APPLY TO ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY

	Alcoholic
	Used alcohol/drugs
	Worked a lot (workaholic)
	Religious
	Worried a lot (neurotic)
	Perfectionist (high strung)
	Enabler
	Chronically ill, hypochondriac
	Emotionally ill
	People-pleaser
	Martyr
	Obese sibling/relative
	Sickly child, too sensitive
	Loner
	Thief, bogus check writer, inmate
	Sexually aggressive, not safe
	Grabbed or wrestled inappropriately
	Pill popper (always taking something)
	Ladies man, player, gigolo, skirt chaser
	Harsh, always critical, verbally abusive
	Great cook (always thought of herself last)
	Undependable, does not follow through
	Argumentative (will not be quiet, keeps arguments going)
	Violent, slapped other, pinched, threatened, glorified fighting
	Always had her face in a mirror (thought she was better than others)
	Heavy debt (always borrowing money) or big spender (flashy clothes)

In ACA, we seek "emotional sobriety" by making a commitment to love ourselves and be good to ourselves. We stop harming ourselves by attaining ACA emotional sobriety.³⁴

We are removing layers of shame and despair to find our True Selves. We began peeling back layers of the onion in Step One with the admission of being powerless over the effects of family dysfunction. Just as an onion can bring tears, our grief work will help us find our tears.³⁵

Moreover, the disease is generational, which means the traits and thoughts you have at this moment have been passed down from generations hence. Relief from the disease occurs when we do Step work, attend Twelve Step meetings, and seek a Higher Power's guidance. By admitting we are powerless over the effects of family dysfunction and that our lives have become unmanageable, we are ready to move onto Step Two.³⁶

- The next page has the Step 1 Worksheet - Powerlessness, Unmanageability, Surrender Process.
- Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed.
- I will read the following worksheet.
- You will have 3 minutes to fill it in to the best of your ability.
- Thoroughly complete the worksheet at home with the support of your sharing partner for support if needed.

Step 1 Worksheet

Powerlessness, Unmanageability, Surrender Process

Effects of Powerlessness	Situations of Unmanageability	Gain Surrender By
<i>Examples: denial, shame, hopeless, lost, stuck, frustrated, confused, worthless</i>	<i>Examples: relationships, parenting, working, money, organizing</i>	<i>Examples: Willing to attend ACA meetings, study ACA 12 steps, get a sponsor, consider a therapist</i>

<i>Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step One.</i>	
• We will go on to Step Two.	
• We will come to an acceptance of the fact that only a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity.	
• I will read from Strengthening My Recovery which relates to Step 2: "On this day I will have faith in a power greater than myself. I will give myself permission to explore what that is for me, no matter what it looks like for others."	
• Please do not rush through the readings so that we can absorb the material.	
• _____ Please begin reading Step Two.	
• Give instructions how to mute and unmute.	
• We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 2?	

• Step Two
• Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
• <i>Spiritual Principles: Open-mindedness and Clarity</i>

Moving to Steps Two and Three, many adult children are confronted with the issues of faith and a Higher Power. In our anger at our parents and God, many of us thought we had outgrown or moved past this issue in our lives. Frankly, some of us did not like this part of the ACA program. Being told of the spiritual nature of ACA irritated some of us. We wondered about the need for spirituality in recovery. We must remember that ACA is a spiritual and not a religious program. Faith and religious conviction are not requirements for ACA membership. We avoid dogmatism and theological discussions, yet, a Higher Power is a key part of the ACA way of life.³⁷

Many adult children have assigned the traits of their dysfunctional parents to God or a Higher Power. If their parents were shaming, vengeful, and inconsistent, then their God tends to be the same. Some adult children describe having a "getcha God". For them, God keeps a record of their behavior and punishes them or "gets them" for making mistakes.³⁸

It has been said that "insanity is repeating the same mistake and expecting a different result." That has been our experience. Change does not occur until the adult child does the Step work needed to curb the tendency to reach outside ourselves for love and affirmation. One of the keys to being restored to sanity involves surrendering our need to harm ourselves or to run from our feelings. We must also be honest about our actions and motives. We must name our behavior properly to avoid the delusional thinking that we are "feeling fine" when in reality we are headed for trouble. Such honesty or clarity of thought comes from seeking a Higher Power and by attending ACA meetings. We stop reacting and become actors, choosing a nurturing role in our Higher Power's play rather than a nightmare role in a destructive or unloving relationship.³⁹

One purpose of Step Two is to introduce the idea of keeping an open mind on the possibility of a Higher Power who can restore sanity. In some cases, our Higher Power helps us create sanity or wholeness for the first time in our lives.⁴⁰

ACA is a spiritual program that confronts the effects of the disease of dysfunction head on. The disease affects our bodies, minds, and spirits and requires a spiritual solution for lasting impact. Knowing where our perceptions of a Higher Power originated from and if the perceptions are accurate, is critical. We must discern what we believe or do not believe if we are to work Step Two and the remainder of the Steps.⁴¹

In one respect, Step Two implies that we had sanity and lost it when in reality we may be learning about sanity for the first time in ACA. A helpful tip in working Step Two involves replacing the word "sanity" with "clarity".⁴²

When we settle down and listen, we begin to realize that the Power that brought us to ACA is still with us today. Where we once thought we found ACA by mistake, we begin to realize that a benevolent Power has been guiding us all along. Discovering this Power is one of the great miracles that many adult children have experienced in working Step Two and the remaining Steps. For some the Higher Power is recognized simply as loving and nurturing. The Higher Power is patient as it seeks to help the adult child find wholeness and integration of a divided self.⁴³

- Following is the Step 2 Worksheet - Seeking A Higher Power.
- Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed.
- I will read the following worksheet.
- You will have 3 minutes to fill it in to the best of your ability.
- Thoroughly complete the worksheet at home with the support of your sharing partner for support if needed.

Step 2 Worksheet

Seeking A Higher Power

Childhood Beliefs of a Higher Power	Adult Beliefs of a Higher Power	Ways to Seek a Higher Power

<i>Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Two.</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will go on to Step Three.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Step Three we make a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care and guidance of a God of our understanding. We see this God as a loving parent who cares for us.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to Step 3: "On this day I will accept the challenges that are placed before me, knowing that I have both the support of my fellow travelers in the program and my Higher Power, who is ever present."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please do not rush through the readings so that we can absorb the material.
	_____Please begin reading Step Three.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 3?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Step Three</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand God.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spiritual Principles: Willingness and Accepting Help</i>

Moving in to Step Three, we see the third Step is merely a decision to ask our Higher Power to help us live courageously and sanely on a daily basis. One day at a time, we recover from the disease of family dysfunction. Step Three is underpinned by the ACA Solution, which is read at the opening of most adult child meetings. The ACA Solution is that we become our "own loving parent." Becoming our own loving parent involves seeing our "biological parents as the instruments of our existence." As The Solution states: Our actual parent is our Higher Power, whom some of us choose to call God."⁴⁴

Working Step Three in ACA means that we realize that our parents brought us into the world. However, we are children of God, seeking to reclaim our true nature or original selves. The Twelve Steps support this journey to the Inner Child or True Self.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, Step Three helps further free us from the generational shame and abuse wrought by dysfunctional parent or caregivers. By realizing that our actual parent is our Higher Power, we complete more of the separation-from-family work. This work is critical so that we can frame the past in its proper perspective while reaching for a brighter future. We gradually realize our painful past can become our greatest asset. We realize we can help others who lack hope and clarity about what happened to them as children we learn to tell our story in meetings and in sponsorship, we move from "hurting, to healing, to helping." By practicing Step Three we begin to stand on our own. We are clear on what we believe. We seek God's will with greater clarity. We come to believe that we really are children of God, as we understand God. We come to believe that God hears our prayers. We are less

confused on what to pray about. We begin to have true choice.⁴⁶

In Step Three we open our minds to new possibilities. Some of us are comfortable with the word "God" for a Higher Power. Other will use Spirit of the Universe, Father of Light, Earth Mother, or the Divine. Some ACA members still investigating their spiritual path choose an ACA group as a power greater than themselves. Whatever we choose as our Higher Power, we make a decision to turn our will and life over to its care on a daily basis.⁴⁷

We turn over everything without bargaining with God as we understand God. We don't release some things to a Higher Power and hold onto others. If we struggle with turning over our will and life to a Higher Power, we can begin by turning over our self-hate, self-doubt, or fear. We can ask God to take our compulsions, resentments, and learned rage. Some of us will work up to turning over our will and life to the care of God. This is a process that we learn to trust.⁴⁸

The disease of family dysfunction manifests itself in dependency, addiction, and dissociative personalities. The disease can kill. Every day, adult children commit suicide, die in addiction, or die one day at a time in silent isolation, thinking they are hopeless. In ACA, we believe we were born whole and became fragmented in body, mind, and spirit through abandonment and shame. We need help find a way to return to our miracle state.⁴⁹

We believe in a spiritual solution for the disease of family dysfunction.⁵⁰

In addition to a deep sense of shame and abandonment, we believe that most of our emotional and mental distress can be traced to our steadfast nature to control. In ACA, we realize that control was the survival trait which kept us safe or alive in our dysfunctional homes. We controlled our thoughts, our voices, and many times our posture to escape detection from an abusive parent or caregiver. We know our parents were looking for imaginary cues to criticize us or verbally attack us. As adults we continue to control ourselves and our relationships in an unhealthy manner. This brings abandonment or predictable turmoil. We make promises to do better but eventually return to our obsessive need to compulsively arrange, question, worry, dust, wash, lock, unlock, read, or hypervigilantly survey our thoughts and actions to feel safe. But it is never enough. Experience shows there is little hope and little spirituality in homes governed by smothering control.⁵¹

This Step is a bottomless well of hope, which is needed to deal with our fear-based attempts to control ourselves and others. As we work the remainder of the Twelve Steps, we will invariably struggle with control and self-doubt. Such struggles are only natural since we relied on controlling our feelings and emotions to survive in our home and relationships. Control meant a sense of safety and predictability; however, we surrendered much of personality and spirit through this manner of living. In Step Three we begin the

gradual and gentle process of easing off of stifling control and replacing it with emotional freedom.⁵²

Each time we encounter the cliff face of control and feel overwhelmed by steep walls, we must remember we can draw on an endless well of God's grace. The Third Step, coupled with our association with other recovering adult children, is an endless resource of hope and reassurance. We can tap it indefinitely, one day at a time.⁵³

In Step Three we learned that our compulsion to control others and ourselves blocks God's will for us, which is to live in peace with our feelings, creativity, and spirituality. We learn that real choice is God's gift to us for letting go. We learned that our attempts at choice before recovery were actually veiled in control. In Step Three, we learned that choice often begins by facing our denial. As we grow in the program, our decisions include true choice that progresses to discernment. We learn to be still and know that God is God.⁵⁴

ACA Third Step Prayer

- Following is the Step 3 Worksheet - Understanding our Higher Power of Our Choice.
- Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed.
- I will read the following worksheet.
- You will have 3 minutes to fill it in to the best of your ability.
- Thoroughly complete the worksheet at home with the support of your sharing partner for support if needed.

God. I am willing to surrender my fears and to place my will and my life in your care one day at a time. Grant me the wisdom to know the difference between the things I can and cannot change. Help me to remember that I can ask for help. I am not alone. Amen ⁵⁵

Step 3 Worksheet

Understanding our Higher Power of Our Choice

What I want my Higher Power to be	How do I become willing to trust my Higher Power?	Things to turn over to my Higher Power
(a loving relationship, nurturing, caring, supportive, kind, always present)	(By totally surrendering my will, by facing my denial, forsake my need to control, learn how to pray, learn to ask for help)	(The Laundry List Traits, character defects, fears and anxieties)

Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Three.

- Are there any questions about what we just read?
 - We will now have our 15 minutes of sharing time with 3 minute shares.
 - We will break up into small groups. Count off as needed. (if needed)
 - I will let you know when the 15 minutes is over.
 - Shares need to be kept to 3 minutes with 1 minute warning, please be considerate of others.
 - Please share on what we just read or what is on your heart. If you feel comfortable you may share your worksheet(s).
 - Please be considerate and give everyone time to share.
 - We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting.
 - Just a reminder what is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
 - Give instructions how to mute and unmute.
 - Who would like to share? List 4 or 5 participants on the Service Sheet for Shares (or as many as time may allow.) Appendix D
 - Please be respectful of our confidentiality.
- Upon return of small groups ——
- Welcome back.
 - At this time I would like to discuss the concept of sharing partners.
 - Choosing a sharing partner from this group who has some ACA experience is suggested for support for the 5 or 6 weeks. Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner, sponsor, fellow traveler, or your group is recommended, when you feel comfortable.
 - This experience with a sharing partner can give the adult child insight to choosing a sponsor.
 - Who would like to be a sharing partner? List information of Sharing Partners on the Sharing Partner Service Sheet in Appendix D. A sharing partner has some ACA experience.
 - Who would like to join the Phone/Email Exchange? Add information on the Phone/Email Exchange Service Sheet in Appendix D.
 - *Consider offering RSG Closed Sharing Time Meetings outside of the regular RSG session for additional sharing time for RSG participants only. See Appendix D page 149 for format.*
 - Who would like to be sharing partner?
 - If there is someone in the group you would like to have as a sharing partner, feel free to approach them after the meeting.
 - Are there any questions?

- Please go to adultchildren.org to contribute for the 7th Tradition.
- In accordance with the 7th tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, we will pass a basket for donations.
- Thank you for participating in our first week of Ready Set GO!! introducing the ACA program and introducing Steps 1, 2 and 3.
- Next week we will introduce Steps 4 and 5.
- Who would like to be the leader for Week #2?
- Refer to BRB pages 166-189 for more information about the inventory.
- We suggest that you read the following affirmations and slogans on your own.

**Affirmations - Steps One Through Three -
Sponsors and Sponsees, and Slogans**
Big Red Book and Workbook

ACA Step One Affirmations

ACA 12 Steps Workbook - Page 42

I am powerless over the effects of alcoholism and family dysfunction.

I am powerless over the Laundry List traits.

My life is unmanageable when I focus on others rather than myself.

I did not cause my parents' addiction or dysfunction.

My feelings and thoughts are separate from the thoughts of my parents and my family.

I can stop trying to heal or to change my family through my current relationships.

I can stop trying to change others.

I can stop condemning myself without mercy.

I am a valuable person.

ACA Step Two Affirmations

ACA 12 Steps Workbook - Page 56

By attending ACA meetings and working with my sponsor

I am being restored to clarity and sanity.

I am understanding the effects of addiction

and family dysfunction in my adult life today.

I am coming to believe that it was insane to think that I caused
my parents' addiction or dysfunction. I was a child. They were the parents.

I am not unique.

I am not alone.

Step Three Affirmations: Let Go. Let God

ACA 12 Steps Workbook - Page 69

I am willing to consider releasing some control in my life.

I am willing to call someone when I feel the urge
to control another's thoughts or actions.

I believe that real choice comes from the God of my understanding
rather than my illusions of control and orderliness.

I desire real choice and discernment.

I surrender my family to God as I understand God.

Affirmations for Sponsees (These Can Also Apply to the Sponsor)

Big Red Book - Page 386

I can ask for help without feeling like I am a burden.
I am treating others with respect and expect others to treat me with respect.
I can be equal in a relationship with another person.
I am capable of selecting a healthy sponsor.
I have willingness to do whatever it takes to recover.
I am following the suggestions of my sponsor in my path of recovery.

Affirmations for Sponsors (These Can Also Apply to the Sponsee)

I have something to offer another person.
I can help someone with what I have learned in recovery.
I will share my experience instead of giving advice.
I will avoid "fixing" others or rescuing others.
I can help another ACA regardless of the type of abuse we experienced as children.
I am more alike than I am different from another person.

Program Slogans that Work

Big Red Book - Page 52

ACA is Simple but it is Not Easy
Live Beyond Mere Survival
There is Another Way to Live
One Day at a Time
Easy Does It
Keep it Simple
Progress Not Perfection
First Things First
This Pain Too Shall Pass
Let Go. Let God
H.A. L.T. - Don't get too Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired
Keep Coming Back
Name It, Don't Blame It
Ask For Help and Accept It
Pray and Pray Hard
Don't Just do Something. Sit There

Be Still and Know

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NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION
NOT FOR FACEBOOK OR
OTHER PUBLIC MEDIA

There is no Healing Without Feeling

Gathered Together

Higher Power, gathered together we find great peace and serenity

We seek hope to become whole as we were created to be.

We find strength to deal with life as we grow in our program.

We trust that as we find courage, we will feel free and secure.

We are grateful to have the support of our group who understands us.

We believe that your presence in our life will give us all that we need.

We close our meeting with a feeling of belonging and being loved.

Keep Coming Back!!

It works if you work It and

You are Worth It!

Ready Set GO!! Week #2

Leader

Telephone Meetings will use grayed sections for instructions for telephone meetings.

Give instructions how to mute and unmute. Announce periodically.
If there are any particulars such as recording announce here.

Who would like to be the leader for week two of Ready Set GO!!?

- Hi, my name is _____, I am an adult child.
- Welcome to week two of a Ready Set GO!! Meeting introducing Step 4 and Step 5.
- Will all who care to please join me in the Serenity Prayer?
- God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.
- Let's go around and introduce ourselves. I'll start.
- Telephone introductions go alphabetically: A-G, H-M, N-Z

- Ready Set GO!! are closed ACA introductory meetings. We meet to introduce our ACA 12 Steps and ACA program in a structured 5 to 6 week time frame. We recognize all our 12 Traditions for safety within the group.

- Ready Set GO!! Is an introduction for ACA newcomers to become acquainted with the ACA Twelve Steps and get clarity and an understanding of the ACA Program. Ready Set GO!! introduces the experienced member to a renewal of their commitment to working their program through the ACA 12 Steps. Ready Set GO!! prepares members for when they will feel ready to go to the ACA 12 Step Workbook. Feel free to leave your fears and anxieties behind you as you experience these introductory meetings.

- The material is taken from our Big Red Book, the ACA 12 Step Workbook, and Strengthening My Recovery, the ACA meditation book. It requires those in attendance to listen to the material with an open mind and an open heart and in good faith with a desire to learn about ACA recovery and emotional sobriety.

- Our objective is simple: to introduce members to the ACA program and introduce the ACA 12 Steps by bringing clarity and awareness to the realization that the ACA 12 Steps offer opportunities for solutions.

- Each step will contain a worksheet that may bring more clarity and understanding of each Step. We will set aside a few minutes to fill in the worksheets and to answer any questions. Appendix B will provide a complete version of the worksheets for copies as needed.

- There is no right or wrong way to do the worksheets. They can be done over time as we grow.

- Choosing a sharing partner from this group who has some ACA experience is suggested for support for the 5 or 6 weeks. Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner, sponsor, fellow traveler, or your group is recommended, when you feel comfortable. This experience with a sharing partner can give the adult child insight to choosing a sponsor.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsors may be inclined to introduce Ready Set GO!! to their sponsees to begin their work together in ACA perhaps setting a flexible time frame to accommodate their needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In each of the 5 or 6 weeks we encourage you to prepare for these meetings by reading The Laundry List Traits, The Problem, The Solution, ACA 12 Steps, ACA 12 Traditions, and The Promises in Part One before attending each Ready Set GO!! Introductory meeting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to Appendix D for filling in Service Sheets. Ask for volunteers to read The Laundry List Traits, The Solution, a Step, and be timekeeper. Also 4 more volunteers for the 4th Sstep Worksheets.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ Please read The Laundry List Traits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ Please read The Solution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As we begin, we remind ourselves to have an open mind and an open heart. Be gentle with yourself as you go through this experience of Ready Set GO!!. This brief encounter with the 12 Steps may prepare you to do the ACA 12 Steps Workbook when you choose to do it. Remember Ready Set GO!! is an introduction to ACA.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to Step Four: "On this day I allow myself to be honest and thorough, welcoming the fact that I am always learning more about myself." p . 98
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be in peace and let fear and anxiety leave you for this journey.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Steps Four and Five we will continue the process of self-discovery and self-awareness by making a written inventory of attitudes and behaviors. We also see the generational nature of this behavior and how it was transmitted to us by our dysfunctional parents or relatives. With ACA, we learn to forgive ourselves and our parents. We change our behavior.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please do not rush through the readings so we can fully absorb the material.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ Please begin reading Step Four.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give instructions how to mute and unmute.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading the Introduction?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Step Four</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spiritual Principles: Self-honesty and Courage</i>

In Steps Four and Five, we review in detail how we were raised. We remember the messages, situations, and feelings. We also look at how we react and think in relationships as adults. We tell our story to another person and to God, as we understand God.⁵⁶

In ACA, we inventory our family system in addition to inventorying our own behavior. Other Twelve Step fellowships tend to limit a review of family dynamics. In ACA, we look at our parent's behavior, family roles, rules, messages, abuse, neglect, and how that affects us as adults. We balance the inventory of our family system with a thorough inventory of our own behavior.⁵⁷

It is not the purpose of the Twelve Steps of ACA to place blame on the parents or caregivers; however, the adult child also must not shield the parents during the inventory process.⁵⁸

Our cofounder, Tony A., believed that adult children could take a “blameless” inventory of his or her parents. That means the adult can name the types of abuse that occurred and the role playing necessary to survive the upbringing; however, with a “blameless” inventory, the adult child also realizes the generational nature of such abuse or neglect. The parents were passing on some form of what was done to them.⁵⁹

We must balance taking responsibility for misdeeds committed as an adult with the knowledge that our mistakes probably have their origin in the abuse we endured as children. We seek balance. We don’t want to use our childhood abuse as an excuse to avoid taking responsibility for our actions as adults. But we also do not want to belittle ourselves for these mistakes or abuses. Adult children can be brutally hard on themselves for making mistakes. We condemn ourselves and rage at ourselves with ease. This serves no good purpose and only means that we have learned to abuse ourselves. No one needs to beat up an adult child. We do it to ourselves long after our parents or relatives have stopped. We need to stop this self-condemning behavior. We can take full responsibility for our actions, knowing that our childhood abuse contributed to our abuses as adults. We also know that we are not blaming anyone for our adult behavior. We are learning to love ourselves. We can do this.⁶⁰

In Step Four, we also shatter the cardinal rules of family dysfunction. The “don’t talk” rule that most of us learned as children is broken so that a self-inventory can be fully reached. Breaking this rule began in Step One with the admission of being powerless over the effects of alcoholism and family dysfunction. When we work Steps Four and Five, we also break the rules of “don’t trust” and “don’t feel” by listing and articulating our life story in a structured manner. We learn to trust the person to whom we tell our story. We feel the feelings that arise by sharing such information. This sharing of our story with our sponsor or informed counselor reveals destructive patterns in our adult lives while illuminating abuses from our childhood. We also begin to see our grief or stored loss lying beneath our decisions to wrong ourselves and others.⁶¹

In Step Four, the adult child learns to “name” the acts of abandonment, shame, and other forms of abuse practiced by dysfunctional parents. At the same time in Step Four, the adult child lists his or her own defects of character, acts of selfishness, and blame that allowed the adult child to rationalize destructive behavior or reject real solutions.⁶²

The key word to remember in working ACA’s Fourth Step is “blameless.” ACA founder Tony A believed that adult children should take a “searching and blameless inventory of our parents because in essence we had become them.” Tony believed that we internalized our parents. We had become them in thinking and action even if we took steps to be different. While we focus primarily on ourselves in Step Four, we have added an inventory of the family to the process. ACA believes that we cannot take a searching and fearless inventory if we leave out the family.⁶³

Blame is not the purpose of Step Four or any of ACA’s Twelve Steps. However, we can hold our parents and family accountable for their action and inaction. Blameless and accountability are the guideposts that steer us toward a balanced but searching inventory.⁶⁴

We avoid blame because we are aware of the generational nature of family dysfunction. Our parents passed on the seeds of shame and fear given to them. They were once children without a choice. They survived as we survived. While some parents were obviously sadistic or unrepentant,

others did the best they could. These parents made a conscious decision to raise their children differently than they were raised. Many of these parents abstained from alcohol, yet passed on problematic fear and shame just the same. Some of these well-meaning parents learned to say affirming statements of love and encouragement. Yet, they still transferred their own self-doubt and lack of self-love in large measures. Many of us are the adult children of these parents. We have acted out with addiction or another self-harming behavior, continuing the disease of family dysfunction.⁶⁵

We stress fairness with our parents while holding them accountable for another reason as well. Many of us working Step Four realize we have harmed our own children. We have passed on what was done to us. Many of us have changed our behavior and made amends. However some of us could one day be the focus of an inventory of our own children arriving at the doors of ACA. This is another reason to take a blameless, yet fair, inventory of the family and parents. If we give fairness, we can hope for fairness.⁶⁶

While working Step Four and all of the ACA Steps, we encourage you to nurture yourself. We must balance this probing look at our behavior with gentleness. We must protect our Inner Child or True Self vigorously. At the same time, we cannot let discomfort or fear stop us from getting honest about our own behavior.⁶⁷

- For your convenience Tony A, our co-founder's 12 Steps and more information are included in Appendix F.
- I will now introduce: **Ready Set GO!!'s "Blameless" 4th Step Inventory Worksheets**. The columns contain **Quick Check, Exercise 1 and Exercise 2, and Seek Balance for Positive Results, Dysfunctional Problems, and the definitions and Healing Solutions, and the definitions**.
- This introduction to the "Blameless" inventory is to help us understand the generational nature of the **Dysfunctional Problems** while learning the impact they have had on our life.
- The **Dysfunctional Problems** are exercises from our ACA 12 Step Workbook for the 4th Step and will be more thorough than this introduction.
- The **Healing Solutions** will help us break out of our role as a victim. These are positive things we may seek but never have experienced or hoped for before in our lives. We may notice them in tiny ways or they could have a huge impact on our recovery over a period of time.
- There are no guarantees, only our determination to do the best we can do to the best of our ability.
- Our Higher Power will love us no matter what we accomplish and so we need to love ourselves unconditionally.
- There is no wrong or right way to do it.
- Be gentle and kind with yourself by letting go of any fears or anxieties, this is not easy.
- Upon completion of the worksheets sharing **the check marks** of our **Dysfunctional Problems in detail** later with our sharing partner, sponsor or fellow traveler will begin to bring us out of denial when we feel comfortable and help us piece together our story.

• Please go to the first worksheet to follow along as I read the instructions.
• We will start under Quick Check with the Dysfunctional Problems column and read across the page.
• Mark the Check ✓ column if this problem affects you personally.
• List a person that has harmed you with this problem in the Exercise 1 column. The harm may be real or imagined.
• List a person who you have harmed with this problem in the Exercise 2 column. Give special consideration to put yourself down first on the list as many adult children have harmed themselves with these behaviors.
• At home you may want to add other people to this inventory and share the details with your sharing partner, sponsor or fellow traveler.
• Under Seek Balance for Positive Results continue with the Healing Solution and the definitions.
• With Ready Set GO!! being an Introduction more thorough work will be done with the ACA 12 Steps when you are Ready Set to GO!! through the ACA 12 Step Workbook.
• Remember to say “pass” if you do not want to read.
• I will call upon those who volunteered to read a page of the 4th Step Worksheet one at a time.
• To start_____Please begin our eading with the Dysfunctional Problem of the Laundry List Traits continuing through the Healing Solution of the Laundry List Workbook thru Shame.
_____Please read the 2nd page - Abandonment thru Stored Anger (resentments)
_____Please read the 3rd page - Dysfuntional Relationships thru Frozen Feelings
_____Please read the 4th page - Sexual abuse thru Emotional abuse
• I will begin our reading with the Dysfunctional Problem of the Laundry List Traits continuing through the Healing Solution of the Laundry List Workbook and the definition and then pass. Please go to the next Dysfunctional Problem to go around the room for others to read?

Ready Set GO!!'s "Blameless" 4th Step Inventory Worksheets

Quick Check			Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Seek Balance for Positive Results	
Dysfunctional Problems	Definitions	✓	Person who has harmed you	Person who you have harmed	Healing Solutions	Definitions
Laundry List Traits	A list of characteristics we seem to have in common due to being brought up in an alcoholic and/or dysfunctional family. Some of these are: afraid of people and authority, addictive lives, stuff our feelings, terrified of abandonment, approval seekers, self-sacrificial, addicted to excitement, confuse love and pity, judge ourselves harshly, reactors rather than actors, para-alcoholics(co-dependents). Choose one for this worksheet. SMR, Front Cover Workbook				Laundry List Workbook	Take a look at the different perceptions that are a part of these traits and learn how to integrate them or let go of them. With this action we will begin to find emotional sobriety. Suggested to do this workbook after the ACA 12 Steps Workbook has been done.
Family Secrets	These are secrets, inconsistencies, and wrongs that are contrary to the family image. Workbook p. 82 Every family has a secret...but how far will people go to protect these secrets? And how do they move past the truth once it is uncovered?				Overcome Denial	Breaking through the wall of dealing with our pain and suffering that we tried to ignore for many years.
Shame	Shame tends to make you feel isolated, inferior and unwanted. When shame is intense the adult child's vision is distorted and perceptions change. Shame is the deep sense that our souls are inherently flawed. BRB p. 10 A person, action, or situation that brings a loss of respect or honor.				Self Love	Start to let ourselves appreciate the true self that God meant us to be, the innocent, pure, thoughtful, loving child of God.

Quick Check			Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Seek Balance for Positive Results	
Dysfunctional Problems	Definitions	✓	Person who has harmed you	Person who you have harmed	Healing Solutions	Definitions
Abandonment	A subjective emotional state in which people feel undesired, left behind, insecure, or discarded. People experiencing emotional abandonment may feel at a loss, cut off from a crucial source of sustenance that has been withdrawn either suddenly or through a process of erosion. SMR, Front Cover Workbook				Loving Parent	The part of ourselves that is free from the Critical Parent. The Loving Parent can give us what we need now. When we were children our needs were not met by our parents. We learn how to be a Loving Parent following the principles of the steps.
Fear	A feeling of anxiety concerning the outcome of something or the safety and well-being of someone: A distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc., whether the threat is real or imagined; the feeling or condition of being afraid.				Gentleness	Being kind, caring, thoughtful of others and ourselves. The quality of being tender, or mild-mannered.
Stored Anger (Resentments)	Strong displeasure; anger; hostility provoked by a wrong experienced.				Foregiveness	The intentional and voluntary process by which a victim undergoes a change in feelings and attitude regarding an offense, lets go of negative emotions such as vengefulness, with an increased ability to wish the offender well. Forgiveness is different from condoning, excusing, forgetting, pardoning, and reconciliation. In certain contexts, forgiveness is a legal term for absolving or giving up all claims on account of debt, loan, obligation, or other claims.

Quick Check			Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Seek Balance for Positive Results	
Dysfunctional Problems	Definitions	✓	Person who has harmed you	Person who you have harmed	Healing Solutions	Definitions
Dysfunctional Relationships	Relationships that do not perform their appropriate function; that is, they do not emotionally support the participants, foster communication among them, appropriately challenge them, or prepare or fortify them for life in the larger world. Workbook				Self Respect	Pride and confidence in oneself; a feeling that one is behaving with honor and dignity.
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	An anxiety disorder associated with serious traumatic events and characterized by such symptoms as survivor guilt, reliving the trauma in dreams, numbness and lack of involvement with reality, or recurrent thoughts and images.				Contentment	A state of happiness and satisfaction.
Frozen Feelings	These are frozen emotions that the child was not allowed to feel that never go away. These emotions stay buried, contributing to limiting beliefs and negative self views. It is not until this pent-up energy is expelled, expressed and processed in the presence of an understanding, safe and validating other that the emotion is released.				Rigorous Honesty	The ability to be totally and completely honest with oneself and sharing that with trusted others.

Quick Check			Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Seek Balance for Positive Results	
Dysfunctional Problems	Definitions	✓	Person who has harmed you	Person who you have harmed	Healing Solutions	Definitions
Sexual Abuse	Criminal sexual activity, especially that involving a victim below the age of sexual consent or incapable of sexual consent.				Courage	The choice and willingness to confront agony, pain, danger, uncertainty or intimidation. Moral courage is the ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition, shame, scandal, discouragement, or personal loss.
Physical Abuse	Is an act of another party involving contact intended to cause feelings of physical pain, injury, or other physical suffering or bodily harm.				Loving Kindness	Tenderness and consideration toward others.
Emotional Abuse	The debasement of a person's feelings that causes the individual to perceive himself or herself as inept, not cared for, and worthless.				Trust	Firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something.

Leader: **Congratulations! You have been introduced to Ready Set GO!!'s
"Blameless" 4th Step Inventory Worksheets.**

Leader: I will read the Praise Exercise balancing positive and spiritual qualities and as I read please feel free to circle at least 10 assets. At home do the repeat exercise "I am_____."

Praise Exercise

These assets will help balance positive and spiritual
qualities while looking at Step Four. BRB p. 188

Sit quietly and circle at least 10 assets:	
strong	humorous
sensitive	willing
intelligent	compassionate
courteous	talented
honest	organized
spontaneous	creative
loving	a listener
spiritual	trustworthy
tenacious	judicious
accepting	modest
prompt	kind
hard working	a friend
An ACA member	

Repeat, I am _____.

For each circled asset.

- You have balanced this INVENTORY with positive traits that include the courage you exhibited by completing the introduction to this challenging Step. Your journey is still unfolding. You are not alone. Ask for help and accept it.

Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Four.

- Are there any questions?
- We will now have our 15 minutes of sharing time with 3 minute shares.
- We will break up into small groups. Count off as needed. (if needed)
- I will let you know when the 15 mins is over.
- Shares need to be kept to 3 minutes with a 1 minute warning, please be considerate of others.
- Please share on what we just read or what is on your heart. The 4th Step inventories need to be shared privately with your sharing partner. You can use this time to share your feelings and experience about this step.
- Please be considerate and give everyone time to share.
- We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting.
- Just a reminder what is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
- Give instructions how to mute and unmute.
- Who would like to share? List 4 or 5 participants on the Service Sheet for Shares (or as many as time may allow. Appendix D
- Please be respectful of our confidentiality.
- Welcome back.
- In Step Five we tell our story with clarity and humility to our sponsor or sharing partner. We will learn to trust ourselves and break down the walls of isolation we have hidden behind.
- I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to Step Five: "On this day I will be honest with the most important person I will ever get to know: Me."
- Please do not rush through the readings so we can fully absorb the material.
- _____ Please begin reading Step Five.
- We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 5?

- **Step Five**
- **Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**
- ***Spiritual Principles: Honesty and Trust***

There is no way around Steps Four or Five. We must go through them to get to the other side, to find the God of our understanding waiting there with a timeless embrace. This is our experience. Thousands of adult children have completed Step Five and found a peace and serenity not known before. They are waiting for you on the other side of Step Five. They called upon the inner strength

which helped them survive a dysfunctional upbringing. They used that inner strength to make it through Step Five with room to spare. You have this inner strength by the very fact you have completed the first four Steps of the program.⁶⁸

Step Five gives us a chance to finally talk about what matters to someone we trust. We give our Fifth Step without grand promises to be perfect or strive for perfection. We tell our story to another person with honesty and sincerity and leave the results to God as we understand God. We can finally give ourselves breathing room to change one day at a time. We claim our humanness and our position in the world.⁶⁹

We approach Step Five with an attitude of self-love and trust that our Higher Power is with us and will not abandon us. We have taken a hard look at ourselves and our family of origin in Step Four. We have held nothing back. We are now preparing to release years of stored grief, shame, and hurtful secrets to God and to someone who understands.⁷⁰

The spiritual principles of Step Five are honesty and trust. We must have self-honesty about the effects of growing up in a dysfunctional home. The effects are our survival traits, which include people-pleasing, becoming addicted or marrying an addict, fearing authority figures, and feeling guilty when we ask for what we need. We often confuse love and pity, and we tend to “love” people we can rescue. We also can be the rescued. We stay in abusive relationships because they resemble how we were raised. We are terrified of abandonment so we tolerate high levels of abuse or neglect as adults. The abuse seems normal.⁷¹

In Step Five, we must also have self-honesty about those we have harmed, including ourselves.⁷²

If we minimize our wrongs or fail to see their exact nature, we fall short of the mark of self-honesty in Step Five. Self-honesty does not mean self harm. We want rigorous honesty, but we do not want to abuse ourselves by being rigorously scathing. If we overstate our wrongs and beat ourselves up, we tend to drift into an attitude of martyrdom, or we assume the victim posture.⁷³

Step Five is where we embrace a more balanced view of who we are as sons, daughters, citizens, employees, business owners, and spiritual seekers. Since we come from homes that were out of balance with abuse or hypercritical attitudes, it is not easy for us to embrace our positive qualities. But we have such traits as compassion, trust, intelligence, and spirituality. Other positive traits are friendliness, honesty, and tenacity. We are not the disease of family dysfunction, but we have acted on harmful traits developed in that family when we were children. We are facing our behaviors in Step Five and making an honest attempt to change. We can feel good about this effort and our good character no matter what our story reveals.⁷⁴

When we look at the exact nature of our wrongs, we see that we have harmed ourselves based on our sense of being unacceptable, inferior, or lost. Further examination of our wrongs reveals there can be both legal and spiritual consequences to our actions. When we break the law there is a legal wrong, but we also see a spiritual separation as well. We separate ourselves from our Higher Power with our behavior. We experience spiritual loss.⁷⁵

But the adult child should also realize that the exact nature of a wrong can also involve loss. That is the secret in understanding Step Five. All of these harmful acts add up to loss. Each time we harmed another person or ourselves, we lost a piece of ourselves. Each time we shamed our own child or spouse, there was loss. Each time we judged ourselves without mercy for common

mistakes, there was loss. Each day we remained in an abusive, dependent relationship there was loss.⁷⁶

Fifth Step Prayer

Divine Creator. Thank you for this chance to speak
honestly with another person about the events of my life.

Help me accept responsibility for my actions.

Let me show compassion for myself and my family
as I revisit my thinking and actions
that have blocked me from your love.

Restore my child within.

Restore my feelings.

Restore my trust in myself. Amen.⁷⁷

- The next page is the Step 5 Worksheet - Dealing and Balancing with the Losses.
- Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed.
- Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner, sponsor or fellow traveler is recommended to take the action of admitting our wrongs to God, to ourselves and to another human being.
- This is not to shame or blame anyone but to take notice that it is your truth and it is real.
- Refer to the **Healing Solutions** to be confident that this is a gift we shall receive from taking this action.
- Be gentle with yourself when you tell your story in detail to your sharing partner, sponsor, or fellow traveler.
- You will have 5 minutes to fill in the worksheet to the best of your ability.
- Thoroughly complete the worksheet at home with the support of your sharing partner for support if needed.
- I will read the following worksheet.

Step 5 Worksheet

Dealing and Balancing with the Losses

Dysfunctional Problems <i>Hurts, abuses, losses</i>	Who harmed me?	What can I learn and how will it help me?
Dysfunctional Problems <i>Hurts, abuses, losses</i>	Who have I harmed?	What can I learn and how will it help me?

Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Five.

- Are there any questions?
- We will now have our 15 minutes of sharing time with 3 minute shares.
- We will break up into small groups. Count off as needed. (if needed)
- I will let you know when the 15 minutes is over.
- Shares need to be kept to 3 minutes, please be considerate of others.
- Please share on what we have just read or whatever may be on your heart. If you feel comfortable you may share your worksheet(s).
- Please be considerate and give everyone time to share.
- We do not crosstalk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the contents of what another person has said during the meeting.
- Just a reminder what is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
- Give instructions how to mute and unmute.
- Who would like to share? List 4 or 5 participants on the Service Sheet for Shares.
- Please be respectful of our confidentiality.
- Welcome back.
- In accordance with our 7th Tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, please go to adultchildren.org to contribute for the 7th Tradition.
- In accordance with the 7th tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, we will pass a basket for donations.
- The 7th Tradition goes towards the use of this room, WSO, Intergroup and any other expenses we may have.
- Thank you for participating in our second week of Ready Set GO!! introducing Steps 4 and 5.
- Thanks to our readers and our timekeeper.
- Next week we will introduce Steps 6, 7, 8 and 9.
- Who would like to be the leader for Week #3.
- Please read the readings on the day of our next meeting.
- After our Closing Prayer we will discuss sharing partners, have a phone and email exchange and Q & A, and have a chance to fellowship.
- Will you please join me for our Closing Prayer, Gathered Together?

Gathered Together

Higher Power, gathered together we find great peace and serenity.

We seek hope to become whole as we were created to be.

We find strength to deal with life as we grow in our program.

We trust that as we find courage we will feel free and secure.

We are grateful to have the support of our group who understands us.

We believe that your presence in our life will give us all that we need.

We close our meeting with a feeling of belonging and being loved.

Keep Coming Back!

It works if you work it!

And you are worth it!

Leader

- At this time I would like to discuss the concept of sharing partners.
- Choosing a sharing partner from this group who has some ACA experience is suggested for support for the five or six weeks. Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner, sponsor, fellow traveler or your group is recommended when you feel comfortable.
- This experience with a sharing partner can give the adult child insight to choosing a sponsor. A sharing partner has some ACA experience.
- Who would like to be a sharing partner? List information of Sharing Partners on the Sharing Partner Service Sheet.
- Who would like to join the Phone/Email Exchange? Add information on the Phone/Email Exchange Service Sheet.
- *Leader's Choice. Consider offering RSG Closed Sharing Time Meetings outside of the regular RSG session for additional sharing time for RSG participants only. See Appendix D page 149 for format.*
- *Two Closed Sharing Time One Hour Meetings for RSG Participants only using teleconference dial in # and access code: Available Tues & Thurs 6:00-7:00pm CT, 4:00pm-5:00pm PST, 7:00pm-8:00pm ET.*
- Are there any questions?
- We now have some time to fellowship.

Ready Set GO!! Week #3

Leader

Telephone Meetings will use grayed sections for instructions for telephone meetings.

Give instructions how to mute and unmute. Announce periodically.
If there are any particulars such as recording announce here.

Who would like be leader for Week #3?

- Hi, my name is _____, I am an adult child.
- Welcome to week three of a Ready Set GO!! Meeting introducing Steps 6, 7, 8 and 9.
- Will all who care to please join me in the Serenity Prayer?
- God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.
- Let's go around and introduce ourselves. I'll start.
- Telephone introductions go alphabetically: A-G, H-M, N-Z
- Ready Set GO!! are closed ACA introductory meetings. We meet to introduce our ACA 12 Steps and ACA program in a structured 5 to 6 week time frame. We recognize all our 12 Traditions for safety within the group.
- Ready Set GO!! Is an introduction for ACA newcomers to become acquainted with the ACA Twelve Steps and get clarity and an understanding of the ACA Program. Ready Set GO!! introduces the experienced member to a renewal of their commitment to working their program through the ACA 12 Steps. Ready Set GO!! prepares members for when they will feel ready to go to the ACA 12 Step Workbook. Feel free to leave your fears and anxieties behind you as you experience these introductory meetings.
- The material is taken from our Big Red Book, the ACA 12 Step Workbook, and Strengthening My Recovery, the ACA meditation book. It requires those in attendance to listen to the material with an open mind and an open heart and in good faith with a desire to learn about ACA recovery and emotional sobriety.
- Our objective is simple: to introduce members to the ACA program and introduce the ACA 12 Steps by bringing clarity and awareness to the realization that the ACA 12 Steps offer opportunities for solutions.
- Each step will contain a worksheet that may bring more clarity and understanding of each Step. We will set aside a few minutes to fill in the worksheets and to answer any questions. Appendix B will provide a complete version of the worksheets for copies as needed.
- There is no right or wrong way to do the worksheets. They can be done over time as we grow.
- Choosing a sharing partner from this group who has some ACA experience is suggested for support for the 5 to 6 weeks. Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner, sponsor, fellow traveler, or your group is recommended, when you feel comfortable. This experience with a sharing partner can give the adult child insight to choosing a sponsor.
- Sponsors may be inclined to introduce Ready Set GO!! to their sponsees to begin their work together in ACA perhaps setting a flexible time frame to accommodate their needs.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In each of the 5 to 6 weeks we encourage you to prepare for these meetings by reading The Laundry List Traits, The Problem, The Solution, ACA 12 Steps, ACA 12 Traditions, and The Promises in Part One before attending each Ready Set GO!! Introductory meeting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to Appendix D for filling in Service Sheets. Ask for volunteers to read The Laundry List Traits, The Solution, a Step, and be timekeeper.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ Please read The Laundry List Traits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ Please read The Solution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As we begin, we remind ourselves to have an open mind and an open heart. Be gentle with yourself as you go through this experience of Ready Set GO!! This brief encounter with the 12 Steps may prepare you to do the ACA 12 Steps Workbook when you choose to do it. Remember Ready Set GO!! is an introduction to ACA.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Step Six we will become willing to have God remove our defects of character.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to Step Six “On this day I will gratefully and joyously remember that my defects are losing their hold on me as my recovery grows.” p. 181
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be in peace and let fear and anxiety leave you for this journey.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please do not rush through the readings so we can fully absorb the material.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ Please begin reading Step Six.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give instructions how to mute and unmute.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 6?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Step Six</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Principle: Willingness

In Step Six we realize that we have defects of character like most of the population in the world. However, our defects of character tend to be entrenched and trap us in unfulfilling relationships and block us from receiving the love of a Higher Power. Our defects can include procrastination, lust, envy, greed, selfishness, and judgementalness. We also have survival traits or common behaviors. The survival traits are the 14 characteristics of The Laundry List (Problem). These common behaviors represent the effects of growing up in a dysfunctional home. They are in a different category than defects of character.⁷⁸

Our survival traits include people-pleasing, addictiveness, hypervigilance, and stuffing our feelings to avoid conflict or arguments. We often confuse love with pity and tend to “love” those we can rescue. Even though we have identified such traits in Step Four, we are still new at this. We need focus to find our best course of action for release. Many adult children take the path of removal for character defects and take the path of integration for the survival traits.⁷⁹

There is a key distinction between defects of character and the survival traits of The Laundry List.⁸⁰

The key to becoming free of character defects while making peace with our survival traits involves a three-pronged approach with willingness, prayer, and time.⁸¹

Willingness is our most powerful ally because it means we are teachable when it comes to addressing our defects of character. By being teachable, we learn to discern how much effort to put into changing our defects and when to get out of the way and let God handle it.

THE LAUNDRY LIST TREE

The Branches Laundry List 14 Traits

Para alcoholics
Codependency
Reactors rather than actors
Judge ourselves harshly
Stuff our feelings
**Afraid of people and
authority figures**
Confuse love and pity
Addictive lives
Addicted to excitement
Approval seekers
Self-sacrificial
Terrified of abandonment
**Frightened by angry
people**
**Live life from the
viewpoint of victims**



On the Cover

The front cover of the ACA 12 Steps Workbook depicts **The Laundry List Tree**, which represents the traits of an adult child. The tree also shows the distinction between the traits which are learned in childhood and the defects of character that develop later in life. The Laundry List Traits represents the limbs while the character defects are the fruit.

Page 211

The Fruit Defects of Character

Mistrust
Feeling Superior
Procrastination
Greed
Pettiness
Envy
Lust
Perfectionism
Isolation
Dishonesty
Judgmental
Self Centeredness

Becoming willing to have a Higher Power remove our defects of character can range from being painless, to moments of discomfort to agony.⁸²

We now have friends and a Higher Power to rely on. We are not alone.⁸³

Our experience reveals that there is value in emotional pain. With support, and with gentleness, we can find our healthy pain and its healing release.⁸⁴

By facing our pain, we learn that we really are not alone in our suffering. When we find ourselves in this kind of pain in Step Six, we stay close to meetings and keep our faces turned toward God as we understand God.⁸⁵

With Step Six, you are taking the time to become entirely ready. You are about to ask God to humbly remove your shortcomings with a Seventh Step prayer. Step Seven states: “Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.”⁸⁶

We have a list of our defects of character. We prepared our list by reviewing our Fourth Step inventory. We also understand our survival traits and their function in our life. These are The Laundry List traits that we respect but which now must be further lessened or integrated.⁸⁷

Our character defects and survival traits are old friends we are beginning to bid farewell.⁸⁸

By now, we have stopped punishing ourselves. We are asking God, as we understand God, to help us become entirely ready to have these defects of character removed. We must realize that good intentions do not work in removing our defects of character. We need help from a power greater than ourselves to achieve Step Six results.⁸⁹

- | |
|---|
| • Next page is the the Step 6 Check List Worksheet. |
| • Feel free to place check marks as they are being read. |
| • Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed. |

Step 6 Check List Worksheet

Check Defects of Character and Laundry List Traits

I am willing to have removed and/or integrated by my Higher Power

To be done over time as I progress.

Defects of Character	
	Mistrust
	Feeling Superior
	Procrastination
	Greed
	Pettiness
	Envy
	Lust
	Perfectionism
	Isolation
	Dishonesty
	Judgmental
	Self Centeredness

Laundry List Traits	
	para alcoholics
	codependency
	reactors rather than actors
	judge ourselves harshly
	stuff our feelings
	afraid of people and authority figures
	confuse love and pity
	addictive lives
	addicted to excitement
	approval seekers
	self-sacrificial
	terrified of abandonment
	frightened by angry people
	live life from the viewpoint of victims

<i>Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Six.</i>	
• In Step 7 we learn to remove defects of character and integrate our Laundry List survival traits. We transform them into spiritual assets when possible.	
• _____ Please begin reading Step Seven.	
• Give instructions how to mute and unmute.	
• We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 7?	

• <u>Step Seven</u>
• Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
• <i>Spiritual Principle: Humility</i>

As we approach Step Seven, we take time to notice that we have taken a fearless and thorough at ourselves and our family of origin.⁹⁰

In Step Seven, we realize we cannot remove our shortcomings without the help of a Higher Power. We may have had moments of freedom from our defects, but they seem to return or take on a new form if we fail to ask for God's intervention. To our horror, we see a defect reappear in a new obsession or new twist that is torturous to face alone. In Step Seven, we muster all the trust or faith that we can. We rely upon God to remove our defects of character. We humbly ask God, as we understand God, to remove our shortcomings.⁹¹

For removal of our defects of character, we sit in a relaxed position and concentrate on becoming entirely willing. We also become willing to integrate our survival traits. We may meditate and pray. When we are ready, we repeat the Seventh Step prayer for each defect or survival trait we wish to have removed or integrated. Do not be concerned if you are not clear if you are addressing a defect or survival trait. God will understand. Humbly ask God, as you understand God, to remove your defects of character.⁹²

When we are ready, we repeat the **Seventh Step prayer** for **each defect or survival trait** we wish to have removed or integrated.

Seventh Step Prayer - Character Defects

God. I am now ready that you should remove from me all my defects of character, which block me from accepting your divine love and living with true humility toward others. Renew my strength so that I might help myself and others along this path of recovery. BRB pp.220

"I humbly ask you to:

"Remove my defect of _____ . Amen."

Select Defects of Character:	
Mistrust	Lust
Feeling Superior	Perfectionism
Procrastination	Isolation
Greed	Dishonesty
Pettiness	Judgmental
Envy	Self Centeredness

Seventh Step Prayer - Laundry List Traits

God. I am now ready that you should integrate my survival traits, which block me from accepting your divine love.

Grant me wholeness. BRB p. 221

"I humbly ask you to:

"Integrate my trait of _____ . Amen."

Laundry List Traits survival traits or common behaviors:	
para alcoholics	addicted to excitement
codependency	approval seekers
reactors rather than actors	self-sacrificial
judge ourselves harshly	terrified of abandonment
stuff our feelings	frightened by angry people
afraid of people and authority figures	live life from the viewpoint of victims
confuse love and pity	addictive lives

With our character defects and survival traits addressed, we rely upon our Step Seven humility to prepare us for the amends process in Steps Eight and Nine. Humility will lead us as we find our path of self-forgiveness while making things right for those we have harmed.

Step Seven is an ongoing process. We can work this Step almost anywhere and anytime we feel the need to have a character defect removed. If we slip into judging another ACA member wrongfully, we can say “God. Please remove my shortcoming of judgementalness.”⁹³

Humility is not humiliation; however, some adult children have humiliated themselves and found humility. Humiliation tends to come from our need to harm ourselves by reenacting the shame from our childhood. Without help, our toxic shame from the past will find a way to express itself in our adult lives no matter how perfect we act and no matter how hard we try to control ourselves or others. The shame finds a way to well up. We are horrified by its expression in relationships or event and our participation in it.⁹⁴

Humility comes from God and is a sibling of anonymity, a foundational principle of the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. Through anonymity, we practice service with love. We seek to be of maximum service to our Higher Power and others.⁹⁵

With humility we find that our will aligns with God’s will on a more frequent basis. True humility is the willingness to seek and do God’s will with our best effort. We know that we are not perfect and know we could fall short. Yet, we try our best to live this Step and obtain its spiritual intent of removing our shortcomings through humility.⁹⁶

In addition to an inner peace and a glimpse of God’s will, humility also brings an unexpected burst of creative energy for many adult children. Since we have backed away from trying to control others, we suddenly realize we have more energy to do things for ourselves. We have more time to attend concerts, go hiking, or begin a book of poems or finish one. Many adult children take their Inner Children to the circus, or buy watercolors and spend afternoons painting and mixing colors to see what happens.⁹⁷

We reparent ourselves by listing any problematic thinking or behavior that might linger after completing Step Seven. We strive to be free of these defects of character, but we also remind ourselves that we have positive qualities. Through humility, we can ask our Higher Power to help us avoid picking up and using a defect of character. We humbly ask our Higher Power to help us address our remaining defects. In this exercise we seek balance in our lives. We avoid focusing only on our problematic behavior. List your positive qualities across from problematic behavior that continues to affect your life. We reparent ourselves with the positive qualities.⁹⁸

Continued Defects	↔	<u>Balance/Reparent with</u>
Self-centered	↔	Selflessness
Not always honest	↔	Rigorous honesty
Manipulative	↔	Sincerity
Perfectionist	↔	Compromise

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following is Step 7 Worksheet - Problematic Behaviors and Positive Qualities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel free to check off the Problematic Behaviors and then the Positive Qualities that apply to you as I read.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoroughly complete the worksheet at home with the support of your sharing partner for support if needed.

Step 7 Worksheets

#1 and #2

#1 Check Problematic Behaviors that Continue to Affect my Life	
	Abrupt
	Aloof
	Argumentative
	Boisterous
	Blunt
	Cold
	Critical
	Domineering
	Fearful
	Greedy
	Hateful
	Inconsiderate
	Irritable
	Miserable
	Resentful
	Sanctimonious
	Suspicious
	Thoughtless
	Timid
	Troublesome
	Ungrateful
	Unfulfilled
	Vengeful
	Weakness
	Worthless

#2 Check Positive Qualities to Balance/Reparent Myself	
	Admirable
	Agreeable
	Balanced
	Calm
	Capable
	Courageous
	Compassionate
	Dedicated
	Efficient
	Enthusiastic
	Flexible
	Forgiving
	Good natured
	Humble
	Objective
	Open
	Patient
	Profound
	Punctual
	Reliable
	Respectful
	Satisfaction
	Spontaneous
	Tolerant
	Warm

Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Seven.

- Are there any questions about what we just read?
- We will now have our 15 minutes of sharing time with 3 minute shares.
- We will break up into small groups. Count off as needed. (if needed)
- I will let you know when the 15 minutes is over.
- Shares need to be kept to 3 minutes with 1 minute warning, please be considerate of others.
- Please share on what we just read or what is on your heart. If you feel comfortable you may share your worksheets.
- Please be considerate and give everyone time to share.
- We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting.
- Just a reminder what is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
- Give instructions how to mute and unmute.
- Who would like to share? List 4 or 5 participants on the Service Sheet for Shares (or as many as time may allow.) Appendix D
- Please be respectful of our confidentiality.

———Upon return of small groups———

- Welcome back.
- In Step Eight we will become willing to make amends for our inappropriate behaviors. We take responsibility for our actions and feelings. We also learn to be gentle with ourselves and to protect our Inner Child during this process.
- I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to Step Eight: “On this day I will stay current with the amends I owe myself, and then work with those I may owe others.” p. 224
- Please do not rush through the readings so we can fully absorb the material.
- _____ Please begin reading Step Eight.
- We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 8?

- **Step Eight**
- **Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**
- ***Spiritual Principles: Willingness and Self-forgiveness***

In Step Eight we make a list of the people we have harmed and become willing to make amends to them all. While making such a list, we are also mindful of our Inner Child and the need to protect the child within from harm during the amends process. While we will concentrate here on willingness and making the list, we must realize that many adult children have families that remain in denial about family addiction or dysfunction. Walking into your home and announcing that you are an adult child might bring

an unintended effect. We urge caution for some circumstances; however, we do not let fear or being uncomfortable stop us from making this important list of our wrongs.⁹⁹

With Step Eight and Step Nine we are strengthening our commitment to changing our lives. We are doing something that is not easy but which will build confidence and set us free. We are moving past our comfort zone. We are moving further away from our dependent, people-pleasing selves toward our new home. We are improving a real connection with our Higher Power.¹⁰⁰

Making an Eighth Step list of those we have harmed and facing our part is an act of courage. This outward courage is a reflection of our inward strength that has been there all along. How could we have survived and arrived at ACA without this inner courage and without a Higher Power? While we once thought we survived by coincidence, we are now beginning to believe in divine intervention at some level. Not all of us can put our finger on it, but many of us know we should not be here. We should not have survived, but we did. We certainly should not have made it to ACA where we now sit contemplating a list of people we have harmed and feeling confident enough to follow through with amends. Many of us who have been locked up or locked down, realize we are lucky as well to have this chance. We want to be sincere. We want to follow through and contribute to society in a meaningful manner. We also want to be the best we can be for our immediate families. We want to finally be emotionally, spiritually, and physically present with them.¹⁰¹

In Step Eight, we are still learning to trust ourselves and to stand with ourselves without fading. If we balk at forgiving ourselves, we face this doubt and affirm ourselves. We get back to the business of self-forgiveness. We show self-forgiveness when we place our name at the top of the Eighth Step list. We also show self-forgiveness by listening to the words we use to describe ourselves. Where we once described ourselves as “lazy,” “mean,” or “incapable of love,” we now describe ourselves in a gentler tone and with language that reflects the growing love inside of us. We begin to hear ourselves say: “I thought I was unlovable, but in fact I am a precious child of God. I am a miracle.”¹⁰²

- I will read the Step 8 Amends List Worksheet.
- Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed.
- You will have 3 minutes to fill it in to the best of your ability.
- Thoroughly complete the worksheet at home with the support of your sharing partner for support if needed.

Step 8 Amends List Worksheet

Person	Relationship	Make Amends For	Behaviors That Will Change
		<p>COPYRIGHT © ACA WSO DRAFT - FOR INTERNAL ONLY NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION NOT FOR FACEBOOK OR OTHER PUBLIC MEDIA</p>	74

Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Eight.

- Going onto Step Nine we balance taking responsibility for our inappropriate behavior with being aware that we also are protecting a wounded child within. We do not balk at making difficult amends, but we lovingly reparent ourselves during this process as well.
- I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to Step Nine: “On this day I will practice new, trusting behavior with my ACA friends. I will continue to learn healthier ways of communicating that will keep me from leaving others for the wrong reasons.” p.113
- Please do not rush through the readings so we can fully absorb the material.
- _____Please begin reading Step Nine.
- Give instructions how to mute and unmute.
- We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 9?

- **Step Nine**
- **Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**
- ***Spiritual Principles: Forgiveness and Courage***

Step Nine can be one of the greatest recovery moments that we will ever experience in ACA. While the Step can appear daunting, Step Nine is one of the fellowship’s best kept secrets. The emotional and spiritual rewards of this Step are like a great hidden treasure. We cannot tell you how the amends process will turn out for you, but we can promise fulfillment and growth that will exceed your expectations if this Step is faced with honesty, sincerity, and thoroughness.¹⁰³

We liken the Steps leading up to Step Nine as a spiritual ropes course. The challenge course has involved risk, group support, and the realization of inner courage.¹⁰⁴

We see no blame for anyone for what we are about to do in Step Nine. We are not blaming our parents or ourselves. We are willing to make amends to those we have harmed so that we can be free to serve God and society. During the amends process, we will protect ourselves and our Inner Child, but we will not shrink from this important Step. We feel as if we are closer to God, and we want to live and let live. We are learning to reparent ourselves with love and gentleness. The sky is clear. We step off into Step Nine.¹⁰⁵

Step Nine is about mending relationships with others and ourselves. The Step also involves cleaning up the wreckage of our past and being willing to release resentments. In some cases, an amends will help restore a relationship. In other cases, an amends will bring closure to a past relationship or association.¹⁰⁶

The emotional and spiritual rewards for making our amends are awesome. Many such benefits are intangible but they assure us that we are finally making greater progress in our lives. We are truly involved in real behaviors that are bringing change into our lives. In Step Nine, we are bringing together the pieces of our spiritual blueprint created by the preceding Steps. We are building our new home. We are turning on switches and opening windows installed by the hands of the Spirit of the Universe. There is still work to be done, but we are on our way. We have our foundation in place.¹⁰⁷

We approach Step Nine with humility and with a sense that we are about to make a significant shift in our lives. We are breaking the shackles of unhealthy dependence and carried shame. With the support of ACA, we understand we can lay down the guilt and shame we have carried from past behavior. We realize that this is a chance to address behavior that we thought was unforgivable. For years, many of us have carried guilt about some thoughts and actions. Many of these behaviors are a reenactment of what was done to us as children. Some of us have struggled horribly with these behaviors, believing we were evil or hopeless. We may have even tried to change but failed. We thought we were unique. Some of our behavior has been disturbing and perhaps outside the bounds of law. With Step Nine, we are naming what we have done and making amends for what we have done. With the help of ACA, our worst acts become forgivable if we are humble and seek help from a Higher Power. Honesty is a must as well.¹⁰⁸

We approach our amends list with an attitude of neutrality. We are not judging ourselves or others for their wrongdoings. We want to focus on our own missteps and not on the other person.¹⁰⁹ During our amends, we don't attempt to educate people about ACA unless they ask. Even then we keep it brief unless they sincerely want to hear more. We don't recruit people to ACA in our amends process. We also don't bring up our newfound spirituality unless the moment is appropriate. It is not wise to meet someone we have harmed and announce our new or renewed focus on God. To do so places us at risk of being branded a religious crank.¹¹⁰

Amends vary in type and form, but keep in mind that amends means making things right. Our first amends should be to ourselves. We have harmed ourselves with codependency, drugs, sex, work, gambling, and food like no other people on the planet.¹¹¹

We are claiming our spot in ACA. We matter. We can forgive ourselves.¹¹²

We use our inner courage to make a start. With our amends, we make no excuses for our behaviors, but we promise to do our best to change. We make practical statements about change instead of uttering grand resolutions or windy claims to be different. We want our actions, rather than our words, to show that we have changed.¹¹³

Step 9 - Suggested - Verbal Amends

In making an amends, we might say:

“I am involved in a program in which I am learning to change my behavior and to live more honestly and openly. Part of the process involves making amends to people I have harmed with my behavior. I am making amends to you for _____(name the behavior, action, or other). I want to make it right. I am not making excuses, but I have harmed people based on my lack of knowledge about living, I am changing my behavior.”¹¹⁴

- I will read the Step 9 Amends Process Worksheet.
- Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed.
- You will have 3 minutes to fill it in to the best of your ability.
- Thoroughly complete the worksheet at home with the support of your sharing partner for support if needed.

Step 9 Amends Process Worksheet

Naming what I have done	Making things right	Actions for change
<i>Example: harmed my true self with codependency, drugs, sex, work, gambling, food, guilt and shame</i>	<i>Example: be humble, seek help from my Higher Power, be sincere, be forgiving, be courageous, ask for support from my sponsor and group</i>	<i>Example: honesty, be understanding, patient, loving, caring, pray, go to ACA meetings, share my experience, strength and hope</i>

Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Nine

- Are there any questions about what we just read?
- We will now have our 15 minutes of sharing time with 3 minute shares.
- We will break up into small groups. Count off as needed. (if needed)
- I will let you know when the 15 minutes is over.
- Shares need to be kept to 3 minutes with a 1 minute warning, please be considerate of others.
- Please share on what we just read or what is on your heart. If you feel comfortable you may share your worksheet(s).
- Please be considerate and give everyone time to share.
- We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting.
- Just a reminder what is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
- Give instructions how to mute and unmute.
- Who would like to share? List 4 or 5 participants on the Service Sheet for Shares (or as many as time may allow.) Appendix D
- Please be respectful of our confidentiality.
- Welcome back.

- In accordance with our 7th Tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, please go to adultchildren.org to contribute for the 7th Tradition.
- In accordance with the 7th tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, we will pass a basket for donations.
- Who would like to be the leader for Week Four?
- Thank you for participating in our third week of Ready Set GO!! introducing Steps 6, 7, 8 and 9. Thanks to our timekeeper. eady Set GO!!
- Thanks to our readers and our timekeeper.
- Next week we will introduce Steps 10, 11 and 12.
- Who would like to be the leader for Week Four?
- Please read the readings on the day of our next meeting.
- After our Closing Prayer we will discuss sharing partners, have a phone and email exchange and Q & A, and have a chance to fellowship.
- Will you please join me for our Closing Prayer, Gathered Together?

Gathered Together

Higher Power, gathered together we find great peace and serenity.
 We seek hope to become whole as we were created to be.
 We find strength to deal with life as we grow in our program.
 We trust that as we find courage we will feel free and secure.
 We are grateful to have the support of our group who understands us.
 We believe that your presence in our life will give us all that we need.
 We close our meeting with a feeling of belonging and being loved.
 Keep Coming Back!
 It works if you work it!

- At this time I would like to discuss the concept of sharing partners.
- Choosing a sharing partner from this group who has some ACA experience is suggested for support for the 5 or 6 weeks. Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner, sponsor, fellow traveler or your group is recommended when you feel comfortable.
- This experience with a sharing partner can give the adult child insight to choosing a sponsor.
- Who would like to be a sharing partner? List information of Sharing Partners on the Sharing Partner Service Sheet.
- Who would like to join the Phone/Email Exchange? Add information on the Phone/Email Exchange Service Sheet.
- Who would like to be a sharing partner?
- *Leader's Choice. Consider offering RSG Closed Sharing Time Meetings outside of the regular RSG session for additional sharing time for RSG participants only. See Appendix D page 149 for format.*
- *Two Closed Sharing Time One Hour Meetings for RSG Participants only using teleconference dial in # and access code: Available Tues & Thurs 6:00-7:00:pm CT, 4:00pm-5:00pm PST, 7:00pm-8:00pm ET.*
- Are There any questions?
- We now have some time to fellowship.

Ready Set GO!! Week #4

Leader

Telephone Meetings will use grayed sections for instructions for telephone meetings.

Give instructions how to mute and unmute. Announce periodically.
If there are any particulars such as recording announce here.

Who would like be leader for Week #4?

- Hi, my name is _____, I am an adult child.
- Welcome to week four of a Ready Set GO!! Meeting introducing Steps 10, 11 and 12.
- Will all who care to please join me in the Serenity Prayer?
- God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.
- Let's go around and introduce ourselves. I'll start.
- Telephone introductions go alphabetically: A-G, H-M, N-Z
- Ready Set GO!! are closed ACA introductory meetings. We meet to introduce our ACA 12 Steps and ACA program in a structured 5 to 6 week time frame. We recognize all our 12 Traditions for safety within the group.
- Ready Set GO!! Is an introduction for ACA newcomers to become acquainted with the ACA Twelve Steps and get clarity and an understanding of the ACA Program. Ready Set GO!! introduces the experienced member to a renewal of their commitment to working their program through the ACA 12 Steps. Ready Set GO!! prepares members for when they will feel ready to go to the ACA 12 Step Workbook. Feel free to leave your fears and anxieties behind you as you experience these introductory meetings.
- The material is taken from our Big Red Book, the ACA 12 Step Workbook, and Strengthening My Recovery, the ACA meditation book. It requires those in attendance to listen to the material with an open mind and an open heart and in good faith with a desire to learn about ACA recovery and emotional sobriety.
- Our objective is simple: to introduce members to the ACA program and introduce the ACA 12 Steps by bringing clarity and awareness to the realization that the ACA 12 Steps offer opportunities for solutions.
- Each step will contain a worksheet that may bring more clarity and understanding of each Step. We will set aside a few minutes to fill in the worksheets and to answer any questions. Appendix B will provide a complete version of the worksheets for copies as needed.
- There is no right or wrong way to do the worksheets. They can be done over time as we grow.
- Choosing a sharing partner from this group who has some ACA experience is suggested for support for the 5-6 weeks. Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner, sponsor, fellow traveler, or your group is recommended, when you feel comfortable. This experience with a sharing partner can give the adult child insight to choosing a sponsor.
- Sponsors may be inclined to introduce Ready Set GO!! to their sponsees to begin their work together in ACA perhaps setting a flexible time frame to accommodate their needs.

- In each of the 5 or 6 weeks we encourage you to prepare for these meetings by reading The Laundry List Traits, The Problem, The Solution, ACA 12 Steps, ACA 12 Traditions, and The Promises in Part One before attending each Ready Set GO!! Introductory meeting.

- *Go to Appendix D for Service Sheet Week #4* and write in the volunteers to read The Laundry List Traits, The Solution, a Step, and be timekeeper.

- _____ Please read The Laundry List Traits.

- _____ Please read The Solution.

- As we begin, we remind ourselves to have an open mind and an open heart. Be gentle with yourself as you go through this experience of Ready Set GO!!. This brief encounter with the 12 Steps may prepare you to do the ACA 12 Steps Workbook when you choose to do it. Remember Ready Set GO!! is an introduction to ACA.

- In Step Ten having now begun the process of recovery, we will learn how to make the Steps a part of our daily lives. We will continue to take personal inventory, learning more about ourselves as we grow.

- I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to Step Ten: "On this day I will see that when I no longer resist change, happiness and serenity will follow." p. 151

- Be in peace and let fear and anxiety leave you for this journey.

- Please do not rush through the readings so we can fully absorb the material.

- _____ Please begin reading Step Ten.

- Give instructions how to mute and unmute.

- We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 10?

- **Step Ten**

- **Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.**

- ***Spiritual Principles: Honesty and Discernment***

And you are worth it!

Step Ten is where we continue to inventory our behavior and thinking. With this Step we continue to let go of control and expose our denial about the effects of being raised in a dysfunctional home. We learn to take a balanced view of our behavior, avoiding the tendency to take too much responsibility for the actions of others. At the same time, we also curb our tendency to blame others when we are obviously wrong, yet are too afraid or ashamed to admit it. In these cases, we keep it simple. There is no need for long analysis of our behavior. We know what the issues are for us. We make an amends with briefness in mind but with a sincere desire to change. Keeping it simple is the best course in some matters. Other amends might require background information about our past and a longer explanation. We will discern those situations as they arise.¹¹⁵

Step Ten helps us apply what we are learning in meetings and to gauge our daily progress. In Step Ten, we are making a statement to hang onto the hard-won changes we are employing in our lives.

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We are living with more honesty and affirmation of ourselves. We realize we don't have to act perfect or flawless to be loved or accepted. We can make errors and laugh at ourselves without feeling shame. We are less fearful of people and their opinions of us.¹¹⁶

Step Ten helps us polish the spiritual principles we are learning and using in our daily lives. To remain spiritually fit, we must continue to attend meetings, share our feelings, and help others. By helping others on their path of recovery, we help ourselves and learn to break our isolation. We get out of ourselves and contribute to the well-being of our ACA support group. With Step Ten, our personal and spiritual lives improve gradually.¹¹⁷

Step Ten calls us to inventory our use of the ACA program to improve our marriages, jobs, and choices. We must practice the ACA program in the home and in our jobs if we are to be true to ourselves. The home or office is not an easy place to practice the principles of ACA, but we must. We do not preach about ACA or invade boundaries with our program. Yet, we stand ready to apply the principles of honesty, humility, and forgiveness outside ACA meetings as well as inside the meetings. We also ask for what we need and keep our word. This is not easy, but neither was living with our addictiveness. It took effort to support addictive choices. Practicing spiritual principles and inventorying our lives takes effort as well, but this is the labor of self-love.¹¹⁸

A daily or weekly inventory is different than the hypervigilance we have practiced before recovery. In our Step Ten inventory we judge ourselves less harshly because we know we are human and will make mistakes. We know we can talk about our feelings and our missteps without being judged when we share in ACA meetings. We have shaken hands with our critical inner parent. We are beginning to listen to the actual parent, whom many of us choose to call God.¹¹⁹

Step Ten is where we can continue to integrate any left over character defects or survival skills into our emerging identity. As we learned in Step Seven, there will be residual defects and survival traits that won't recede easily. This does not mean we have failed in previous Steps. Step Ten is where we can acknowledge and embrace these lingering but less useful traits. We use humility and

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• Following is the Step 10 Guide with 5 exercises for you to take daily.
• Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed.
• While they are being read please feel free to fill them in.
• _____Please begin reading Step Ten Guide, with The Personal Inventory,
• Give instructions how to mute and unmute.
• We will go around the room, read a couple of parts of the different exercises and then pass. Who will begin reading the Personal Inventory?

consistent effort to integrate these aspects of our personality.¹²⁰

STEP TEN GUIDE

Page 257-258, Para. 3

Personal Inventory

Ask yourself these questions daily.

1. Am I isolating and not talking about what is really going on with me?
2. Did I view anyone as an authority figure today and feel frightened or rebellious?
3. Did I dissociate, fantasize, or become involved in self-harm today?
4. Am I keeping secrets and feeling unique? Am I talking about my feelings?
5. Am I being honest in my relationships or am I seeking approval over honesty?
6. Am I acting "perfect" and obsessing over making mistakes?
7. Do I overreact or isolate from others when I perceive that I have been criticized?
8. Am I attending ACA meetings to nurture myself and to give back what was given to me?
9. Have I acted helpful recently to manipulate others?
10. Am I secretly angry at someone, but I am avoiding talking about it?
11. Have I listened to my Inner Child or True Self today?
12. Did I judge myself or someone else without mercy today?
13. Am I listening to the Critical Parent or Loving Parent?
14. Am I remembering that I can ask for help today and that I can call someone?

Choice Continuum Exercise

Pages 258-259

Each day circle where you think you are in having real choice in your life.
Continue throughout the day because we can change our level
of control at any time.

Date: _____

DENIAL

AM ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

PM ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

SOME CHOICE

AM ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

PM ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

GREATER CHOICE

AM ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

PM ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

DISCERNMENT

AM ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫

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One Day At A Time Exercise

Page 259

Step Ten reminds the recovering adult child
to live in the moment
to enjoy life's gifts and
to feel connected to life.

☒ Check the tools of recovery

- ☐ Attending ACA Meetings regularly
- ☐ Attending Ready Set GO!! Meetings
- ☐ Working the Twelve Steps
- ☐ Getting a Sponsor
- ☐ Associating with recovering adult children
- ☐ Sponsoring new members
- ☐ Getting involved in service work
- ☐ Volunteer to share our recovery at
prisons or the treatment setting
- ☐ Answer the Intergroup helpline
- ☐ Seek to become a trusted servant

you are using to help live in the moment.

Feelings and Journaling Exercise

Pages 260-261

Complete a sentence each day or every other day
to become comfortable with talking about your feelings

Date _____

loved	joy	ashamed	humorous	irritated
angry	embarrassed	trusted	betrayed	pleased
satisfied	ambivalent	hopeful	inspired	loving
frustrated	disappointed	grief	accepted	excited
grateful	confident	humiliated	guilty	serene
rested	shame	abandoned	pleasure	safe
tenacious	thoughtful	playful	fascinated	enthralled

I feel _____ when I _____ because _____.

Praise Exercise

These assets will help balance positive and spiritual qualities while looking at Step Four. BRB p. 188

Sit quietly and circle at least 10 assets:	
strong	humorous
sensitive	willing
intelligent	compassionate
courteous	talented
honest	organized
spontaneous	creative
loving	a listener
spiritual	trustworthy
tenacious	judicious
accepting	modest
prompt	kind
hard working	a friend
An ACA member	

Repeat, I am _____.
For each circled asset.

Leader	<i>Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Ten.</i>
	• Are there any questions about what we just read?
	• We will now have our 15 minutes of sharing time with 3 minute shares.
	• We will break up into small groups. Count off as needed. (if needed)
	• I will let you know when the 15 minutes is over.
	• Shares need to be kept to 3 minutes with 11 minute warning, please be considerate of others.
	• Please share on what we just read or what is on your heart. If you feel comfortable you may share your worksheets.
	• Please be considerate and give everyone time to share.
	• We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting.
	• Just a reminder what is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
	• Please be respectful of our confidentiality.
	• Who would like to share? List 4 or 5 members who want to share on the <i>Service Sheet for Week #5</i> (or as many as time may allow.) Appendix D

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome back. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In Step Eleven we will seek to improve our contact with our Higher Power through prayer and meditation. We seek to learn God's will for us, and we ask for the power to carry that out. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to Step Eleven: "On this day I live in the moment by taking care of both my mind and my body. I breathe, move and ask my Higher Power to be with me." p. 101 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please do not rush through the readings so we can fully absorb the material. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• _____ Please begin reading Step Eleven. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give instructions how to mute and unmute. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 11? |

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Step Eleven</u> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spiritual Principles: Seeking and Listening</i> |

Step Eleven is where we travel often to find greater levels of maturity through prayer and meditation. Through meditation, we begin to visualize emotional sobriety. We find out what ACA recovery looks like. We begin to see that recovery is a noticeable freedom from the damaging affects of The Laundry List Traits. We realize our Step work has brought some measure of healing from the trauma and neglect of our childhood. We intuitively rely on the Steps and ACA meetings to face every situation in our lives. We rely upon God as we understand God for sure footing. With emotional sobriety, reparenting ourselves becomes a reality in our lives. We love ourselves. The proof of emotional sobriety can be found in our relationships with others and with God, as we understand God.¹²¹

With meditative techniques, we let go of racing thoughts. We learn to be in the moment and to be present in our bodies. We learn that our thoughts can end.¹²²

We can let troublesome thoughts die a natural death in meditation.¹²³

In Step Eleven, we take time out of the day to focus on our spiritual path. We connect with God through our True Self when we find stillness and listen for God's footstep. Our True Self knows God's call. The True Self knows the path that our Higher Power takes to the heart. It is the path of love.¹²⁴

Our primary founder, Tony A., said” “The adult child personality is a personality which doubts God or cannot believe the unseen, but which seeks God who is unseen.” We cannot stop ourselves from seeking contact with a Higher Power. It is part of being an adult child, We must accept this great fact. We are called to God and cannot resist. Acting distracted or indifferent no longer works. The True Parent calls.¹²⁵

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Whatever meditative style we choose, the goal is to seek God’s will and the power to carry that out. With continued meditation, we return to our everyday activities, feeling more emotionally sober. We feel more energy to get involved in life and to contribute in making a better world. By traveling inward in meditation, we find strength to go farther outward than we could have imagined.¹²⁶

Prayer and meditation will take us further. We pray to put into action the principles and concepts we are finding in ACA. We pray for strength and power to work the ACA program and to stay focused. We pray for God to take out what blocks us from accepting ourselves. We pray to connect with our Inner Child.¹²⁷

The simple prayer is an example of seeking and listening, which is the heart of ACA’s Eleventh Step. Many ACA members describe prayer as seeking God’s guidance and meditation as listening for it. We pray and listen in Step Eleven.¹²⁸

With prayer and meditation we find our true inner power. This is the inner strength that we have always had but used limitedly. God has been holding onto it until we were ready to claim it in Step Eleven. This is the power which changes our life and our course of thinking and behaving. This is the power which keeps us going when we lapse into judging ourselves or feel discouraged about making progress in ACA. This is the power that we find when we ask humbly to be used for the greater good of the world.¹²⁹

We feel more alive than ever before with Step Eleven. We are more imaginative and hopeful. A return to prayer and creativity are two of the gifts of Step Eleven in addition to making conscious contact with God within.¹³⁰

Prayer¹³¹

*‘God, When I look let me truly see.
When I listen let me truly hear.’*

- I will read the Step 11 Worksheet, Focusing Daily on our Spiritual Path.
- Blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed.
- You will have 3 minutes to fill it in to the best of your ability.
- Thoroughly complete the worksheet at home with the support of your sharing partner for support if needed.

Step 11 Worksheet

Focusing Daily on our Spiritual Path

Seeking God’s Will	Listening for God’s Will

L e a d e r	<i>Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Eleven.</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Step Twelve, having experienced a spiritual awakening, we learn to practice these principles in all our affairs and to carry the message to those who still suffer. If we wish to keep what we have gained, we must learn to give it away, wherever and whenever we can. We must get out of ourselves. We insist on enjoying life and being a part of life. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I will read from Strengthening My Recovery related to Step Twelve:“On this day I give service to the ACA fellowship from love, realizing that I am supporting my own progress when I help make another member’s progress possible.” p.144 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please do not rush through the readings so we can fully absorb the material. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ Please begin reading Step Twelve. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give instructions how to mute and unmute. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will go around the room, read a couple of paragraphs and then pass. Who will begin reading Step 12? 	
P a r t i c i p a n t	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Step Twelve</u> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others who still suffer, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spiritual Principles: Love and Self-love</i> 	
	<p>In Step Twelve we claim our program of recovery for ourselves by putting into practice the spiritual principles we have used and continue to use to reparent ourselves. The principles include surrender, hope, honesty, self-forgiveness, humility, and many more from the Twelve Steps.¹³²</p> <p><i>(Additional principles are: powerlessness, open-mindedness, clarity, willingness, acceptance, courage, trust, forgiveness, discernment, seeking, listening, love and self-love).</i></p>	
	<p>The Twelfth Step is our stage where we become actors instead of reactors without solutions. Acting from a foundation of self-love and respect, we offer our spiritual solutions to adult children seeking a better way of life. We also help ourselves.¹³³</p>	
	<p>One of the results of a spiritual awakening involves the understanding that God is real. With a spiritual awakening, we move from theories about God to the belief that a Higher Power is accessible and hears our prayers. We know that a loving God or a Spirit of the Universe exists. We have come to believe that God, as we understand God, is the Actual Parent.¹³⁴</p>	
	<p>With a spiritual experience, we usually realize that we are transformed in some manner. We know something has changed inside of us even though we do not yet fully understand it. For some of us, our spiritual focus seems sharper. We know a peace that we could not imagine previously. We can still have moments of being affected by life, but these moments seem milder and are handled more quickly. We know there is something greater than ourselves at work in the universe. We let go and let God work in these matters.¹³⁵</p>	
	<p>A spiritual awakening simplifies our lives. We intuitively know what we need and what we can live without. We are no longer reacting to people, places, and things. We live and let live.¹³⁶</p>	
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Spiritually awake adult children understand the spiritual axiom which states: “We must give away what we have to keep it.” This is one of the most selfless acts of love we can offer a confused world; however, we must love ourselves first to have something to give away. Self-love is a result of working the Twelve Steps, being vulnerable, asking for help, and being aware of our bodies through meditation and proper breathing. We love ourselves when we find our pain. We sit with it without acting out on drugs or some other compulsive activity. We go after our stored grief and greet it and feel it. We find our True Selves and sit beside the Divine Light.¹³⁷

Meanwhile, those who are spiritually awake accept Twelve Step work with an attitude of service rather than sacrifice. By the time we reach this Step, we know the difference between being a rescuer and giving service with love.¹³⁸

While much of ACA’s program involves the inward journey, Step Twelve reminds us to journey outward as well. We carry the message to other adult children in our meetings, on the telephone, and through service work. We get out of ourselves by sponsoring others, giving rides to meetings, and by getting involved at an ACA event or fund raiser. There are many opportunities if we only look. Most of this activity falls under the title of Twelve Step work, and it means that we are answering the call to carry the message to others.¹³⁹

- | |
|---|
| • I will read the Step 12 Worksheet, Carrying the Message to Those Who Still Suffer. |
| • Full blank worksheets are in Appendix B to make copies as needed. |
| • You will have 3 minutes to fill it in to the best of your ability. |
| • Thoroughly complete the worksheet at home with the support of your sharing partner for support if needed. |

Step 12 Worksheet

Carrying the Message to Those Who Still Suffer

This introduction to the ACA 12 Steps introduced you to spiritual principles you may have never heard of. This chart indicates where you stand with each spiritual principle. Check how you feel about each spiritual principle.

♥ means you have gained some understanding of this principal,

R means you are **ready** to try to use this principal.

S means you will **set** this principal into all of your affairs.

G means you are **going** to share what you have been given with those who still suffer.

Spiritual Principals	♥	R	S	G
Surrender				
Hope				
Honesty				
Self-forgiveness				
Humility				
Powerlessness				
Open-mindedness				
Clarity				
Willingness				
Acceptance				
Courage				
Trust				
Forgiveness				
Discernment				
Seeking				
Listening				
Love				
Self-love				

Congratulations! You have been introduced to Step Twelve.

- Are there any questions about what we just read?
- We will now have our 15 minutes of sharing time with 3 minute shares.
- We will break up into small groups. Count off as needed. (if needed)
- I will let you know when the 15 minutes is over.
- Shares need to be kept to 3 minutes with 1 minute warning, please be considerate of others.
- Please share on what we just read or what is on your heart. If you feel comfortable you may share your worksheets.
- Please be considerate and give everyone time to share.
- We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting.
- Just a reminder what is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
- Please be respectful of our confidentiality.
- Who would like to share? List 4 or 5 members who want to share on the *Service Sheet*(or as many as time may allow.) Appendix D

———Upon return of small groups ———

- Welcome back.
- Who would like to continue to be a sharing partner? List information of Sharing Partners on the Sharing Partner Service Sheet in Appendix D. A sharing partner has some ACA experience.
- Who would like to join the Phone/Email Exchange? Add information on the Phone/Email Exchange Service Sheet in Appendix D.
- *Consider offering RSG Closed Sharing Time Meetings outside of the regular RSG session for additional sharing time for RSG participants only. See Appendix D page 149 for format.*
- Next week will be introducing Ready Set GO!! Inner Child Workshop “Awakening My Little One” .
- For Part 1 and Part 2 of Ready Set GO!!’s Inner Child Workshop by telephone over the next two weeks bring blank paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, cut outs of old magazines, and glue to do exercises with your Inner Child by scribbling, doodling, coloring, drawing or making a collage.
- For Ready Set GO!!’s Inner Child Workshop blank paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, cut outs of old magazines, and glue to do exercises with your Inner Child by scribbling, doodling, coloring, drawing or making a collage will be provided. The workshop will be 3-4 hours.
- Thank you for participating and for doing service.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with our 7th Tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, please go to adultchildren.org to contribute for the 7th Tradition.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the 7th tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, we will pass a basket for donations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember we keep what we have been given when we give it away. Please take on the opportunity to do service by leading Ready Set GO!! Introductory Meetings.
<p style="text-align: center;">TO BE CONTINUED FOR THE REST OUR LIVES, PEACE</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Below is a link of a video to help you view and listen to a summary of Ready Set GO!! in your quiet time.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">https://www.dropbox.com/s/j9z3qhwwk1lsbo8/Final%20RSG%20DVD%2012%3A12%3A2018.m4v?dl=0 or email your request for the link at acatoni5617@comcast.net Updated 12/12/2018</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will you please join me for our Closing Prayer, Gathered Together?

Gathered Together

Higher Power, gathered together we find great peace and serenity.

We seek hope to become whole as we were created to be.

We find strength to deal with life as we grow in our program.

We trust that as we find courage we will feel free and secure.

We are grateful to have the support of our group who understands us.

We believe that Your Presence in our life will give us all that we need.

We close our meeting with a feeling of belonging and being loved.

Keep coming back!,

It works if you work it!

<p style="text-align: center;">RSG's Inner Child Workshop "Awakening My Little One." Special Instructions for the telephone version and face to face version</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone meetings for this workshop will be presented over a 2 week period. For face to face meetings the workshop will done in one week with a 3-4 hour workshop. All material will be the same just split for the a full complete version..
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After Part 1 the Closing will be inserted were it is split. We will have our usual closing at the end of Part 1 clearly noted at the end of Part 1 for telephone meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face will continue past the Part 1 split and to where to continue for that script.

And you are worth it!

Ready Set GO!! - Week #5 & Part #1

Leader

Telephone Meetings will use grayed sections for instructions for telephone meetings.
Give instructions how to mute and unmute. Announce periodically. If there are any particulars such as recording announce here.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hi, my name is _____, I am an adult child.
Welcome to the first week of the Ready Set GO!! Inner Child Workshop "Awakening My Little One"
Welcome Ready Set GO!! Inner Child Workshop "Awakening My Little One"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will all who care to please join me in the Serenity Prayer?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's go around and introduce ourselves. I'll start.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone introductions go alphabetically: A-G, H-M, N-Z
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready Set GO!! Inner Child Workshop will introduce you to Chapter 8 of our Big Red Book "The Solution:" Becoming Your Own Loving Parent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please have blank paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, cut outs of old magazines, and glue to do exercises with your Inner Child to scribble/doodle/draw/create a collage/write letters, affirmations or feeling words.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader go the <i>Appendix D for Service Sheet Week #5</i> and ask/write in the volunteers to read The Solution, How our 12 Steps Helps to Address our Critical Parent, Critical Parent, affirmations and 2 paragraphs following, Introduction of our Loving Parent, Meditation for our Inner Lover Parent, Affirmations To Be Repeated Each Day. And a timekeeper is needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader go the <i>Appendix D for Service Sheet Week #5</i> ask/write in the volunteers who want to be a sharing partners, phone and email exchange. Sharing Partners have some ACA experience.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ Please read The Solution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready Set GO!! Inner Child Workshop is an introduction for ACA participants to become acquainted with the ACA Twelve Steps relating to your Inner Child. We will introduce the meaning of the Critical Parent, the Loving Parent and the Inner Child establishing an understanding of this vital part of ACA recovery. Feel free to leave your fears and anxieties behind you as you experience this introductory inner child workshop.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The material is taken from our Big Red Book, Step 11 Meditation for our Inner Child BRB p. 276, recorded by Sky P., an adult child, Strengthening My Recovery, the ACA meditation book and RSG music of Awakening My Little One. It requires those in attendance to listen to the material with an open mind and an open heart and in good faith with a desire to learn about this vital part of our ACA recovery and emotional sobriety.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our objective is simple: to bring clarity and awareness to the importance of this phase of our ACA program offering opportunities for solutions.

RSG Inner Child Workshop

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- In this workshop besides our readings we will use collages, writing with our non-dominant hand, some dominant hand writing, music from RSG Awakening My Little One, drawing, scribbling, doodling, coloring and meditations to find our Inner Child while seeking our connection with a Higher Power to guide us through this process.
- Ready Set GO!! small group sharing is limited to 3 minute shares with a 1 minute warning. We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting. We honor each others feelings and respect their boundaries to have a safe and welcoming environment to grow and heal and feel our feelings without judgment and/or fixing. Designated sharing partners will be available for those who may become overwhelmed, stressed out, flooded or just totally overwhelmed. (Do a peace sign for aid any time during this workshop)
- Feel free to request a time out for yourself and breathe if help is needed.
- First we will try to understand the impact our Critical Parent has had on our lives and how our Critical Parent prevents us to connect with our Loving Parent.
- Becoming aware of the Critical Parent is essential for the development of the Loving Parent. *BRB page 306*
- The definition for **Critical Parent** is: The hypercritical and judgmental voice that frequently finds fault in our thoughts and actions. This includes the frequent blaming and shaming of ourselves and others. *BRB p 298*
- _____ Please read How Our ACA 12 Steps Helps to Address our Critical Parent.
- We will read How our ACA 12 Steps Helps to Address our Critical Parent.
- We will go around the room and read a paragraph and pass.
- Please do not read *BRB or page numbers*.

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“Awakening My Little One” How Our ACA 12 Steps Helps to Address our Critical Parent

BRB p 308-309

Some of us use a Twelve Step template to address our Critical Parent. In **Step One**, for instance, we recognize that we are powerless over this Critical Parent and its judgments. In **Steps Two and Three**, we ask our Higher Power for guidance. We ask for the strength to turn over the false power wielded by the Critical Parent. We trust that something greater than ourselves can help us release our old way of thinking about things. With **Steps Four and Five**, whenever we do something that distresses us, we can immediately wrap our arms around ourselves in a hug and say: Well, we don't like how that went, so we will learn a lesson from it and do better next time.” That is what a Loving Parent would do for his or her child within.

With **Steps Six and Seven**, we ask for the help we need from our Higher Power to integrate the Critical Parent into our lives. Integration is a sign that we recognize that the critical inner voice has some value and should not be totally eliminated. Our critical nature must be toned down, but we also recognize it guided us through dependent times. We cannot live life without judgment, but we seek judgment that takes the course of discernment and fairness instead of comparing ourselves to others.

We ask for patience and guidance in tempering the inner critic into usefulness. Facing our own self-criticism with the help of a Higher Power prepares us to face criticism and challenge from others.

With **Steps Eight and Nine**, we make our amends for any behavior caused by acting under the influence of the Critical Parent. Finally with **Step Ten through Twelve** we stay mindful and present. We inventory ourselves, we meditate, and we help others. We acknowledge our own behavior. We ask God, as we understand God, to continue providing us with willingness to love ourselves.

• Leader: _____ Please the meditation for the Critical Parent. *SMR p 99.*

• Leader: Let's go around the room and read the meditation for the Critical Parent. *SMR p 99.*

Critical Parent

"Judging ourselves harshly for mistakes is the Critical Parent."

BRB p 307

The criticism we heard growing up, whether it was from our parent, teachers or others, even other children, became so internalized that we learned to let it define us. This wasn't a conscious decision. It's something that happened gradually.

As adults, we carry these shaming messages with us in the form of our own personal inner critical parent. This is why we continue to beat ourselves up when we miss the nuance of a situation or make even the smallest error in judgment. These "mistakes" might be as simple as walking out the door in front of someone and accidentally cutting them off. Or maybe we're having trouble following a conversation. Our critical inner parent jumps right in with, "How could you be so stupid?" or "What's wrong with you?" When we allow this voice to rule our thoughts, we can second-guess almost everything we do.

As we learn in ACA to silence that critical voice, we replace those messages with more loving thoughts that tell us we haven't done anything wrong — we're okay! If we accidentally cut someone off, we apologize and move on. And we realize there could be many reasons why we're not following what someone is saying. Maybe they aren't painting a complete picture, so we can ask them to explain or rephrase.

Our new responses show strength and they empower us.

On this day I will practice silencing my critical parent and affirm for myself that I am human, and it's okay to be imperfect.

• Relax and let your fears and anxieties lessen knowing there is no right or wrong way to do this. We will be playing "Awakening My Little One" softly in the background for our exercises during this workshop.

• With our non-dominant hand begin to write some of our Critical Parent's lies and messages we have heard most of our life before any kind of recovery. We have blank paper available. If writing does not come easy perhaps creating a collage of our Critical Parent's judgments and messages may be easier to express a part of ourself we have allowed to impact our well being. Scribbling and doodling, coloring or drawing are options as well. We will have 10 minutes for this exercise and we will discontinue the music when the 10 minutes are up.

• We will have 15 minutes of sharing time. Each share will be 3 minutes with a 1 minute warning. Share your answers, your experience with this workshop so far, your writing, your collage, your drawing or just where you are at and how you may be feeling. *Go to Service Sheet #5 write in those who want to share.* No crosstalk. What is said here stays here.

- We will have 15 minutes of sharing time in small groups. Each share will be 3 minutes with a 1 minute warning. Share your answers, your experience with this workshop so far or just where you are at. No crosstalk. What is said here stays here.
- Welcome back. Would anyone care to share their experience in our large group? We will have 5 minutes.
- _____ Please read the affirmations and 2 paragraphs following to lessen some of the harshness that you may have lived with before ACA from our *BRB p 307*. After the reading scribble/doodle/draw/create a collage/write any of the following affirmations/ or write some feeling words. (5 mins)
- Here are some affirmations to lessen some of the harshness that you may have lived with before ACA from our *BRB p 307*. Read one and pass. After the reading scribble/doodle/create a collage/write any of the following affirmations. (5 mins)

Affirmations

- ♥ My feelings are okay.
 - ♥ I am human
 - ♥ I make mistakes, but I am not a mistake.
 - ♥ I don't have to be perfect.
 - ♥ It is okay to know who I am.
- BRB p 307 the last 4 sentences*

We cannot change such negativity in one week or one month, but we make a beginning with affirmations. We ask our Higher Power for help as well. After awhile, our Loving Parent awakens, and we are comfortable with affirmations and with believing them. We begin to have the choice of whether we will believe a negative thought, or instead believe a positive message from the program.

BRB p 308 1st paragraph last sentence

We can tell the internal critic to be quiet as we learn to think differently about ourselves.

- _____ Please read the introduction of our Loving Parent or reparenting beginning with our definition in our *BRB p 298*. The inner parent we can develop from the part of us that took action to care for ourselves as children and which can be awakened in recovery.
- We will now introduce our Loving Parent or reparenting beginning with our definition in our *BRB p 298*. The inner parent we can develop from the part of us that took action to care for ourselves as children and which can be awakened in recovery.

Loving Parent

BRB p 298

What does it mean to become your own Loving Parent? The first step in reparenting ourselves involves recognizing the loving voice inside. Our experience shows that every adult child has love inside regardless of what the person says or believes. Love is there and it is original.

As we awaken the Loving Parent inside, we remember a simple slogan: "First Things First". Many adult children rush into Inner Child work without taking time to meet their inner, caring parent. As a result, some of us struggle with finding the Inner Child until we take this necessary step. The Inner Child will not usually emerge until we establish our Loving Parent. In some cases, a sabotaging aspect of the Inner Child will emerge if we rush this phase of our recovery. This angry aspect of the Inner Child can overpower the newly developing Loving Parent and delay recovery.

While becoming your own Loving Parent is at the core of healing from a neglectful childhood, it is also the gateway to the child within. In addition to the ACA Twelve Steps, this is The ACA Solution. By reparenting ourselves with gentleness, humor, love, and respect, we find our child within and true connection to a Higher Power. This is the God who does not abandon.

BRB p 296 first paragraph

Becoming our own Loving Parent — reparenting ourselves — requires that we accept the reality of the Inner Child. The child within is our original identity which knows how to love and trust freely. We become willing to consistently seek out and integrate the Inner Child into our lives. By making the effort the child within becomes our guide to feelings, creativity, and spirituality. Through reparenting, we learn to listen for the child within. We can restate our childhood and teen years with the gentleness by being a Loving Parent to ourselves. With the help of our ACA friends, we learn how to fill in the nurturing and attention we did not receive as children.

• Leader: _____ Please read Meditation for the Inner Loving Parent. *SMR p 194*

• Leader: Let's go around the room reading the meditation for the Loving Parent. *SMR p 194*

Inner Loving Parent

“Learn to validate yourself by becoming your own loving parent.”

BRB p. xxiv

In ACA, we pay attention to how we talk to ourselves in our heads. Mindfulness helps us stop those thoughts that say, “What’s wrong with you?” and replace them with, “I have a lot of things going for me. I am amazing!” As we work our program and make progress, we become our own loving parent and learn to take care of ourselves by affirming our growth.

It seems second nature for us to be critical of ourselves — even about our recovery work. We can tell ourselves that we aren’t doing it right, or it’s taking us too long. But when we see children learning to read, is it okay to criticize them along the way? Or do they need to hear encouragement and support, and have someone say positive things like, “Outstanding! You’re doing great. Keep it up. “Most of us didn’t hear these words in our dysfunctional families, but we can learn to say them to ourselves now.

Our inner loving parent can tell us some of the most wonderful words a parent can say to a child, words a child remembers for a lifetime, words that help a child know they are okay the way they are. “I love you and I am proud of you. “This is what we’ve been waiting to hear.

On this day I will capture positive moments, feel proud of myself for the work I am doing, *and tell myself I am loved for who I am.*

• Relax and let your fears and anxieties lessen knowing there is no right or wrong way to do this. We will be playing “Awakening My Little One” softly in the background for our next exercise of this workshop.

• With your dominant hand write the answers to your Loving Parent Questions. Blank paper is available. If writing does not come easy perhaps creating a collage of our Loving Parent answers may be easier to express this part of ourselves we may have never questioned before. Scribbling, doodling, coloring or drawing are options as well. We will have 10 minutes for this exercise and we will discontinue the music when the 10 minutes are up.

LOVING PARENT QUESTIONS

BRB p 327

What is a Loving Parent? What is an Inner Child?

If you can envision a Critical Parent inside, is it possible to envision a Loving Parent, who is there as well waiting to step forward? Are you willing to explore this possibility?

Can you see how you took care of yourself as a child and how you can now use that care to nurture a Loving Parent within?

If you were self-destructive as a child, how would a Loving Parent care for an abused or neglected child? Would you be willing to do these caring things for your Inner Child?

Name a way you can meet your Loving Parent.

What are 5 traits of a Loving Parent?

- We will have 15 minutes of sharing time. Each share will be 3 minutes with a one minute warning. Share your answers, your experience with this workshop so far, your writing, your collage, your drawing or just where you are at and how you may be feeling. *Go to Service Sheet #5 write in those who want to share.* No crosstalk. What is said here stays here.

- We will have 15 minutes of sharing time in small groups. Each share will be 3 minutes with a one minute warning. Share your answers, your experience with this workshop so far, your writing, your collage, your drawing or just where you are at and how you may be feeling. No crosstalk. What is said here stays here.

- Welcome back. Would anyone care to share their experience? We will have 5 minutes.

- _____ Please read the **Affirmations to be Repeated Each Day**. We will read the **Meditation** together. You may scribble or doodle while they are being read. It is OK to do if you are bored or feel like you want to distract yourself. It is not highly recommended but it will be OK. We hope you will stay with us and let your Loving Parent read these to you.

- BRB suggests you write down some other affirmations and post them where you can read them.

- Please read a couple of the **Affirmations to be Repeated Each Day** and then pass. We will read the **Meditation** together. You may scribble or doodle while they are being read. It is OK to do if you are bored or feel like you want to distract yourself. It is not highly recommended but it will be OK. We hope you will stay with us and let your Loving Parent read these to you.

- Use post-it notes as the BRB suggests you write down some other affirmations and post them where you can read them.

- BRB suggests you write down some other affirmations and post them where you can read them. We have post-it notes available.

Affirmations to be Repeated Each Day

BRB p 329-330

Affirmations with other program work are a powerful tool for addressing our critical nature toward ourselves and others. These affirmations represent basic truths that most of us did not receive as children, but we can claim as adults. Read these affirmations out loud for several weeks. You may also write down some others and post them where you can read them. With affirmations, we begin to challenge the Inner Critical Parent. We learn to give ourselves a break.

- 1.It is okay to know who I am.
- 2.It is okay to trust myself.
- 3.It is okay to say I am an adult child.
- 4.It is okay to know another way to live.
- 5.It is okay to say no without feeling guilty.
- 6.It is okay to give myself a break.
- 7.It is okay to cry when I watch a movie or hear a song.
- 8.My feelings are okay even if I am still learning how to distinguish them.
- 9.It is okay to not take care of others when I think.
- 10.It. is okay to feel angry.
- 11.It is okay to have fun and celebrate.
- 12.It is okay to make mistakes and learn.
- 13.It is okay to not know everything.
- 14.It is okay to say "I don't know."
- 15.It is okay to ask someone to show me how to do things.
- 16.It is okay to dream and have hope.
- 17.It is okay to think about things differently than my family.
- 18.It is okay to explore and say, "I like this or I like that."
- 19.It is okay to detach with love.
- 20.It is okay to seek my own Higher Power.
- 21.It is okay to reparent myself with thoughtfulness.
- 22.It is okay to say I love myself.
- 23.It is okay to work an ACA program.

Meditation

Higher Power. Help me to be willing to recognize the Loving Parent inside of me. Help me integrate my Inner Child more actively into my daily life so that I remain awake spiritually. Grant me the courage to change the things I can. Grant me the wisdom of my Inner Child.

***Congratulations! You have been introduced to
your Critical Parent and your Loving Parent!***

- Please write what you discovered about your Critical Parent. 3 mins
- Please write what you discovered about your Loving Parent. 3 mins
- If you feel comfortable please share with our large group what you have written, or a few comments about your experience this first week of RSG's Inner Child Workshop. 5 mins.

STOP HERE & GO TO PAGE 101 to continue the one week RSG Inner Child Workshop.

CONTINUE HERE TO COMPLETE & CLOSE PART 1 OF RSG INNER CHILD WORKSHOP

- Just a reminder what is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
- Please be respectful of our confidentiality.
- Sharing partners will be available for this workshop if needed. *Read the list of sharing partners from the service sheet. Sharing partners have some ACA experience.*
- Thank you to all the readers and the timekeeper.
- In accordance with our 7th Tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, please go to adultchildren.org to contribute for the 7th Tradition.
- In accordance with the 7th tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, we will pass a basket for donations.
- Thank you for participating in the RSG Inner Child Workshop "Awakening Our Little One" Part One.
- Next week we will have Part 2 of Ready Set GO!!'s Inner Child Workshop bring blank paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, cut outs of old magazines, and glue to do exercises with your Inner Child by scribbling, doodling, coloring, drawing, writing or making a collage.
- Will you please join me for our Closing Prayer, Gathered Together?

Gathered Together

Higher Power, gathered together we find great peace and serenity.

We seek hope to become whole as we were created to be.

We find strength to deal with life as we grow in our program.

We trust that as we find courage we will feel free and secure.

We are grateful to have the support of our group who understands us.

We believe that your presence in our life will give us all that we need.

We close our meeting with a feeling of belonging and being loved.

Keep Coming Back!

It works if you work it!

And you are worth it!

Ready Set GO!! Week #6 & Part #2

RSG Inner Child Workshop

“Awakening My Little One”

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Telephone Meetings will use grayed sections for instructions for telephone meetings.
Give instructions how to mute and unmute. Announce periodically. If there are any particulars such as recording announce here.
• Hi, my name is _____, I am an adult child.
Welcome to the second week of the Ready Set GO!! Inner Child Workshop “Awakening My Little One”
• Will all who care to please join me in the Serenity Prayer?
• God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.
• Let's go around and introduce ourselves. I'll start.
• Telephone introductions go alphabetically: A-G, H-M, N-Z
• Ready Set GO!! Inner Child Workshop will introduce you to Chapter 8 of our Big Red Book “The Solution:” Becoming Your Own Loving Parent.
• Please have blank paper, pencils, crayons, scissors, cut outs of old magazines, and glue to do exercises with your Inner Child to scribble/doodle/draw/create a collage/write letters, affirmations or feeling words.
• Leader go the <i>Appendix D for Service Sheet Week #6</i> and ask/write in the volunteers to read the Solution, The Inner Child - True Self, Tools and Techniques for Connecting with our Inner Child, Meditation for the Inner Child, Inner Child Affirmations Before the Guided Meditation. Also will need a timekeeper.
• Leader go the <i>Appendix D for Service Sheet Week #6</i> ask/write in the volunteers who want to be a sharing partner, phone and email exchange. Sharing Partners have some ACA experience.
• _____ Please read The Solution.
• Ready Set GO!! Inner Child Workshop is an introduction for ACA newcomers to become acquainted with the ACA Twelve Steps relating to your Inner Child. We will introduce the meaning of the Critical Parent, the Loving Parent and the Inner Child establishing an understanding of this vital part of ACA recovery. Feel free to leave your fears and anxieties behind you as you experience this introductory inner child workshop.
• The material is taken from our Big Red Book, Step 11 Meditation for our Inner Child BRB p. 276, recorded by Sky P., an adult child, Strengthening My Recovery, the ACA meditation book and RSG music of Awakening My Little One. It requires those in attendance to listen to the material with an open mind and an open heart and in good faith with a desire to learn about this vital part of our ACA recovery and emotional sobriety.
• Our objective is simple: to bring clarity and awareness to the importance of this phase of our ACA program offering opportunities for solutions.

- In this workshop besides our readings we will use collages, writing with our non-dominate hand, some dominate hand writing, music from RSG Awakening My Little One, drawing, scribbling, doodling, coloring and meditations to find our Inner Child while seeking our connection with a Higher Power to guide us through this process.
- Ready Set GO!! small group sharing is limited to 3 minute shares with one minute warning. We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting. We honor each others feelings and respect their boundaries to have a safe and welcoming environment to grow and heal and feel our feelings without judgment and/or fixing. Designated sharing partners will be available for those who may become overwhelmed, stressed out, flooded or just totally overwhelmed. (Do a peace sign for aid any time during this workshop)

Leader Instructions: Continue face to face the 1 week RSG IC Workshop here.

- We begin with the definition for our **Inner Child**: The original person, being, or force which we truly are. Some ACA members call this the True Self. *BRB p 298*
- _____ Please read the introduction of the Inner Child — True Self.
- And _____ when _____ is done please continue to read the Tools and Techniques for Connecting with our Inner Child.
- We will introduce the Inner Child — True Self and Tools and Techniques for Connecting with my Inner Child. We will go around and read a few sentences and pass.

The Inner Child — True Self

BRB p 302-303

Once we become comfortable with affirmations and sharing about being a Loving Parent, we are usually ready to make contact with our Inner Child. For many ACA members, the child within represents our True Self. This is the part of us that is our original being. The Inner Child has original trust, original belief, and original love. The child within understands feelings and the language of a Higher Power. The Inner Child or True Self is present during our spiritual experiences and underpins our spiritual awakening.

The Inner Child also has all the mental, physical, and historical memory of the family. One of the surest signs that an Inner Child exists is found in the definition of the term “adult child”. An adult child is someone whose actions and decisions as an adult are guided by childhood experiences grounded in self-doubt or fear. Until we get help, we can operate from childhood fear that threatens our jobs and relationships. Under certain conditions, we can revert to childhood states that are age specific. Many adult children have said they feel like a child in a grown-up body. This is a clue to the Inner Child, but there is much more. The childhood fears expressed in adulthood are only a fraction of the full nature of the Inner Child.

Adult children who have experienced their Inner Child describe an inner being that is joyful and playful. There is a feeling of lightness and great optimism when the Inner Child is active in one’s life. There is trust, spontaneity, and warmth. Many adult children can describe an Inner Child’s voice, physical appearance, and likes and dislikes. Meditation and consistent writing with the opposite or non-dominant hand seem to reveal the greater presence of the Inner Child.

Family dysfunction drives the Inner Child into hiding, leaving states of fear that wander the adult's soul. While the Inner Child or True Self can be the spark of our creativity, we must also remember the child is a deeply hurt part of ourselves. Some of us believe the child within can sabotage our current relationships through fear of abandonment and shame. Through recovery, we learned that our Inner Child has an array of protective tools. The tools, however, can lead to self-harm and great emotional pain. We can sabotage ourselves as we seek help. This is a paradox of sorts. The Inner Child or True Self is our original wholeness who believed in people without effort. The Inner Child freely gave love and trust without effort. Yet, as a result of abuse, an angry Inner Child can fuel self-destructive behaviors that we seem powerless to stop at times.

An angry child within can exhibit feelings and behaviors of crippling fear and extreme dishonesty. There can be blistering rage. These feelings or behaviors were necessary to survive the unhealthy family. As adults, when we encounter situations that resemble our childhood experiences, we can be rageful. We can seem to lash out at people or co-workers for no cause. We have shocked people with rage, which comes from this hurt child within. We feel embarrassed by our rage, but we also feel powerless to change. We feel sabotaged. The good news is that this hurt child within will listen if we take the time to build trust and intimacy from within.

Tools and Techniques for Connecting with our Inner Child

BRB p 304-305

Connecting with our Inner Child brings greater integration within ourselves and moves us closer to our Higher Power. Connecting with the Inner Child also helps us remember. One of the rules of a dysfunctional family is "don't remember." In ACA, we seek a full remembrance or the most complete remembrance we can obtain of the growing up years. Our memory holds the key to living in the present with a full range of feelings, hope, and spirituality.

First we must be willing. With willingness, we can overcome self-doubt or the sense that we are not making progress. We apply the tools of recovery and make progress at our own pace. We remain free of stagnation by avoiding unwillingness or inaction.

Tools for connecting with the Inner Child can be counseling, journaling, and guided meditation in addition to attending ACA meetings. Childhood pictures are a great tool to connect with the child that still dwells within us.

- If you feel comfortable please share your picture of your Inner Child with our group letting us know his or her name and how old he or she is. Feel free to keep your little kid's picture visible to you for the rest of the workshop. If you do not have a picture of your little kid draw one or find a picture of a child in the cut outs of magazines. 5 mins.

- _____ Please read the meditation for the Inner Child. *SMR. p 162*

- Let's go around the room reading the meditation for the Inner Child. *SMR, p 162*

Inner Child

"Family dysfunction drives the Inner Child into hiding, leaving states of fear that wander the adult's soul. While the Inner Child or True Self can be the spark of our creativity, we must also remember the child is a deeply hurt part of ourselves." BRB p. 303

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 OTHER PUBLIC MEDIA

Long ago, in order to protect ourselves from the pain of having a dysfunctional family, we shut away our most vibrant essence, our True Self. Instinctively, we knew this tender and vulnerable part of us was unsafe and must be hidden away.

We have many buried hurts and disappointments that get triggered when we are reminded of the circumstances surrounding our original pain. It is then that our Inner Child reacts and we may find ourselves engaged in self-destructive behaviors if we don't provide appropriate comfort and reassurance.

When we work the ACA program and take the time to uncover our pain while treating our Inner Child with unconditional love, we begin to heal. Having the courage to listen will expose the pain we denied for so long. It also will bring back to life our childlike joy and wonder. We give voice to the child within so we can finally resolve the lifetime of pain he or she has shouldered.

On this day I unconditionally support my Inner Child so we both have the freedom to heal and feel safe.

- We will now attempt to have a simple dialogue with our Inner Child using blank paper. Write with your non-dominant hand.
- You may scribble/doodle/draw/create a collage/write letters, affirmations or feeling words or write down what comes to mind without judging yourself if your inner child will not dialogue with you.
- Release yourself from any fear or anxiety knowing there is no right or wrong way to do this. Be gentle with yourself and know you are OK.

What is your name?
How old are you?
What do you like?
What don't you like?
What kind of things do you like to do when you play?
Who do you like to play with?
What do you like to eat and drink?
Where do you like to go on vacation?
What are your favorite colors?
What is your favorite room? or place?
What would you like from me?

- We will have 15 minutes of sharing time. Each share will be 3 minutes with one minute warning. Share your answers, your experience with this workshop so far, your writing, your collage, your drawing or just where you are at and how you may be feeling. *Go to Service Sheet Week #6 write in those who want to share.* No crosstalk. BRB p 573-574 What is said here stays here.

- We will have 15 minutes of sharing time in small groups. Each share will be 3 minutes with one minute warning. Share your experience with this workshop so far, your writing, your collage, your drawing or just where you are at and how you may be feeling. No crosstalk. BRB 753-574 What is said here stays here.

- Welcome back. Would anyone care to share their experience? We will have 5 minutes.

- _____ Please read the Inner Child Affirmations to help us focus as we go through Our Inner Child Meditation.

- Please read an Inner Child Affirmation and pass to help us focus as we go through Our Inner Child Meditation.

Inner Child Affirmations before our Guided Meditation

BRB p328

I love my Inner Child unconditionally.

I will protect my Inner Child to the best of my ability.

I will take time to listen to my Inner Child and
to follow through on promises.

I will integrate my Inner Child into my life
through play, creativity, and spirituality.

I will take time to become my own Loving Parent.

- We will now listen to our guided meditation for our Inner Child Workshop recorded by Sky P. from Step 11 in the BRB p. 276. Or Leader will read the meditation. Copy and paste this link or click on this link to play the recording of the meditation. <https://www.dropbox.com/s/93ap34vhftv33f0/ACA%2011th%20Step%20Meditationa%20By%20-%20Sky%20P.m4a?dl=0>

- Immediately after the meditation is complete I will read What We Can Expect from **Reparenting** Ourselves. We will have 10 minutes of quiet time to write a letter with your dominant hand to your Inner Child about your feelings, thoughts, complaints, experiences you have experienced today and then have your Inner Child write with his or her non-dominant hand to you about his or her feelings, thoughts, complaints, experiences you have experienced today using blank paper. Awakening My Little One will be played softly in the background until the 10 minutes are completed.

- Who would like to share in a few words your experience with our large group? We will have 5 minutes.

Meditation Exercise

BRB p 276-278

To begin the guided meditation, find a quiet and comfortable room without any distraction. You may sit in a chair or sit on the floor. An outdoor location is acceptable as well. Sit upright but be comfortable. Begin the exercise by closing your eyes and taking a deep breath and releasing it slowly.

As you take four or five slow breaths, let any thought you might have fade away. Be aware of being present in your body. If your mind is wondering, gently focus on yourself and be present in the moment and in your body. Continue breathing naturally.

Imagine that you are sitting on a warm beach. The weather is pleasant and not too hot. The beach is secluded but safe. You can feel the warm sand beneath your feet as you stand up and look out upon a calm, blue ocean. White sea gulls are diving for fish and the smell of seawater is refreshing. You are wearing a T-shirt, loose trousers, and a floppy hat to block the sun.

In front of you, near the shoreline, you see an image of yourself when you were six or eight years old. Your Inner Child is bent at the waist picking up starfish and sea shells. The child notices you and waves you over. You walk up to the child and the child reaches out and places a starfish in one of your hands. You smile and feel the bristles of the tiny starfish tickling you. Your Inner Child smiles and squints to block the friendly sun.

The child reaches out and grips your hand. The child's skin has been warmed by sun rays. You both begin walking along the beach. You notice the child's soft hair and sensitive touch as you walk. The child trusts you and giggles softly each time a wave washes up the shore almost touching your feet.

You walk for many moments, chatting softly, but paying attention to the child's innocence and imagination. You want to protect the child.

You notice two people ahead, and they seem familiar so you keep walking toward them. Your Inner Child squeezes your hand and moves slightly behind you as you move closer to the couple. The child becomes shy, pushing into your leg from behind. You keep walking.

You recognize the couple before you reach them. They are your parents, waiting for you to walk up. They grin at you and your Inner Child. They ask if they can walk with the child.

You feel your stomach tighten, and you look down at your Inner Child to find the child pressed into your legs from the back. The child won't look at you and won't let go of your hand.

You smile at your parents but ask them to wait for another day to walk the child. You and your Inner Child walk up the beach away from your parents and sit down. The child looks over a shoulder, climbs into your lap, and sits down. You hold your Inner Child. You both watch your parents walk away.

The sun is lower now but still warm. Your Inner Child naps. You are safe. Your Inner Child is safe. You are going to make it. You know what you are doing. You can trust yourself to take care of your Inner Child. You can trust yourself to love.

Continue to meditate and hold your Inner Child. When you are ready to stop, gently wake the child, walk the child to your cottage, and tuck it into bed. After putting the child to bed, back out of the room, counting slowly backward from ten. Open your eyes.

What We Can Expect from **Reparenting** Ourselves

BRB p 326-327

- The **Critical Parent** is developed and entrenched in most adult children, so it takes effort and focus to develop a **Loving Parent** who can connect with the **Inner Child** on a consistent and meaningful level.
- With a **Loving Parent**, we stop harming ourselves. We disrupt self-harming behavior more quickly.
- With **reparenting**, we integrate the **Steps**, **Inner Child** and our **Higher Power** into our daily lives. The person within us that our **Higher Power** created will emerge safe at last to love and be loved.

- We will have 10 minutes to write a letter with our dominate hand to our Inner Child about our feelings, thoughts, complaints, experiences we have experienced today and then have our Inner Child writes with his or her non-dominate hand to us about his or her feelings, thoughts, complaints, and/or experiences we have experienced today using blank paper.

- We have 5 minutes to share our experience with our large group about their letter to their Inner Child about their feelings, thoughts, complaints, and/or experiences we have experienced today or what our Inner Child wrote to us about his or her feelings, thoughts, complaints, and/or experiences we have experienced today.

- We will have 15 minutes of sharing time. Each share will be 3 minutes with one minute warning. Share your answers, your experience with this workshop so far, your writing, your collage, your drawing or just where you are at and how you may be feeling. *Go to Service Sheet #6 write in those who want to share.* No crosstalk. What is said here stays here.

- We will have 15 minutes of sharing time in small groups. Each share will be 3 minutes with one minute warning. Share your answers, your experience with this workshop so far, your writing, your collage, your drawing or just where you are at and how you may be feeling. No crosstalk. What is said here stays here.

- Welcome back. Would anyone care to share their experience of our RSG Inner Child Workshop? We will have 5 minutes.

- It is time to close our workshop and wrap up our introductory Ready Set GO!! meetings and RSG Inner Child Workshop.

- Thank you for participating in our 5 or 6 weeks of Ready Set GO!!

- Thank you to those who volunteered to be leaders, sharing partners, readers and timekeepers.

- It is recommended that you lead or participate in Ready Set GO!! Introductory meetings with Inner Child Workshop at least once a year to refresh your ACA program.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Inner Child and service to others will keep us awake spiritually. Along with the Steps, they will underpin our spiritual experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with our 7th Tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, please go to adultchildren.org to contribute for the 7th Tradition.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with the 7th tradition, which states that each group will be self-supporting, we will pass a basket for donations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember we keep what we have been given when we give it away. Please take on the opportunity to do service by leading Ready Set GO!! Introductory Meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you to all the authors of our ACA Big Red Book, the ACA 12 Steps Workbook and our ACA Meditation Book Stengthening My Recovery.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the grace of God may we humbly move onto working the 12 Steps of ACA in the ACA 12 Steps Workbook when we are Ready, and we feel Set to GO!! forward.
<p style="text-align: center;">TO BE CONTINUED FOR THE REST OUR LIVES, PEACE</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Below is a link of a video to help you view and listen to a summary of Ready Set GO!! in your quiet time.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">https://www.dropbox.com/s/j9z3qhwk1lsbo8/ Final%20RSG%20DVD%2012%3A12%3A2018.m4v?dl=0 or email your request for the link at acatoni5617@comcast.net Updated 12/12/2018</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will you please join me for our Closing Prayer, Gathered Together?

Gathered Together

Higher Power, gathered together we find great peace and serenity.

We seek hope to become whole as we were created to be.

We find strength to deal with life as we grow in our program.

We trust that as we find courage we will feel free and secure.

We are grateful to have the support of our group who understands us.

We believe that your presence in our life will give us all that we need.

We close our meeting with a feeling of belonging and being loved.

Keep Coming Back!

It works if you work it!

And you are worth it!

READY SET GO!!

ONE DAY

***This guide is made for presenting the
Ready Set GO!! One Day
in one or two days.***



It takes 7 hours with lunch & sharing breakout groups to complete this event strictly following this guide's timeline. I suggest making your own adjustments as needed for presenting this event in the time you have allowed. Example: If you have 10 hours over two days you could start with page one of the script and allow more time for filling out the worksheets and the 4th step inventory.

Again this guide will get you through the RSG script in 7 hours.

READY SET GO!!

ONE DAY

Begins Here

Welcome to Ready Set GO!! One Day, an introduction to the spiritual language, concepts, and actions of introducing the 12 steps of Adult Children of Alcoholics and Dysfunctional Families.

We hope to foster a safe environment by embracing the 12 Steps & 12 Traditions of ACA. Throughout this workshop, we will gather in groups of 3 to 4 people to share our clarity, strength, and hope. We wish to identify and own our losses, unprocessed grief, and other denied emotions. We have accumulated this baggage from growing up in dysfunctional childhoods that may have been instilled with chronic shame, abuse and abandonment.

In ACA, we commonly use “fellow traveler” or “sponsor” to signify people with whom we are taking this spiritual journey. As you read, please feel free to substitute whatever word or concept YOU are comfortable with, for the word God. We use the word God to signify any spiritual entity. When it is your turn to read, read a few paragraphs at a time or say pass if you don’t want to read; everyone gets a chance to be heard here.

When we break into small groups of 3 to 4 people each, please be mindful of time limits for sharing. In small group breakouts, we usually take 4 minutes for personal shares so everyone gets an equal time to share. After group breakouts, it’s important we start back on time, as we have just the one day for all 12 steps and the Loving Parent – Inner Child dialog exercise please be considerate of time boundaries. Please remember to use “I” statements in group shares. We keep the focus on ourselves. We do not give advice or make comments on what others say because it is true for them. We are here to work on ourselves and be the best we can be for ourselves and to honor our truth and respect others.

I will be interrupting to give directions to skip sections & breakout into our sharing groups.

Please note this manuscript contains copy written material and is under review by the WSO Literature Committee. It is intended to be used only in meetings of Adult Children of Alcoholics and other Dysfunctional Families.

Once again, welcome to Ready Set Go!!

***Wording in red italics are not to be read out loud
they are just leadership instructions***

START READING THE SCRIPT HERE:

(Page 25, with paragraph beginning “As we begin, we remind ourselves”)

Say: Everyone turn to page 25 of your script, Will someone please begin our day by reading the paragraph starting “As we begin, we remind ourselves to have an open mind”

Skip Breakout Session On Page 32:

(Intervene at the Bottom of Page 31)

Say: Stop there. Turn to page 33. Continue reading at the top of page 33, “The ACA Twelve Steps – Step One”

Step One Group Sharing Breakout:

(Intervene on Page 38, just after the worksheet)

Say: Will those willing to take the 1st Step please stand. This is the 1st Step question. Am I now willing to concede to my innermost self that I am powerless over the effects of alcoholism or other family dysfunction and that my life has become unmanageable?

Say: When answering this question consider these responses (Yes, No, maybe, I don't know). Choose a response that feels true to yourself. There is no judgement here. There is no right or wrong answers to the question. Going around the room please answer one at a time and then be seated.

(Wait till everyone has sat down then proceed)

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 1. ***(Clapping)***

Say: We are going to break into sharing groups of 3 to 4 people soon. Topics to consider during our group shares are:

- Breaking the family rules of “Don't Trust, Don't Talk, Don't Feel”
- What are your family types?
- If you are comfortable you could share what you wrote on the 1st Step worksheet.

Say: Please remember to keep the focus on yourself, use “I Statements”, there is no “Cross Talk”, we don't give advice, fix or rescue our sharing partners. Share your experience, strength and hope. We honor each other by sitting quietly while others share. Treat everything that is said here today confidentially. What is said here stays here.

Say: Break into sharing groups of 3 to 4 people. You have time for 4 minute shares each.

Say: Come back at _____. *(25 minute break)*

(After the breakout session begin reading Leader section for Step 2 on Page 38, with paragraph beginning “We will go on to Step Two”)

Step Two Commentary:

(Intervene on the bottom of Page 40, just after the worksheet)

Say: Will those willing to take the 2nd Step please stand. This is the 2nd Step question. Do you now believe or are you willing to believe that a power greater than yourself can restore you to sanity and/or clarity?

Say: When answering this question consider these responses (Yes, No, maybe, I am willing to believe, I want to believe, I don't know at this time). Choose a response that feels true to yourself. There is no judgement here. We are practicing greater independence from codependence in the presence of our support group. Going around the room please answer one at a time and then be seated.

(Wait till everyone has sat down then proceed)

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 2. *(Clapping)*

(Begin reading Leader section for Step 3 on top of Page 41, with paragraph beginning "We will go on to Step Three")

Step Three Group Sharing Breakout:

(Intervene on the bottom of Page 44, just after the worksheet)

Say: Let's read out loud the "Third Step Prayer" on page 44 together.

(Recite prayer as a group)

"God. I am willing to surrender my fears and to place my will and my life in your care one day at a time. Grant me the wisdom to know the difference between the things I can and cannot change. Help me to remember that I can ask for help. I am not alone. Amen."

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 3. *(Clapping)*

Say: We are going to break into sharing groups soon. Topics to consider during our group share are:

- What does taking the first three steps mean to you?
- What do you think about the concept of having a "Loving Parent" be your higher power vs a "Critical Parent"?
- What role does spirituality have in your life?
- If you are comfortable you could share what you wrote on the 3rd Step worksheet.

Say: During group shares Please remember to keep the focus on yourself, use "I Statements", there is no "Cross Talk", we don't give advice, fix or rescue our sharing partners. Share your experience, strength and hope. We honor each other by sitting quietly while others share. Treat everything that is said here today confidentially. What is said here stays here.

Say: Break into sharing groups. You have time for 4 minute shares each.

Say: You have extra 5 to 10 minutes for a restroom break.

Come back at _____. (30 minute break)

(After the breakout session begin reading Leader section for Step 4 on top of Page 52, with paragraph beginning “In Steps Four & Five we will continue the process of self-discovery.....”)

Suggested 4th Step Method for One Day:

(Intervene on Page 55, just before “Exercise 1 will introduce you to...”)

Say: Soon we are going to complete our “Blameless” 4th Step Inventory one “Dysfunctional Problem” at a time. Starting with the first “Dysfunctional Problem” on page 58.

- Going around the room we will read the **Dysfunctional Problem** definition.
- Then mark the **Check** column if this problem affects you personally.
- List the people that have harmed you with that problem in the **Exercise 1** column. The harm may be real or imagined.
- List the people who you have harmed with that problem in the **Exercise 2** column. Give special consideration to put yourself down first on the list as many adult children have harmed themselves with these behaviors.
- Next read the **Healing Solution** Definition. **Healing Solutions** show us how to **Seek Balance for Positive Results** by using the **Healing Solutions** that help us break out of our role as a victim. The definitions may be helpful filling out your inventory. After sharing this inventory in detail with a sharing partner, sponsor, or therapist we may experience some of these **Healing Solutions** going through this process. These are positive things that we may never have experienced or hoped for before in our lives. We may notice them in tiny ways or they could have a huge impact on our recovery. The results will be different for all of us. There are no guarantees, only our determination to do the best we can do to the best of our ability. Our Higher Power will love us no matter what we accomplish and so we need to love ourselves unconditionally.

Say: Ok, Let’s go around the room and complete our “Blameless” 4th Step Inventory one “Dysfunctional Problem” at a time. Starting with the first “Dysfunctional Problem” on page 58. Remember to say “pass” if you do not want to read. Someone begin reading with the dysfunctional problem of the “Laundry List Traits”.

(One person at time go through the entire 4th Step Inventory & Praise Exercise)

Step Four Leader Commentary:

(Intervene on the very bottom of Page 63)

Say: We have completed our short form “Blameless” 4th Step Inventory.

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 4. ***(Clapping)***

(Begin reading Leader section for Step 5 in the middle of Page 64, with paragraph beginning “In Step Five we tell our story with clarity and humility.....”)

Step Five Group Sharing Breakout & Lunch:

(Intervene on the bottom of Page 68, just after the worksheet)

Say: Let’s read out loud the “5th Step Prayer” together on page 67.

(Recite prayer as a group)

“Divine Creator. Thank you for this chance to speak honestly with another person about the events of my life. Help me accept responsibility for my actions. Let me show compassion for myself and my family as I revisit my thinking and actions that have blocked me from your love. Restore my child within. Restore my feelings. Restore my trust in myself. Amen.”

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 5. ***(Clapping)***

Say: Let’s break into our sharing groups. Consider sharing some of your 4th Step Inventory if you are comfortable doing so. There is no requirement to share your Inventory today. There is the option of sharing your 5th Step worksheet titled “Dealing & Balancing with Losses”. You have time for 4 minute shares each.

Say: Come back for Lunch @ _____. *(50 minute break)*

(After Lunch is over)

(Begin reading Leader section for Step 6 near the bottom of Page 71, with paragraph beginning “In Step Six we will become willing to have God remove.....”)

Step Six Commentary:

(Intervene on the bottom of Page 75, just after the worksheet)

Say: Will those willing to take the 6th Step please stand. This is the 6th Step question. Are you now ready to let the God of your understanding remove from you all the things which you have admitted are objectionable? Please answer one at a time going around the room and be seated.

(Wait till everyone has sat down then proceed)

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced Step 6. ***(Clapping)***

(Begin reading Leader section for Step 7 at the top of Page 76, with paragraph beginning “In Step Seven we learn to remove defects of character and integrate.....”)

Skip Breakout Session On Page 81:

(Intervene at the Bottom of Page 80, just after the worksheet)

Say: Stop there. Congratulations you have been introduced Step 7. ***(Clapping)***

(Begin reading Leader section for Step 8 in the middle of page 81, with paragraph beginning “In Step Eight we become willing to make amends.....”)

Step Eight Commentary:

(Intervene on the very bottom of Page 83, just after the worksheet)

Say: We congratulate those who have made an amends list and putting yourself first on that list. Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 8. ***(Clapping)***

(Begin reading Leader section for Step 9 at the top of Page 84, with paragraph beginning “Going onto Step Nine we balance taking responsibility.....”)

Step Nine Commentary & Skip Breakout Session:

(Intervene in the middle of Page 87, just after the worksheet)

Say: Going to Ready Set GO!!, attending ACA meetings and talking with my Fellow Travelers is a very important part of my amends process to myself.

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 9. ***(Clapping)***

(Begin reading Leader section for Step 10 at the bottom of Page 90, with paragraph beginning “In Step Ten having now begun the process of recovery, we will learn.....”)

Step Ten Group Sharing Breakout:

(Intervene on the bottom of Page 97, just after the Praise Exercise)

Say: Will those willing to take the 10th Step please stand. This is the 10th Step question. Will you continue to take personal inventory and continue to praise yourself for what you do that is right or good and continue to set right any new mistakes as you go along?

Say: Going around the room please answer one at a time and then be seated.

(Wait till everyone has sat down then proceed)

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 10. ***(Clapping)***

Say: We are going to break into our sharing groups. Please remember to keep the focus on yourself, use “I Statements”, there is no “Cross Talk”, we don’t give advice, fix or rescue our sharing partners. Share your experience, strength and hope. We honor each other by sitting quietly while others share. You have time for 4 minute shares each.

Say: Come back at _____. (25 minute break)

(Begin reading Leader section for Step 11 in the middle of Page 98, with paragraph beginning “In Step Eleven we will seek to improve our contact with our Higher Power.....”)

Step Eleven Commentary:

(Intervene after the Step 11 Worksheet on Page 101, just before introduction to Step 12)

Say: Let's read the "11th Step Prayer" together on page 100.

(Recite prayer as a group)

"God, When I look let me truly see. When I listen let me truly hear."

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 11. **(Clapping)**

Say: **(Begin reading Leader section for Step 12 in the middle of Page 101, with paragraph beginning "In Step Twelve, having experienced a spiritual awakening.....").**

Step Twelve Commentary:

(Intervene on the bottom of Page 104, just after the worksheet)

Say: Will those willing to take the 12th Step please stand. This is the Step 12th Step question. Will you carry the message to other Adult Children? Please answer one at a time going around the room and be seated.

(Wait till everyone has sat down then proceed)

Say: Congratulations you have been introduced to Step 12. **(Clapping)**

Adult Children of Alcoholics®
Dysfunctional Families

Sneaks, Lies, Loves, Jealousy, Selfish, Self-love, Pride, Loving, Mistaken, Worried, Self-consciousness, Addictive, People-pleasing, Conceal, Shifted feelings, Perfectionism

Ready Set GO!!

BRB p.280

Steps Four and Five as “Fessing Up”

Steps Six through Nine as “Cleaning Up”

Steps Ten through Twelve as “Stepping Up”

BRB p. 330

Higher Power. Help me to be willing to recognize the Loving Parent inside of me. Help me integrate my Inner Child more actively into my daily life so that I remain awake spiritually. Grant me the courage to change the things I can. Grant me the wisdom of my Inner Child.

ACA Definitions

Abandonment	A subjective emotional state in which people feel undesired, left behind, insecure, or discarded. People experiencing emotional abandonment may feel at a loss, cut off from a crucial source of sustenance that has been withdrawn either suddenly or through a process of erosion.
Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Abuse - Criminal sexual activity, especially that involving a victim below the age of sexual consent or incapable of sexual consent. • Physical Abuse - Is an act of another party involving contact intended to cause feelings of physical pain, injury, or other physical suffering or bodily harm. • Emotional Abuse - The debasement of a person's feelings that causes the individual to perceive himself or herself as inept, not cared for, and worthless.
Acceptance	With help and acceptance we recognize the false identity we had to develop to survive family dysfunction.
Addiction	In ACA we view our compulsive thinking and dependency as a spiritual dilemma rather than a mental illness.
Amends	taking responsibility for our actions and changing our behavior.
Blame	to hold responsible, accuse, the act of finding fault; From living with shaming and blaming parents, adult children doubt and blame themselves and others.
Boundaries	something as a line or mark that forms an outer limit, an edge, or an extension; there are different types of boundaries, but their purposes are to allow us to stay respected and free of harm.
Clarity	to make or become clear, understandable, clarity helps us decipher the contradictory messages of our childhood.
Control	to have power or authority to direct or manage; control effects our choices and our thinking. It effects our interpersonal relationships and our relationship with a higher power. As children growing up in shame we have fought hard for control whether it was internal or external.
Courage	The choice and willingness to confront agony, pain, danger, uncertainty or intimidation. Moral courage is the ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition, shame, scandal, discouragement, or personal loss.
Critical parent	the hypercritical and judgmental voice that frequently finds fault in our thoughts and actions. This include the frequent blaming ourselves and others.
Denial	Breaking through the wall of dealing with our pain and suffering that we tried to ignore for many years.
Discernment	keenness of judgment and insight. Through discernment we know who we are. We trust ourselves at last. This is the breath of God's guidance.

Emotional Sobriety	is measured by the freedom we gain by abstaining from acting out on the Laundry Lists traits. We cease self-harming behavior and make an effort to measure emotionally and spiritually. Emotional sobriety is evident in our willingness to seek and do God's will.
False self	the self we became to survive our dysfunctional families.
Fear	A feeling of anxiety concerning the outcome of something or the safety and well-being of someone: A distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc., whether the threat is real or imagined; the feeling or condition of being afraid.
Forgiveness	the act of pardoning an offender. Forgiveness does not mean that we are forgetting or minimizing our offender's behavior.
Honesty	acting honorably, truthfully or fair; we must be honest about our actions and motives. Honesty and clarity of thought comes from seeking a higher power and attending ACA meetings.
Hope	an optimistic state of mind. In ACA we develop an expectation that things will work out, trusting oneself and others.
Humility	an appreciation of oneself, one's talents, skills, and virtues. Through humility we come to know our inner child.
Inner child	the original person, being, or force which we truly are. Some ACA members call this the true self.
Inventory	a list and evaluation of family systems in addition to our own behavior.
Listening	hearing and paying attention to Adult Children, ourselves, and our Higher Power.
Loving Parent	the inner parent we can develop from the part of us that took action to care for ourselves as children and which can be awakened in recovery.
Open-mindedness	receptiveness to new ideas. Relates to the way in which people approach the views and knowledge of others,
Perfectionism	the quality of demanding an impossible level of performance; perfectionism in dysfunctional homes fuels our control and our attempts to control people, places, and things.
Powerlessness	lack of ability or capability to do something to produce a certain effect; adult children view abuse and inappropriate behavior as normal. We are reactors who feel powerless to change our situations.
Recovery	is the process of reclaiming the true self and accepting yourself for who you are no longer waiting for others to define you or approve of you. Through recovery you come out of isolation and connect to others beginning by building relationships in ACA.
Respect	to have or show high regard, esteem, and honor; through learning to respect ourselves we learn to respect others.

Seeking	search for, try to find, look for, be on the lookout for, be after, hunt for, be in quest of.
Self-forgiveness	pardon, absolution, exoneration, remission, dispensation, indulgence, clemency, mercy; reprieve, amnesty; may be required in situations where the individual hurt themselves or in situations where they hurt others
Self-Love	regard for one's own well-being and happiness
Shame	Shame tends to make you feel isolated, inferior and unwanted. When shame is intense the adult child's vision is distorted and perceptions change. Shame is the deep sense that our souls are inherently flawed. BRB p. 10 A person, action, or situation that brings a loss of respect or honor.
Sharing Partner	A participant in Ready Set GO!! who has some ACA experience and is willing to support another participant of Ready Set GO!! by connecting by phone or email or face to face.
Solution	a means of solving a problem or dealing with a difficult situation.
Spirituality	seeking a meaningful connection with something bigger than yourself. It is the way you find meaning, hope, comfort and inner peace in your life and become more human.
Sponsorship	backing, supporting and aiding someone.
Surrender	relinquish possession or control over, give up or agree to forgo to the power or possession of another. We surrender to our inability to change the past and our powerlessness to control the future. We surrender the notion that we can reason out a solution alone or avoid discomfort.
Survival Traits	also known as The Laundry List. ACA experience shows that survival traits continue to effect the adult in problematic ways.
Twelve Step Program	set of guiding principles, outlining a course of action for recovery from addiction, compulsion, other behavioral problems and unhealthy dependence on others.
Trust	a confidence or belief in the strength, ability, or honesty in a person or thing; as children we learned the rule "don't trust". In ACA, we overcome that rule and learn to trust ourselves and others.
Unmanageability	capable of being controlled or directed; desire to control others and ourselves while having a sense that we are not capable of being effective.
Willingness	power that the mind has to make choices and decisions to select acts to carry them out; we make a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of Higher Power as we understand our Higher Power.

FAMILY MEMBER LABELS WORKSHEET

Think about your experiences or what you have heard about relatives in connection with addiction, religion, relationship, food, sex, work, etc. The labels for your family members can include one or a combination of labels.

AS I READ

CHECK THOSE THAT APPLY TO ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY

	Alcoholic
	Used alcohol/drugs
	Worked a lot (workaholic)
	Religious
	Worried a lot (neurotic)
	Perfectionist (high strung)
	Enabler
	Chronically ill, hypochondriac
	Emotionally ill
	People-pleaser
	Martyr
	Obese sibling/relative
	Sickly child, too sensitive
	Loner
	Thief, bogus check writer, inmate
	Sexually aggressive, not safe
	Grabbed or wrestled inappropriately
	Pill popper (always taking something)
	Ladies man, player, gigolo, skirt chaser
	Harsh, always critical, verbally abusive
	Great cook (always thought of herself last)
	Undependable, does not follow through
	Argumentative (will not be quiet, keeps arguments going)
	Violent, slapped other, pinched, threatened, glorified fighting
	Always had her face in a mirror (thought she was better than others)
	Heavy debt (always borrowing money) or big spender (flashy clothes)

Step 1 Worksheet

Powerlessness, Unmanageability, Surrender

Effects of Powerlessness <i>Examples: denial, shame, hopeless, lost, stuck, frustrated, confused, worthless</i>	Situations of Unmanageability <i>Examples: relationships, parenting, working, money, organizing</i>	Gain Surrender By <i>Examples: Willing to attend ACA meetings, study ACA 12 steps, get a sponsor, consider a therapist</i>

Step 2 Worksheet

Seeking A Higher Power

Childhood Beliefs of a Higher Power	Adult Beliefs of a Higher Power	Ways to Seek a Higher Power

Step 3 Worksheet

Understanding our Higher Power of Our Choice

What I want my Higher Power to be	How do I become willing to trust my Higher Power?	Things to turn over to my Higher Power
<i>(a loving relationship, nurturing, caring, supportive, kind, always present)</i>	<i>(By totally surrendering my will, by facing my denial, forsake my need to control, learn how to pray, learn to ask for help)</i>	<i>(The Laundry List Traits, character defects, fears and anxieties)</i>

Ready Set GO!!'s "Blameless" 4th Step Inventory Worksheets

Quick Check			Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Seek Balance for Positive Results	
Dysfunctional Problems	Definitions	✓	Person who has harmed you	Person who you have harmed	Healing Solutions	Definitions
Laundry List Traits	A list of characteristics we seem to have in common due to being brought up in an alcoholic and/or dysfunctional family. Some of these are: afraid of people and authority, addictive lives, stuff our feelings, terrified of abandonment, approval seekers, self-sacrificial, addicted to excitement, confuse love and pity, judge ourselves harshly, reactors rather than actors, para-alcoholics(co-dependents). Choose one for this worksheet. SMR, Front Cover Workbook				Laundry List Workbook	Take a look at the different perceptions that are a part of these traits and learn how to integrate them or let go of them. With this action we will begin to find emotional sobriety. Suggested to do this workbook after the ACA 12 Steps Workbook has been done.
Family Secrets	These are secrets, inconsistencies, and wrongs that are contrary to the family image. Workbook p. 82 Every family has a secret...but how far will people go to protect these secrets? And how do they move past the truth once it is uncovered?				Overcome Denial	Breaking through the wall of dealing with our pain and suffering that we tried to ignore for many years.
Shame	Shame tends to make you feel isolated, inferior and unwanted. When shame is intense the adult child's vision is distorted and perceptions change. Shame is the deep sense that our souls are inherently flawed. BRB p. 10 A person, action, or situation that brings a loss of respect or honor.				Self Love	Start to let ourselves appreciate the true self that God meant us to be, the innocent, pure, thoughtful, loving child of God.

Quick Check			Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Seek Balance for Positive Results	
Dysfunctional Problems	Definitions	✓	Person who has harmed you	Person who you have harmed	Healing Solutions	Definitions
Abandonment	A subjective emotional state in which people feel undesired, left behind, insecure, or discarded. People experiencing emotional abandonment may feel at a loss, cut off from a crucial source of sustenance that has been withdrawn either suddenly or through a process of erosion. SMR, Front Cover Workbook				Loving Parent	The part of ourselves that is free from the Critical Parent. The Loving Parent can give us what we need now. When we were children our needs were not met by our parents. We learn how to be a Loving Parent following the principles of the steps.
Fear	A feeling of anxiety concerning the outcome of something or the safety and well-being of someone: A distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc., whether the threat is real or imagined; the feeling or condition of being afraid.				Gentleness	Being kind, caring, thoughtful of others and ourselves. The quality of being tender, or mild-mannered.
Stored Anger (Resentments)	Strong displeasure; anger; hostility provoked by a wrong experienced.				Foregiveness	The intentional and voluntary process by which a victim undergoes a change in feelings and attitude regarding an offense, lets go of negative emotions such as vengefulness, with an increased ability to wish the offender well. Forgiveness is different from condoning, excusing, forgetting, pardoning, and reconciliation. In certain contexts, forgiveness is a legal term for absolving or giving up all claims on account of debt, loan, obligation, or other claims.

Quick Check			Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Seek Balance for Positive Results	
Dysfunctional Problems	Definitions	✓	Person who has harmed you	Person who you have harmed	Healing Solutions	Definitions
Dysfunctional Relationships	Relationships that do not perform their appropriate function; that is, they do not emotionally support the participants, foster communication among them, appropriately challenge them, or prepare or fortify them for life in the larger world. Workbook				Self Respect	Pride and confidence in oneself; a feeling that one is behaving with honor and dignity.
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	An anxiety disorder associated with serious traumatic events and characterized by such symptoms as survivor guilt, reliving the trauma in dreams, numbness and lack of involvement with reality, or recurrent thoughts and images.				Contentment	A state of happiness and satisfaction.
Frozen Feelings	These are frozen emotions that the child was not allowed to feel that never go away. These emotions stay buried, contributing to limiting beliefs and negative self views. It is not until this pent-up energy is expelled, expressed and processed in the presence of an understanding, safe and validating other that the emotion is released.				Rigorous Honesty	The ability to be totally and completely honest with oneself and sharing that with trusted others.

Quick Check			Exercise 1	Exercise 2	Seek Balance for Positive Results	
Dysfunctional Problems	Definitions	✓	Person who has harmed you	Person who you have harmed	Healing Solutions	Definitions
Sexual Abuse	Criminal sexual activity, especially that involving a victim below the age of sexual consent or incapable of sexual consent.				Courage	The choice and willingness to confront agony, pain, danger, uncertainty or intimidation. Moral courage is the ability to act rightly in the face of popular opposition, shame, scandal, discouragement, or personal loss.
Physical Abuse	Is an act of another party involving contact intended to cause feelings of physical pain, injury, or other physical suffering or bodily harm.				Loving Kindness	Tenderness and consideration toward others.
Emotional Abuse	The debasement of a person's feelings that causes the individual to perceive himself or herself as inept, not cared for, and worthless.				Trust	Firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something.

Praise Exercise

These assets will help balance positive and spiritual qualities while looking at Step Four. BRB p. 188

Sit quietly and circle at least 10 assets:	
strong	humorous
sensitive	willing
intelligent	compassionate
courteous	talented
honest	organized
spontaneous	creative
loving	a listener
spiritual	trustworthy
tenacious	judicious
accepting	modest
prompt	kind
hard working	a friend
An ACA member	

Repeat, I am _____.

For each circled asset.

Step 5 Worksheet

Dealing and Balancing with the Losses

Dysfunctional Problems <i>Hurts, abuses, losses</i>	Who harmed me?	What can I learn and how will it help me?
Dysfunctional Problems <i>Hurts, abuses, losses</i>	Who have I harmed?	What can I learn and how will it help me?

Step 6 Check List Worksheet

Check Defects of Character and Laundry List Traits

I am willing to have removed and/or integrated by my Higher Power
To be done over time as I progress.

Defects of Character	
	Mistrust
	Feeling Superior
	Procrastination
	Greed
	Pettiness
	Envy
	Lust
	Perfectionism
	Isolation
	Dishonesty
	Judgmental
	Self Centeredness

Laundry List Traits	
	para alcoholics
	codependency
	reactors rather than actors
	judge ourselves harshly
	stuff our feelings
	afraid of people and authority figures
	confuse love and pity
	addictive lives
	addicted to excitement
	approval seekers
	self-sacrificial
	terrified of abandonment
	frightened by angry people
	live life from the viewpoint of victims

When we are ready, we repeat the **Seventh Step prayer**
for **each defect or survival trait** we wish to have removed or integrated.

Seventh Step Prayer - Character Defects

God. I am now ready that you should remove from me all my defects of character, which block me from accepting your divine love and living with true humility toward others. Renew my strength so that I might help myself and others along this path of recovery. BRB pp.220

"I humbly ask you to:

"Remove my defect of _____ . Amen."

Select Defects of Character:	
Mistrust	Lust
Feeling Superior	Perfectionism
Procrastination	Isolation
Greed	Dishonesty
Pettiness	Judgmental
Envy	Self Centeredness

Seventh Step Prayer - Laundry List Traits

God. I am now ready that you should integrate my survival traits, which block me from accepting your divine love.

Grant me wholeness. BRB p. 221

"I humbly ask you to:

"Integrate my trait of _____ . Amen."

Laundry List Traits survival traits or common behaviors:	
para alcoholics	addicted to excitement
codependency	approval seekers
reactors rather than actors	self-sacrificial
judge ourselves harshly	terrified of abandonment
stuff our feelings	frightened by angry people
afraid of people and authority figures	live life from the viewpoint of victims
confuse love and pity	addictive lives

Step 7 Worksheets

#1 and #2

#1 Check Problematic Behaviors that Continue to Affect my Life	
	Abrupt
	Aloof
	Argumentative
	Boisterous
	Blunt
	Cold
	Critical
	Domineering
	Fearful
	Greedy
	Hateful
	Inconsiderate
	Irritable
	Miserable
	Resentful
	Sanctimonious
	Suspicious
	Thoughtless
	Timid
	Troublesome
	Ungrateful
	Unfulfilled
	Vengeful
	Weakness
	Worthless

#2 Check Positive Qualities to Balance/Reparent Myself	
	Admirable
	Agreeable
	Balanced
	Calm
	Capable
	Courageous
	Compassionate
	Dedicated
	Efficient
	Enthusiastic
	Flexible
	Forgiving
	Good natured
	Humble
	Objective
	Open
	Patient
	Profound
	Punctual
	Reliable
	Respectful
	Satisfaction
	Spontaneous
	Tolerant
	Warm

Step 8 Amends List Worksheet

Person	Relationship	Make Amends For	Behaviors That Will Change

Step 9

Suggested Verbal Amends

In making an amends, we might say:

“I am involved in a program in which I am learning to change my behavior and to live more honestly and openly. Part of the process involves making amends to people I have harmed with my behavior. I am making amends to you for _____ (name the behavior, action, or other). I want to make it right. I am not making excuses, but I have harmed people based on my lack of knowledge about living, I am changing my behavior.”

Step 9 Amends Process

Naming what I have done	Making things right	Actions for change
<i>Example: harmed my true self with codependency, drugs, sex, work, gambling, and food, guilt and shame</i>	<i>supportExample: be humble, seek help from my Higher Power, be sincere, be forgiving, be courageous, ask for support from my sponsor and group</i>	<i>Example: honesty, be understanding, patient, loving, caring, pray, go to ACA meetings, share my experience, strength and hope</i>

STEP TEN GUIDE

Personal Inventory

Page 257-258

Date _____

1. Am I isolating and not talking about what is really going on with me?
2. Did I view anyone as an authority figure to day and feel frightened or rebellious?
3. Did I dissociate, fantasize, or become involved in self-harm today?
4. Am I keeping secrets and feeling unique? Am I talking about my feelings?
5. Am I being honest in my relationships or am I seeking approval over honesty?
6. Am I acting "perfect" and obsessing over making mistakes?
7. Do I overreact or isolate from others when I perceive that I have been criticized?
8. Am I attending ACA meetings to nurture myself and to give back what was given to me?
9. Have I acted helpful recently to manipulate others?
10. Am I secretly angry at someone, but I am avoiding talking about it?
11. Have I listened to my Inner Child or True Self today?
12. Did I judge myself or someone else without mercy today?
13. Am I listening to the Critical Parent or Loving Parent?
14. Am I remembering that I can ask for help today and that I can call someone?

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Date _____ Ask yourself these questions daily.

1. Am I isolating and not talking about what is really going on with me?
2. Did I view anyone as an authority figure to day and feel frightened or rebellious?
3. Did I dissociate, fantasize, or become involved in self-harm today?
4. Am I keeping secrets and feeling unique? Am I talking about my feelings?
5. Am I being honest in my relationships or am I seeking approval over honesty?
6. Am I acting "perfect" and obsessing over making mistakes?
7. Do I overreact or isolate from others when I perceive that I have been criticized?
8. Am I attending ACA meetings to nurture myself and to give back what was given to me?
9. Have I acted helpful recently to manipulate others?
10. Am I secretly angry at someone, but I am avoiding talking about it?
11. Have I listened to my Inner Child or True Self today?
12. Did I judge myself or someone else without mercy today?
13. Am I listening to the Critical Parent or Loving Parent?
14. Am I remembering that I can ask for help today and that I can call someone?

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Choice Continuum Exercise

Pages 258-259

Each day circle where you think you are in having real **choice** in your life.

Continue throughout the day because we can change
our level of control at any time.

Date: _____

DENIAL												
AM	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
PM	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫

SOME CHOICE												
AM	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
PM	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫

GREATER CHOICE												
AM	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
PM	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫

DISCERNMENT												
AM	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫
PM	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	⑪	⑫

Step Ten reminds the recovering adult child
to live in the moment
to enjoy life's gifts and
to feel connected to life.

☒ **Check the tools of recovery you are
using to help you live in the moment.**

DATE _____

- ☐ Attending ACA Meetings regularly
- ☐ Attending Ready Set GO!! Meeting
- ☐ Working the Twelve Steps
- ☐ Getting a Sponsor
- ☐ Associating with recovering adult children
- ☐ Sponsoring new members
- ☐ Getting involved in service work
- ☐ Volunteer to share our recovery at prisons
or the treatment setting
- ☐ Answer the Intergroup helpline
- ☐ Seek to become a trusted servant

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Feelings and Journaling Exercise

Appendix D

Pages 260-261

Complete a sentence each day or every other day
to become comfortable with talking about your feelings:

loved	joy	ashamed	humorous	irritated
angry	embarrassed	trusted	betrayed	pleased
satisfied	ambivalent	hopeful	inspired	loving
frustrated	disappointed	grief	accepted	excited
grateful	confident	humiliated	guilty	serene
rested	shame	abandoned	pleasure	safe
tenacious	thoughtful	playful	fascinated	enthralled

Date_____

I feel_____when I _____because_____.

Date_____

I feel_____when I _____because_____.

Date_____

I feel_____when I _____because_____.

Date_____

I feel_____when I _____because_____.

Date_____

I feel_____when I _____because_____.

Date_____

I feel_____when I _____because_____.

Praise Exercise

Page 261-282

Date _____

As we also inventory our mistakes and missteps.
Note what you do right and include those you are unsure of or those you would like to have in your life.

☑ Check to celebrate your good qualities

- ☐ humorous, ☐ willing, ☐ compassionate,
☐ courteous, ☐ loving, ☐ spiritual,
- ☐ accepting, ☐ trustworthy, ☐ tenacious,
☐ a friend, ☐ spontaneous, ☐ creative,
☐ a listener, ☐ strong, ☐ sensitive,
- ☐ talented, ☐ prompt, ☐ an ACA member,
☐ intelligent, ☐ honest, ☐ organized,
☐ judicious, ☐ modest, ☐ kind,
☐ hard working.

These assets will help
balance positive and spiritual qualities.

**Sit quietly and fill an asset in an
affirmation repeating:**
I am _____.

Date _____

As we also inventory our mistakes and missteps.
Note what you do right and include those you are unsure of or those you would like to have in your life.

☑ Check to celebrate your good qualities

- ☐ humorous, ☐ willing, ☐ compassionate,
☐ courteous, ☐ loving, ☐ spiritual,
- ☐ accepting, ☐ trustworthy, ☐ tenacious,
☐ a friend, ☐ spontaneous, ☐ creative,
☐ a listener, ☐ strong, ☐ sensitive,
- ☐ talented, ☐ prompt, ☐ an ACA member,
☐ intelligent, ☐ honest, ☐ organized,
☐ judicious, ☐ modest, ☐ kind,
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Note what you do right and include those you are unsure of or those you would like to have in your life.

☑ Check to celebrate your good qualities

- ☐ humorous, ☐ willing, ☐ compassionate,
☐ courteous, ☐ loving, ☐ spiritual,
- ☐ accepting, ☐ trustworthy, ☐ tenacious,
☐ a friend, ☐ spontaneous, ☐ creative,
☐ a listener, ☐ strong, ☐ sensitive,
- ☐ talented, ☐ prompt, ☐ an ACA member,
☐ intelligent, ☐ honest, ☐ organized,
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As we also inventory our mistakes and missteps.
Note what you do right and include those you are unsure of or those you would like to have in your life.

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☐ courteous, ☐ loving, ☐ spiritual,
- ☐ accepting, ☐ trustworthy, ☐ tenacious,
☐ a friend, ☐ spontaneous, ☐ creative,
☐ a listener, ☐ strong, ☐ sensitive,
- ☐ talented, ☐ prompt, ☐ an ACA member,
☐ intelligent, ☐ honest, ☐ organized,
☐ judicious, ☐ modest, ☐ kind,
☐ hard working.

These assets will help
balance positive and spiritual qualities.

**Sit quietly and fill an asset in an
affirmation repeating:**
I am _____.

Step 11 Worksheet

Focusing Daily on our Spiritual Path

Seeking God's Will	Listening for God's Will

Step 12 Worksheet

Carrying the Message to Those Who Still Suffer

This introduction to the ACA 12 Steps introduced you to spiritual principles you may have never heard of. This chart indicates where you stand with each spiritual principle. Check how you feel about each spiritual principle.

♥ means you have gained some understanding of this principal,
R means you are **ready** to try to use this principal.
S means you will **set** this principal into all of your affairs.
G means you are **going** to share what you have been given with those who still suffer.

Spiritual Principals	♥	R	S	G
Surrender				
Hope				
Honesty				
Self-forgiveness				
Humility				
Powerlessness				
Open-mindedness				
Clarity				
Willingness				
Acceptance				
Courage				
Trust				
Forgiveness				
Discernment				
Seeking				
Listening				
Love				
Self-love				

Gathered Together

Higher Power, gathered together we find great peace and serenity

We seek hope to become whole as we were created to be.

We find strength to deal with life as we grow in our program.

We trust that as we find courage, we will feel free and secure.

We are grateful to have the support of our group who understands us.

We believe that your presence in our life will give us all that we need.

We close our meeting with a feeling of belonging and being loved.

Keep Coming Back!

It works when you work it!

And you are worth it!

Suggestions/Preparations for a Closed Meetings

Ready Set GO!!

Introductory Telephone Meetings

Please print for telephone meetings

- Select a free teleconference provider can be easily found on the internet thus becoming the Host for the 5-6 weeks.
- Determine day, time zone for the four weeks of a closed RSG Telephone Meeting.
- Register Closed Telephone Meeting with WSO if you will be doing RSG every few months.
- Create a flyer for your telephone meeting, and for your Intergroup's Event Page, and WSO's Event Page, with the teleconference numbers needed to join the meeting.
- Screen Sharing is very helpful.
- Recordings up to group, request for shares not be recorded is fine.
- Remind participants that RSG meetings does not take the place of their regular meeting.
- The host will be the leader for the first week.
- It is suggested participants volunteer to be the leader for a week of RSG.
- Go to Part 2 of Ready Set GO!! The Script Telephone instructions are in grayed sections.
- Telephone meetings are 6 weeks including the last 2 weeks for the Inner Child Workshop. Face to Face are 5 weeks. Leader. Note instructions to use script for both versions. Dark grayed sections.
- RSG Sharing Time Meetings outside regular RSG session for structured, safe sharing for RSG participants only. See format p. 149.

Preparations before the start of the RSG for Telephone Meetings

- Please print the Service Sheet of the Week for listing volunteers.
- Fill in names for service choices. Readers for The Laundry List Traits, The Solution, each Step, and 4th Step Worksheets, Timekeeper, Sharing, Sharing Partner, and Phone/Email Exchange.

RSG WEEK #1 Service **Timekeeper_____

Readers	Readings
	The Laundry List - Reading Sheet or BRB p. 587-588
	The Solution Reading Sheet or BRB 590
	Introduction through ACA Program
	ACA Program through Family Types That Can Create Adult Children
	Step One
	Step Two
	Step Three

RSG WEEK #2 Service **Timekeeper_____

Readers	Readings
	The Laundry List - Reading Sheet or BRB p. 587-588
	The Solution Reading Sheet or BRB 590
	Step Four
4th Step Worksheets	
	1st page - Laundry List thru Shame
	2nd page - Abandonment thru Stored Anger (resentments)
	3rd page - Dysfunctional Relationships thru Frozen Feelings
	4th page - Sexual abuse thru Emotional abuse
	Step Five

RSG WEEK #3 Service **Timekeeper_____

Readers	Readings
	The Laundry List - Reading Sheet or BRB p. 587-588
	The Solution Reading Sheet or BRB 590
	Step Six
	Step Seven
	Step Eight
	Step Nine

RSG WEEK #4 Service **Timekeeper_____

	The Laundry List -Reading Sheet or BRB p. 587-588
	The Solution Reading Sheet or BRB 590
	Step Ten
	Step Ten Guide
	Step Eleven
	Step Twelve

RSG Week #5 - Part 1- Service Sheet Timekeeper_____

	The Solution BRB p 590
	How our 12 Steps Helps to Address our Critical Parent
	Critical Parent
	Affirmations and 2 paragraphs following
	Introduction of our Loving Parent
	Meditation for our Inner Lover Parent
	Affirmations To Be Repeated Each Day

RSG Week #6 - Part 2- Service Sheet **Timekeeper_____

	The Inner Child - True Self
	Tools and Techniques for Connecting with our Inner Child
	Meditation for the Inner Child
	Inner Child Affirmations Before the Guided Meditation

Sharing Partners

Sharing Partners	Phone	Email

Phone & Email

[illegible]

Appendix E

RSG Sample Flyer & RSG For Your Information - Readings Before Attending RSG



Ready Set GO!!

An introduction to the ACA program, ACA 12 Steps, and the Critical Parent, the Loving Parent and the Inner Child

A 5-6 week session consisting of 5-6 closed meetings using face to face meetings and/or telephone meetings

6 Closed Telephone Meetings:

Feb 11- March 19, 2019

Mondays, 7:00pm to 9pm Central Time

Questions: Name (999) 555-5555 or email _____

Dial-in number (US): (999) 999-9999

Access code: 99999#

International dial-in numbers: <https://fccdl.in/i/xxxxxx>

Online meeting ID: xxxxxxxx

Join the online meeting: <https://join.call.com/xxxxxx>

For 24/7 Customer Care, call (999) 999-9999

5 Closed face to face Meetings - Last Week RSG Inner Child Workshop:

St Joseph Hospital, 999 W Madison, Chicago, IL 12345

Questions: Name: (999) 555-5555 or email _____

Most beneficial to attend 5 or 6 consecutive weeks

Ready Set GO!! 6 Week Introductory Schedule

Week #1 - Introduction, Steps 1, 2, 3

Week #2 - Steps 4 and 5

Week #3 - 6, 7, 8 and 9

Week #4 = 10, 11 and 12

Week #5 - Part 1 - RSG Inner Child Workshop

“Awakening My Little One”

Week #6 - Part 2 - RSG Inner Child Workshop

“Awakening My Little One”

Ideal for newcomers who have attended a couple of ACA meetings
and for the experienced member to refresh their recovery

Participants need their own Ready Set GO!! copies for the 6 weeks

Ready Set GO!!
For Your Information
Please read the next few pages
before attending RSG

Ready Set GO!!

Suggested Preparations For Participants

- Read The Laundry List, The Problem, The 12 Steps, The 12 Traditions, The Solution and The Promises on your own the day of your Ready Set GO!! meeting.
- Volunteer to be a sharing partner when you feel comfortable for six weeks.
- Ask a sharing partner to support you through the six weeks.
- Volunteer to be the leader for one week of Ready Set GO!!
- Continue to attend your regular meetings.
- Put your mind at ease and understand that RSG is available to be taken as many times as needed. It is a stepping stone to go on to the ACA 12 Step Workbook when you are ready to choose to move onto that.
- Have faith in the process and know that the Steps offer a solution.
- Feel free to ask questions. This is your recovery and questions help us understand and gives us clarity.
- Print out full worksheets that are in Appendix B as needed.
- A few regular ACA meetings would be helpful before attending Ready Set GO!! Introductory Meetings.

It is time to focus on my ACA Recovery!

Suggested Guidelines For Leaders

- Pray for guidance to lead a RSG meeting. Some experience leading a meeting will help.
- Volunteer to be the leader for one week of Ready Set GO!!
- Follow Part Two which contains the primary script of Ready Set GO!! inserted into a user friendly, structured, detailed format. This is designed to cover the 5 weeks of a face to face meeting and/or 6 weeks of a telephone meeting.
- **Part Two may be followed for telephone meetings with the details that are in Appendix D.**
- **Part Two may be followed for the RSG One Day Workshop.**
- **Part Two may also be useful for a 2 or 3 day retreat with minor adjustments.**
- Sponsors may find RSG helpful to be used with sponsees at a slower pace.
- Pick a location for your meeting.
- Pick a date and time for the meeting.
- Register the meeting with WSO. (for telephone meetings)
- Create a sign-up sheet for face to face meetings.
- Make announcements at meetings.
- Print out full worksheets that are in Appendix B as needed.
- Create a flyer for the meeting.
- Contact your local Intergroup and WSO to post the flyer on their website for other members to participate.
- Perhaps offer RSG meetings once or twice a year in place of your regular meeting.

SEEKING HELPFUL GOALS

READY = I will become **READY** to take on the ACA 12 Steps.

SET = I will become **SET** into a new way of living my life.

GO!! = I will become willing to **GO!!** to any length for my recovery.

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OTHER PUBLIC MEDIA

Readings to attach to RSG Flyer

optional

- *Ready Set GO!! is an introduction to the ACA program, the ACA 12 Steps and the Loving Parent/Inner Child.*
- *Material is available at _____ for the six weeks using a user friendly, structured, detailed format, clearly marking the reading for the leader and participant.*
- *References will be made of the other 2 Parts that makeup Ready Set GO!! covering many different features to gain an understanding of RSG using our ACA recovery. Go to _____ to view Part 1 and Part 3*
- *Service Sheets are provided for telephone meetings when you receive your request for the material via email.*
- *Screen Sharing will be used to help participants follow along with our readings. The choice is yours to print out or not.*
- *Following are important documents to help prepare the participant to get some idea of how to handle this RSG journey.*
- *Email: _____ at _____ with any questions of RSG.*

Experiencing Ready Set GO!!

Telephone Closed Meeting

Safety for all members is imperative for this group

- *Helpful to have attended a few regular ACA meetings before taking on RSG.*
- *Call in on time.*
- *Try to participate in sharing time to the best of your ability.*
- *Share on the reading or whatever is on your heart, sharing your experience, strength and hope. (3 min. shares)*
- *Respect the anonymity of others.*
- *Be kind and courteous and respectful of all members.*
- *Attending all six weeks consecutive meetings is most beneficial.*
- *Volunteers to be the leader, do the readings or be a timekeeper.*
- *We do not cross talk. Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, commenting on, or using the content of what another person has said during the meeting.*
- *Choosing a sharing partner from this group is suggested for support for the six weeks. Sharing the worksheets with a sharing partner, sponsor, fellow traveler, or your group is recommended, when you feel comfortable. This experience with a sharing partner can give the adult child insight to choosing a sponsor.*
- *Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and any occurrence will result with member being removed from the call.*

A Suggested Format for ACA 12 Step Workbook Group

Begin at _____
Closing at _____.
Welcome to the ACA 12 Step Workbook Group.
My name is _____ and I am your leader for tonight.
Let's go around the room and introduce ourselves.
The Workbook Group is not easy. We suggest you seek support of a sponsor or co-sponsor, attend regular meetings, and read the additional material from the Big Red Book. This will broaden your understanding and enhance your ability to participate in the Twelve Step process.
One of the first lessons in recovery is know your own limitations and participate only in those activities that support your recovery.
We meet to share our experience, strength and hope as we recover from growing up in an alcoholic and/or dysfunctional home.
Ask if we need a five to ten minute group conscience.
Will you please join me in a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer?
Read the Laundry List, the Solution, the 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions on your own the day of your
Read the meditation from Strengthening my Recovery.
I will pass around the clipboard with the phone list and a Signup Sheet for chairing the meeting.
Please feel comfortable to do so when you are ready.
It is time for our 7th Tradition.
Tonight we will be sharing on the material on pages (see clipboard). Focus on your written responses, one at a time or summarize, as you feel comfortable.
Crosstalk means interrupting, referring to, or commenting on what another person has said during the meeting. We do not crosstalk 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 what others say because it is true for them. We work toward taking more responsibility in our lives rather than giving advice to others. BRB p564
We will now have our sharing time. Please be considerate of others so we can all have a reasonable time to share and close at _____.
Share a feeling word with a brief comment.
Will someone please read the Inner Child Affirmations?
Will someone please read The Promises? BRB p. 591
What is said at this meeting stays at this meeting.
Thank you for the opportunity to chair this meeting.
Will all who care to please join me in the Lord's Prayer.
Keep coming back. It works if you work it. And you are worth it.

ACA/ACOA's Co-Founder Tony A's 12 Steps

(Recording by Tony A. available on youtube: enter Tony A's 12 steps in search, runs 55 mins.)

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 it's 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.

ACA cofounder Tony A. published a new version of the Twelve Steps in his 1991 book ``The Laundry List: The ACoA Experience.'' [The Laundry List](#) is a list of 14 traits that capture the personality and thinking of an adult reared in a dysfunctional home. Tony's 1991 steps focus on self-love and self-forgiveness. They are quite different than the traditional Twelve Steps adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous.

Here is an example of Step Three: ``We made a decision to practice self-love and to trust in a Higher Power of our understanding.'' AA's Third Step: ``Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.''

Tony was a concurrent member of Alcoholics Anonymous and Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACoA/ACA). He believed in AA and its proven method for helping the suffering alcoholic; however, Tony began tinkering with rewording the Twelve Steps soon after helping found ACoA in 1978. He refined his version of the Twelve Steps during the next 11 years and published them in 1991. Tony's Steps are not presented here due to copyright reasons.

Meanwhile, the Adult Children of Alcoholics fellowship adopted and approved the AA Steps for fellowship use in 1984. This was seven years before Tony's published his book and his Steps. The AA Steps and Traditions were adopted by the ACoA (ACA) Annual Business Conference of 1984. This is known as the fellowship vote for autonomy for ACoA (ACA). The AA adapted Steps are the fellowship approved Steps for ACoA (ACA).

The AA Steps, as adapted by Adult Children of Alcoholics, incorporate many of Tony's ideas on self-love and self-forgiveness while also retaining the original principles and meaning of the AA Steps.

For example, Step Four incorporates a compelling feature of Tony's Fourth Step which calls for a blameless inventory of the parents. This feature is unheard of in Twelve Step fellowships, which have erected a firewall against looking at anyone else during the inventory process.

Most Twelve Step fellowships believe that you cannot look at parental behavior without falling into blame and self pity. Tony disagreed. Tony believed we internalized our parents' dysfunctional behavior as children. He believed we could not find clarity or peace of mind until we inventoried what had been handed off to us by our parent, grandparents or relatives. When you look at the generational nature of how family dysfunction is passed on from parent to child, Tony was right. We have internalized our parents' behavior and passed it on to our children. However, this is not the end for us. We can take a blameless and fair inventory of our parents balanced with an inventory of ourselves. The ACoA/ACA Steps bring true change and peace of mind.

- Continue to go to my regular ACA meetings.
- Encourage my fellow travelers to experience the introduction meetings of RSG.
- Consider taking RSG many times to strengthen the message of these introductory meetings.
- Consider becoming a leader of Ready Set GO!!.
- Seek courage to be a sharing partner.
- Feel more comfortable knowing that my fears and anxieties have lessened.
- Use Ready Set GO!! as a helpful tool to share with my sponsees.
- When I am ready to take on the ACA 12 Step workbook, I can feel confident that it is possible to take on this challenging course of action with a lot less fear and anxiety.
- Have the courage to give away what I have been so freely given by becoming a sponsor.
- Listen to my inner child who is beginning to help me connect with my Higher Power.
- Seeing more opportunities for me to do service.
- Feeling the healing beginning to be a part of my recovery.
- Realizing that I can keep coming back to renew my recovery.
- Enjoy the connection I have experienced with fellow travelers during these 5-6 weeks.
- My inner child feels a new sense of love for my Loving Parent and can go on without feeling inadequate, hopeless and lost.

In Gratitude of Ready Set GO!!



Ready Set GO!! seems to offer relief to the Adult Child who is confused, overwhelmed, depressed, miserable and wondering where do I go from here. The Ready Set GO!! Committee was made up of many Adult Children who felt this would be a good way to do service. Their dedication for these 8 years have opened up many new and different encounters with many people from all over the world. This has been an act of love for all of us. Our Higher Power has connected us all with one goal in mind, to help the Adult Child who is still suffering. We hope that Ready Set GO!! will give you the ability to be

HAPPY, JOYOUS AND FREE.

Ready Set GO!!

Developed by:

Dolores W., Toni P., Kathy S., Karen A., Elizabeth C.,
Downers Grove, IL and La Grange, IL ACA Meetings
and Dave S., Matt K. developed
Ready Set GO!! One Day Workshop
Fitchburg, WI ACA Meetings



Ready Set GO!! Cover
Created By: Kate B.

“Awakening My Little One”
was composed by Lynne B.
for The Ready Set GO!! Video

The Ready Set GO!! Video
was Lovingly Created By:
Toni P.

NOTES

NOTES



About the Cover:

The cover depicts the adult child's journey toward healing. Ready Set GO!! is a bridge over troubled waters. As Adult Children we are seeking relief from the wounds and pains of growing up in an alcoholic or dysfunctional family. This led us to the ACA program. Raging waters represent our struggle for survival. The sun represents Our Higher Power a source of energy. The trees and green growth are the beginnings of new life. We find bits and pieces along the path of the bridge finding love and understanding beyond our wildest dreams.

Ready Set GO!! Endnotes

¹ Big Red Book, p. 571

² Ibid, p.558

³ Ibid, xxvi

⁴ Ibid, p. 568

⁵ Ibid, p.358

⁶ Ibid, p. 93

⁷ Ibid, p. 81-82

⁸ Ibid, p. 82

⁹ Ibid, p. 82

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 387

¹¹ Ibid, p. 387

¹² Ibid, p. 568

¹³ Ibid, p. 569

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 569

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 569

¹⁶ Ibid, p.57-59

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 96

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 96-97

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 97

²⁰ Ibid, p. 97

²¹ Ibid, p. 97

²² Ibid, p. 98

²³ Ibid, p. 99

²⁴ Ibid, p. 99

²⁵ Ibid, p. 102

²⁶ Ibid, p. 103

²⁷ Ibid, p. 104

²⁸ Ibid, p. 104

²⁹ Ibid, p. 123

³⁰ Ibid, p. 124

³¹ Ibid, p. 405

³² Ibid, p. 127

³³ Ibid, p. 128

³⁴ Ibid, p. 155

³⁵ Ibid, p. 201

³⁶ Ibid, p. 125

³⁷ Ibid, p. 106

³⁸ Ibid, p. 107

³⁹ Ibid, p. 137

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 107

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 107

⁴² Ibid, p. 135-136

⁴³ Ibid, p. 137

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 107-108

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 108

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 108

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 142

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 142

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 143

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 143

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 143-144

⁵² Ibid, p. 145-146

⁵³ Ibid, 146

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 155-156

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 149

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 149

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 109, para. 1

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 109, para. 3

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 109, para. 4

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 109-110, p. 5

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 110, para. 2

⁶² Ibid, p. 110-111

⁶³ Ibid, p. 157, para. 1

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 157, para. 2

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 157-158

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 159, para. 1

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 159

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 188 partial

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 189, para. 2 partial

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 189, para. 3 partial

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 195, para. 2

⁷² Ibid, p. 195, para. 3

⁷³ Ibid, p. 196

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 195-197, para. 3

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 197, para 1

⁷⁶ Ibid, 197, para. 5

⁷⁷ Ibid, p.198

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 198

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 199

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 206

⁸¹ Ibid, p. 209, para. 2

⁸² Ibid, p. 209, para. 3

⁸³ Ibid, p. 209, para. 4

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 210, para. 2

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 212, para. 2

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 212, para. 3

⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 212, para 4

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 213, para. 2

⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 214, para. 3

⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 214, para. 4

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 215, para. 1

⁹² Ibid, p. 215, para. 2

⁹³ Ibid, p. 219

⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 220, para. 2

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 220, para. 3

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 222

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 223, para. 1

⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 223, para. 2

⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 223, para. 3

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 225

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 225

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 226

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 229-230

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 230

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 231

¹⁰⁶ Ibid p. 234

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 237, para. 1

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 237, para. 2

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 238-239, para. 3

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 239, para. 1

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 239, para. 3

¹¹² Ibid, p. 239-240, para. 4

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 240, para. 3

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 241, para 2

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 241, para. 3

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. 242

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 242, para. 1

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p. 242, para. 2

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 251-151, para. 5

¹²⁰ Ibid , p. 252, para. 1

¹²¹ Ibid, p. 252, para. 3

¹²² Ibid, p. 252, para. 4

¹²³ Ibid, p. 254

¹²⁴ Ibid, p. 256-257, para. 3

¹²⁵ Ibid, p. 265-266, para. 1

¹²⁶ Ibid, p. 266, para. 1

¹²⁷ Ibid, p. 266, para. 1

¹²⁸ Ibid, p. 266, para. 2

¹²⁹ Ibid, p. 267, para. 3

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 272-273, para. 4

¹³¹ Ibid, p. 273-274, para. 3

¹³² Ibid, p. 275, para. 1

¹³³ Ibid, p. 275, para. 2

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 275, para. 3

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 274

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 282

¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 283, para. 1

¹³⁸ Ibid, p. 283, para. 2

¹³⁹ Ibid, p. 284