

ACA SMR, WEB0120
Group Conscience Business Meeting

January 17, 2021

Meeting began at 8:53 am

MINUTES

1. Call to Order
2. ACA Serenity Prayer
3. Call for Service
4. Attendance
5. Reports
6. Reading of the Motions
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Announcements and Next Meeting
10. Adjournment and Closing Prayer.

OPENING

1. Call to Order: Meeting is called to order by Jim R. at 8:53 am.

2. ACA Serenity Prayer: All invited to recite the ACA Serenity Prayer.

3. Call for Service: Jim identified the service people for the meeting:

- Recording Secretary: Jim
- Timekeeper: Will
- Tradition of the month: Elizabeth read:
Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.
- The Suggested Commitment to Service: Jim began:
"I perform service so that my program will be available for myself, and through those efforts, others may benefit. I will perform service and practice my recovery by:
 1. *Affirming that the true power of our program rests in the membership of the meetings and is expressed through our Higher Power and through group conscience.*
Krista:
 2. *Confirming that our process is one of inclusion and not exclusion; showing special sensitivity to the viewpoint of the minority in the process of formulating the group conscience so that any decision is reflective of the spirit of the group and not merely the vote of the majority.*
Carol:
 3. *Placing principles before personalities.*
 4. *Keeping myself fit for service by working my recovery as a member of the program.*

5. *Striving to facilitate the sharing of experience, strength, and hope at all levels: meetings, Intergroups, Regional committees, service boards, and World Services.*

Paul K-F:

6. *Accepting the different forms and levels of service and allowing those around me to each function according to their own abilities.*

7. *Remaining willing to forgive myself and others for not performing perfectly.*

Natalie:

8. *Being willing to surrender the position in which I serve in the interest of unity and to provide the opportunity for others to serve; to avoid problems of money, property, and prestige; and to avoid losing my own recovery through the use of service to act out my old behavior, especially in taking care of others, controlling, rescuing, being a victim, etc.*

Steven:

9. *Remembering I am a trusted servant; I do not govern.*

Attendance – ask all members, participating or observing, to raise their virtual hand. Take a count and record names.

4. Attendance: There were 53 participants in attendance, at the start:

REPORTS & BUSINESS

5. Reports: [33 Minutes]

Treasurer reports on the financial standing of the group. Primarily the figures from the previous month.

<i>Month</i>	<i>December</i>
Available funds	\$553
Contributions	540.13
TOTAL, for the month	\$1,093
Earmark (ABC Delegate)	(120)
Expenses; Zoom	(50)
Expenses; Website	(79)
Expenses; Other	
Disbursements; WSO	(500)
Disbursements; Other	
Ending funds	\$345

2021 Totals	
Contributions	6464.00
For ABC Delegate	960.00
Expenses – Zoom	751.00
Expenses – Website	125.00
Disbursement - WSO	4300.00

Treasurer, Adam:

It is my recommendation that our group direct 25% of our continuing 7th Tradition WSO contributions to their International Literature Scholarship Fund, to assist in bringing affordable recovery materials to our worldwide fellowship.

Motion 22-1.1 – Recommend 25% of SMR contributions to WSO each month are directed to the Literature Scholarship Fund, and 75% to the general fund. Second: Channa Yetta.

Comment: From Fredrik (WSO Treasurer) that there is a board that oversees the program, the administration is thoughtful.

Question: Do we have a Prudent Reserve – It's not listed in the report?

Answer: Yes, \$350. Has been for over a year.

C: So, without an Intergroup, we send the funds to WSO.

Q: Why doesn't the Prudent Reserve include the funds for a Delegate to the ABC?

A: It could be accounted in that fashion. That's a separate issue – funding a Delegate to attend the WSO ABC.

Q: The other 75% goes to a general fund – Is that the World Service?

A: Yes.

Q: So, do we give 100% of our funds?

A: Yes. Presently, beyond our Prudent Reserve and our expenses, we disburse 100% of the remaining contributions to WSO. We are not aligned with an intergroup.

C: So as not to get bogged down in motions, suggest that motions are made as agenda items and not included in the reports.

Q: So the 25% to the Literature Fund has not been approved?

A: Yes, it was first brought to our attention in July and has not been on the agenda line-up.

C: It has been a practice for Committees to put forth motions. (NOTE: In these instances, they may be listed as a Top Priority Item and addressed in New Business)

The motion was withdrawn

WSO Annual Business Conference in April will most likely be online only. Does our group want to donate funds set aside to send a delegate this year, and to accrue funds starting in April to send a delegate to the 2023 ABC? There is no WSO Group Rep currently.

Future Motion – Donate 2022 ABC reserves to WSO in March and begin 2023 ABC delegate accruals in April.

This issue needs to be addressed in the near future.

Recommend to replace CashApp with Venmo as 2nd donation option to PayPal. CashApp accounted for 3.5% of all group donations in 2021. Venmo is more popular than CashApp and will allow more members to donate.

Q: Has the former Treasurers banking information been unlinked to the PayPal account?

A: Yes.

Other reports are no longer read during the group conscience meeting. They are posted on the website prior to the meeting for members to peruse.

Participants are offered an opportunity to raise questions concerning the reports posted online.

Service Team: Will B.

Report was posted to the website late.

Chair: Perhaps this could be tabled till next month.

C: New to business meeting, I do service and would like to know what this report entails.

Will: I'll give a 2 minute summary.

The Co Secretaries are attempting to refine the service process:

- First, we addressed the schedule. Added days and dates to the online schedule to be able to plan ahead.
- Implemented a Service Signup Form which has been successful and recently improved by separating out the requests for training from the offers to be of service. Overall, we have had about 50 responses.
- We have begun to assemble a service team – 5 in total.
- Created a service Contact List to allow autonomy in covering shift commitments.
- Implemented a method for unscheduled trained members to indicate their availability to Room Host by adding a 'O' in front of their name.

- Created a 'best practice' document.

Q: How may we add to the best practices document?

A: Write to service@acamorning.org.

Barbara: I do not support a document coming from just the service team. Suggest we take it through a group conscience. The guidelines I use come from the script and the position descriptions which are approved by the GC. I did not approve this and do not support it. And I formally want to ask that we take this to a group conscience, in honor of Tradition 2.

Communications: Report is posted on the Website write to Kate; info@acamorning.org with comments or questions.

Website: Conrad present. Report on the website. No questions raised. Write to website@acamorning.org with comments or questions.

Service Description Committee: Paul K-F present. Report is on the website. 12 position descriptions approved. Next meeting on Thursday, to include a review of the Service Co Secretary position.

WSO Representative: No Representative at present.

NOTE: The World Service Organization is inviting all registered groups to participate in voting on the proposals which will determine the agenda of the Annual Business Conference in April. Do we want to participate, and how will we choose to do so?

NOTE: **Jim:** From the website – Service Team Co-Secretaries – “...generally responsible for Drafting policy/procedures/helpful practices on matters within its area of responsibility.”

Barbara: “Service Team responsibility”. A team of 5 to 7 people would have a group conscience essence to it, yet there is no team established. It feels like a Tradition 2 violation.

6. Reading of the Motions of the December GC: [3 Minutes]

Motions 21_1220_1-5: each proposed by Paul K-F, on behalf of the Committee,

- Tech Host description. Dissolve the position of Keyholder. /Jim R
- Service Team Co-Secretaries description. Remove reference to Keyholder. /Barbara
- Newcomer Coordinator Position. Eliminate the position (vacant for months). /Barbara
- World Service Representative position. The position may be supported by an Alternate Rep. /Barbara
- Common Elements document revision:
 - Service is teamwork.
 - Make volunteer opportunities known.
 - Invite people to do service in the order in which they volunteer.
 - ensure a healthy rotation of service.
 - create standards for putting reports onto the website (2 days prior to the GC.
 - announce stepping down from service and invite members to read the position description. /Barbara

Motion 21_1220_6: Kimberly. Any agenda item that changes the way the meeting functions be addressed then tabled and announced for one month, so everyone had opportunity to engage in decision. After discussion, the Motion was Tabled.

Motion 21_1220_7: Christy. Have Tony A's Steps, along with an introductory paragraph, used as a self-care reading on Wednesdays, replacing the ACA Bill of Rights. Second – not seconded. After lengthy discussion and a subsequent vote, there was no Resolution.

Motion 21_1220_8: Barbara. To table (suspend) the voting procedures on Motion 7 until next month. Second – Conrad. There was no discussion. The motion passed without opposition.

Top Priority Business Item [8:00 Minutes] – Former World Service Rep

Motion 22_01.17_1: Jim R. That the Group decide whether to participate in the voting on the 2022 Ballot Proposals which will determine the agenda for the Annual Business Conference. Second Christy

C: Last year it was done through a mailed survey. I support our participation.

C: I support our involvement, regardless of how we choose to do it. It is important to stay connected to WSO.

Chair: Is there anyone against participating?

With no dissention, the Motion carries.

Motion 22_01.17_2: Jim R. If participating in the vote, that the Group decide how they would like to proceed in addressing the 13 Proposals on the Ballot, which might include attending the Town Hall events scheduled for the end of January. Second Christy

Christy agreed to attend the Town Hall events. Adam was asked to assist with creating a survey. He agreed to try to participate. The survey would need to be available by mid-February. Will work with Christy.

Also – perhaps Wendy will be willing to assist.

And – all members invited to participate – write to Adam at treasurer@acamorning.org.

Note – info about the Ballot may be found in the Traveler – adultchildren.org.

Chair: Is there anyone against this motion?

With no opposition, the Motion carries.

7. Old Business: [55 Minutes]

We are in the middle of a motion. From last month:

Motion 21_1220_7: Christy. Have Tony A's Steps, along with an introductory paragraph, used as a self-care reading on Wednesdays, replacing the ACA Bill of Rights. Second – not seconded. The vote was 7 for; 2 against; 2 abstained. The members who had voted against were about to be given the opportunity to offer their dissenting opinions when the curtain came down and the process was tabled, due to time concerns. We are picking it up now.

Chair: The 2 members against the motion were myself and Conrad.

Conrad: Actually, I abstained.

Christy: I would like to restate my motion.

Motion 22-1.2: Instead of reading the Bill of Rights twice each week, on Wednesdays and Sundays, I move we replace Wednesdays with Tony A's 12 Steps of Recovery. Our World Service Organization has approved Tony A's Steps for use in ACA (sic) meetings, yet WSO cannot publish it officially because of copyright issues, and every year at the Business Conference... Proposal 2... the Board is researching legal standing... explained before the 2022 Annual Business Conference in April.

Chair: Thank you Christy that is a good summation of what transpired last month.

Chair: I voted no. I'm glad I had the time to think about it because I realize that I'm not really opposed to having Tony A's 12 steps as part of our meeting, and that I am concerned with how the newcomer might be confused. Newcomers will be buying literature with traditional steps mentioned, but there's no mention of Tony A's steps. I thought, to avoid that confusion we shouldn't go down this road. Now I

realize, confusion can be avoided by using our website. Therefore I would suggest one of two things: either we vote 'no' on the motion, or we amend the motion to include, "these steps will be instituted once we have a page on our website devoted to explaining Tony A's Steps and how we use them."

C: I was not here last month, will I be able to vote?

Chair: Well, this is untested ground. We had 7 people. I don't know who they were. And now we have 29 participants. This is the group and the Group Conscience. Any suggestions?

C: Let's call for a fresh vote. Trust Higher Power, trust the Group.

C: Do we discuss this again or just vote?

Chair: I would suggest we get clarity on the motion.

Motion 22-1.2: Christy. Instead of reading the Bill of Rights twice each week, on Wednesdays and Sundays, I move we replace Wednesdays reading with Tony A's 12 Steps of Recovery. Seconded.

Chair: Motion to extend until 10:00?

Motion: Christy. To extend for an hour. Seconded by Pam.

C: Are we extending to discuss only the motion, or to discuss anything?

C: Amendment to extend for up to an hour in order to discuss this motion (only). Accepted.

No one was opposed. Motion carries. On to discussion.

C: Huge advocate of Tony A's Steps. Still, newcomers will ask about which literature to purchase. This will create massive amount of confusion for the newcomer. It may not work out the way we think it's going to.

C: We have unique steps from our founder, Tony A. There is no other 12 Step program that stresses self-compassion, self-love, gentleness. Tony A says that the traditional steps, while they have a place, they may backfire on newcomers. Equivalent to the Bill of Rights.

C: Big fan. My only issue is that I am a Bill of Rights fan. I could vote for this if the Steps were read on Sunday.

C: In face-to-face times, I was exposed to Tony A's Steps, clandestinely. Would prefer that WSO figure this out first. I am not in favor currently.

C: We read these at a meeting in Palm Beach, FL. Very comforting. Not confusing to newcomers.

C: I support adding these steps in our readings. The newcomers can come to the after-meeting Q and A.

C: Big proponent of putting forward information. We are not responsible for the participant reaction. These steps are comforting, especially the blameless inventory.

C: Don't recall whether I voted 'no', originally, or abstained. Right now, I feel like the trusted servants experience at the meeting is not being acknowledged. Newcomers are having questions and are confused. Ignoring this is not serving the meeting. There's willfulness. The newcomer is the most important person in the group – think of them and not myself.

Q: Can we ask people to only share for a minute?

Chair: At this point, no. We can ask people to be thoughtful and brief.

C: I am a newcomer and it was very confusing to me when in meetings I heard both of them. I think it's great to have the information on the website. It's good to have these steps utilized – not have them secret. I am for putting it out there in the forefront.

C: I also went through the steps in another program and something was missing for me. Tony's Steps were a big piece for me. My experience is that people love his material. If for some reason it doesn't work, we can always vote it out in the future. I support it.

Chair: Once upon a time, we added to our script, reference to a 'predatory tent card' – a thing that doesn't exist. It was mistitled and it was in our script for months and months before it was written out of the script. With that said, I would only vote for this motion if it were amended to include having a reference on the website. I think it could also include a review in two or three months, at which time we could see if it causes more problems than it's worth.

C: Curious is the word I would use to describe newcomers, not confusion.

C: The wholesale lift of AA steps into various 12 Step groups doesn't work. Tony's 12 steps fit much more closely with the Solution. I will vote for this proposal. I liked the caveat that we include something on our website to explain about Tony A.

C: The self-care portion of the Breakout Room is an entirely standalone section – an opportunity to explore deeply something that moves us about that reading. I agree that what I hear at newcomer meetings is curiosity. I trust in people's intelligence about what they need; ability to find what works. I also like the idea of looking into it again in a couple of months.

C: When I first got here I was very confused. I had to untangle and clarify for myself. Having another option, one that is softer, more accessible, is very appealing and can enhance the process.

C: One more thing, where are you pointing these people to studying the steps? There's no workbook. What's floated about is not conference approved literature. And there are no sponsors in this program either. I don't feel you're in a place of curiosity, you're in a place of desperation.

Chair: We're entering into the second round of people voicing their thoughts. We'll hear from one more.

C: There are a lot of Tony A meetings. Some use that ACA Experience workbook, other meetings don't. There is in fact even a workbook which avoids using Tony's text, leaving it blank and if you want to fill it then you buy the book on Kindle. There's a lot of options for people.

Chair: I'm going to ask Christy to accept an amendment to the motion:

Amendment to the Motion: **Chair.** To include on our website, under the newcomer section, a page devoted to Tony A's steps, with references on where people can get more information and how it might relate to our meeting.

Christy: Perfect. I would add that to my motion.

Chair: Does anyone want that written down?

Christy: There are so many references. I already assumed we had that in our website.

Chair: This amendment would be specifically referencing a new webpage, which would be referenced in the paragraph on the slide. If it's not read, it could be on the slide – *"For more information go to this page on our website..."* Something like that.

Christy: Piece o' cake.

Chair: Does anyone want to discuss this amendment?

Q: What exactly is the amendment?

Chair: In so many words, the amendment is that a page on the website be created, in the newcomer section, devoted to helping members understand the Tony A Steps and where they can find more references to explain the steps.

Barbara: It's all on there, piecemeal: Tony A Steps in one place, the video in another. It would be a matter of bringing it all together in one sweet little spot. Even throw in the history link from the ACA WSO site. I'm happy to create the page or work with Conrad to do that.

Bill: I'd like to second that motion.

Chair: So, we have a new composite motion with an amendment seconded by Bill. Are we ready to vote?

Christy: I'll make a motion we vote

Chair: We have 25 participants. All those in favor...

C: Can I comment? Sorry, I'm really having a difficult time with this process I'm sorry... I don't know I'm getting really activated by the way that this process is going. It feels like it's self-will and people over talking the host of the meeting... trying to get it pushed through. I'm just really uncomfortable with it. I love Tony A's Steps, personally... I think they're great... I think they're really gentle. But I'm very uncomfortable with this process. So I'm gonna, I don't know... I don't even know what to say right now - whether to vote against it, or to abstain. But I'm really uncomfortable with the way this process is going. I just needed to say that, thank you.

Chair: OK. So, wait, I want to address this member. How would you feel more comfortable? Like, what's missing for you?

A: What's missing? I think one of the pieces that I'm having an issue with are the messages in the chat that are going to everybody. That feels really 'crosstalkie' and could be manipulative of the vote. And I think it's a really good thing that we are discussing that because we're an online meeting and, you know, this would not happen in a face-to-face business meeting. There wouldn't be crosstalk conversations; people sending messages to each other before a vote. I'm uncomfortable with that and it just feels manipulative to me.

Chair: Thank you for pointing that out. I would add that I see that there are 31 messages in the chat. I haven't looked at the chat this whole time. But you can't unsee what you've seen. Perhaps going forward, we should reconsider whether we have a chat capability during a business meeting. Maybe that's a policy we would like to start. Yes. People have strong positions on this topic and they don't refrain from having their positions known. And it does move into crosstalk and even bullying. I'm sorry you feel that way. There's not much we can do at this time... So what you're uncomfortable with is the goings-on behind the scenes, and it's not so much the motion itself?

A: Absolutely right. The motion is a motion. Whether they have Tony A's Steps included, you know, I'm fine with that. Just uncomfortable with the process before the vote. I'm comfortable with the motion.

Chair: Alright. Maybe the Group Conscience Chair will disable the chat next month. We'll see. So, back to the motion on the floor. We're taking a vote. The motion is, more or less, to have Tony A's Steps read as

the self-care part of the Wednesday meeting and to put supportive information on a web page in the Newcomer Section to further describe what's going on.

Chair: We're still at 25 participants. We are asking all those in favor to raise your hand digitally.

C: Wait, just to get clear, can the proposal be read? I need clarity on the proposal. Is it written down exactly as stated, Christy?

Christy: Instead of using the Bill of Rights, twice each week on Wednesdays and Sundays, I moved we replace Wednesday with Tony A's 12 Steps of Recovery; accompanied with knowledge of his 12 Steps referenced on our website.

Chair: So, again, I see 16 votes in favor. Is there anyone opposed to this motion? Can we clear all the hands, please? Now anyone opposed to this motion, could you raise your hand? We have three hands raised we're going to hear from X¹.

Chair: X¹, would you like to explain why you're opposed?

X¹: Love the Steps. Only reason is that it's on a Wednesday. Prefer Sunday when I'm no there. That's the only reason. I feel the Bill of Rights is really important. Thank you.

Chair: X², can I hear your opposition?

X²: I'm just voting against it to protest how it has come to be. I'm not comfortable with that. I've already expressed that above. But I also think, for a newcomer, do we have to be the meeting where they find out about this? Like, there's other completely Tony A Step meetings - do we have to be in that place? But the main reason I'm opposed is just the process, the messages in the chat. It's not personal. I just feel like it is somewhat manipulative and self-willed. I don't feel like it's a true open group contest, you know, just because of the chats to everyone.

Chair: And finally, X³.

X³: I don't have a particular objection to the idea or the motion. I do feel somewhat similar to X² and I'm feeling we're on a pathway, that this is going to be implemented and to me it seems like maybe this isn't ready to be implemented. I also recognize that if this motion passes it's not like, this week it's going to be put into action. Perhaps those additional steps in clarification just can be figured out. I would not classify my vote as against - it probably just abstaining.

Chair: And finally, X⁴.

X⁴: I will just say it once more – most of us came from families who spoke out of both sides their mouth... we have two sets of Steps... we have no conference approved literature. Again, where are you pointing these newcomers to study the steps? 'Curious' is not the word I would use, when I came to ACA; 'desperate' is the word I would use, when I came to ACA. I just think that when you're in that state of confusion adding more confusion is not necessarily helpful.

Chair: Now, the question is, "Having heard the dissenting opinions, Is there anyone who voted yes originally, who would like to change their vote and reconsider their position?" If you voted 'yes' and now you're thinking 'no' please raise your hand.

Q: Can I make a motion that we revote?

Chair: Sadly, no. Again, one more time, is there anyone who voted originally, 'yes', to having this motion approved – who would now like to say 'no'? Seeing no hands raised...

Chair: X⁵... yes?

X⁵: I was trying to vote 'no', because of the discussion and because the chat should be shut down. Because that's crosstalk, with people interfering. I just feel that the manipulation was there.

Chair: OK, good to know, and yes this could be brought up again, like, you know... well, first of all, did you vote 'yes' originally?

X⁵: I voted 'yes' originally

Chair: And now you're saying you're reconsidering your vote?

X⁵: Yes. Because of the discussion. And also because I was concerned about the fact that people were interrupting each other as people were speaking and there was chat going on that I was reading, and I was saying, you know... well anyway.

Chair: OK. Sadly I missed out on that whole thing, or happily. So, because someone...

C: I just wanna say, I don't know where this goes. but if we can put on the agenda for next time this whole idea about closing the chat in a business meetings. I think that folks...

Chair: Thank you, but before we diverge, we are in a position – because someone who said 'yes' originally is now saying 'no', we have the opportunity to re vote. We're going to vote on whether we should re vote on this motion. Technically, that's how it works. And if there's a majority to re vote, we will have a revote, if not then the motion carries.

So, all those in favor of re casting their vote on this motion; all those in favor of having a second vote on whether or not to pass this motion – raise your hand at this time.

Q: Is that a revote now?

Chair: Yes. Right now. Are we gonna re vote on whether to have the Wednesday reading and the website page? I see only one hand raised, so we're not gonna re vote and the original vote stands. Thank you.

Chair: Now, we have in our description of the Group Conscience Secretary - they create the agenda. I think we could defer to Paul on the position description, whether that I mean... if the Group Conscience Secretary sets the agenda, I don't see why they couldn't also set the zoom settings. So that will probably be discussed between now and then. This meeting is sort of wrapping up. We extended this meeting to talk about the issue that we just finished. I don't feel comfortable opening a new issue.

C: I didn't know whether we needed to put this on the agenda for a vote at a next meeting or whether it's just a decision that people can take care of. I have no desire to extend this meeting.

Chair: We have had a practice of having Top Priority Items. They are not in the lineup for new business, but they are Top Priority because of a time element or importance. This could become a Top Priority Item next month because it is it affects how we have our meetings. This would put it at the top of the list for discussion at next month's GC. But there might be a footing for the Group Conscience Secretary to say, "Hey, we're not going to have chat," on grounds of safety in the meeting.

CLOSING

9. Announcements and Next Meeting

Chair: Our next meeting will be on February 21st, by the way. Do we hear any announcements?

10. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Chair: Is there a motion to close? I make a motion to close. Anyone second? I see Margaret and Conrad, and it is 10:38. Anyone opposed to closing this meeting? Having heard only a chuckle, we will now go into our closing prayer because the meeting is adjourned.