***THE LEEDS GROUP OF***

***ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCHOHOLICS***

[***www.adultchildrenofalcoholics.co.uk***](http://www.adultchildrenofalcoholics.co.uk)

***PREAMBLE***

**CHAIR :** Just some house keeping before we start: Those who are on mobile ‘phones be aware that although the teleconferencing itself is free, this call counts towards your mobile contract minutes. Also, those who are on landlines and have contracts that give the first hour free, be aware that this meeting lasts 90 minutes, so to ring off and ring back before the hour is up. Someone will usually give a reminder of this at around 50 minutes into the meeting. And finally, also a reminder that unless you are actually speaking, please keep your ‘phone muted, to reduce ‘hiss’ and background noise.

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ welcome to the Leeds meeting of Adult Children of Alcoholics and dysfunctional families. May we have a moment of silence to remember why we are here? Thank you. Do we have any newcomers or visitors? **WELCOME!**

We meet to share our experience of growing up in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional home, the way if affected us then, and the way it affects us today. By practising the **12 steps**, and by accepting a **Higher** **Power** of our own understanding, we find freedom from denial of the effects of alcoholic or dysfunctional families. We identify with **The Problem** and learn to live by focusing on **The Solution** one day at a time.

Read, or ask for a volunteer to read: **The ACA** **12 steps** ( p586 Red Book )

Then ask for a volunteer to read:  **The Problem** ( p589 Red Book )

Then ask for a volunteer to read: **The Solution** ( p590 Red Book )

Once you have made it to this meeting, you do not have to feel as if you are the only one who has had the experience, the pain, the fear, the feelings, the depression or the problems. We welcome you, and invite you to keep coming back. While growing up, Adult Children of Alcoholics and dysfunctional families learned:

**DON’T TALK**

**DON’T TRUST**

**DON’T FEEL**

 When we lived in an alcoholic or dysfunctional home, no one listened, we were told our feelings were wrong. We took care of other people and neglected ourselves. In ACA meetings we break those rules; we talk about what happened then and what is happening now. We feel the feelings we could not feel then, and get in touch with our feelings today. We come to realise that all we attempted and all our experiences are valuable parts of our growth, and have led us to this new beginning.

 Beginning to talk, trust and feel, we break the patterns which, while necessary for our survival as children, prevent us from fully experiencing life. Many of us come to our first meeting distressed and in some stage of unresolved grief. We need to understand what

happened to us as children. We need to know that there really was and is a problem, and that we aren’t just reacting to something we imagined.

 This programme is not easy, but if you can deal with what comes up at six meetings, you will start to come out of **denial**. The discovery of family denial will give you freedom from the past; both you and your life will change. Many of us could not recognise or accept that certain characteristics of our attitude or behaviour in the present are the results of our childhood experiences as the victims of the dysfunction of our families. We behave as adult children, often without realisation, but by attending six meetings at the beginning, and attending regularly after that, we get to know and love our real selves, and then this pattern can change.

 This meeting, like most ACA meetings, does not allow cross-talk or advice giving, each person is allowed to share without editorial comment, one-liners or interruptions from other people in the meeting. This creates a safe place to share. Cross-Talk violates safety by recreating the family experience of being criticised, belittled, or not being heard.

We now go round and introduce ourselves by first name only and, if we chose to, give a **brief** description of how we are feeling. Please be as brief as possible to allow time for in-depth sharing later in the meeting.

**1**st Meeting of month: Read and ask volunteers to read:

  **The Red Book**

**2**nd Meeting of month: Read and ask volunteers to read:

 **The Red Book**

**3**rd Meeting of month: (‘Open’ meeting night, so accept that those new to 12 Step/ACA

 may cross-share; emphasise sentence in closing that asks for confidentiality/ no public disclosure/gossip etc)

 Read and ask volunteers to read:

 **Step In Red Book corresponding to the number of the current month**

 **eg: if March meeting, Step Three** ( p118 to p294 )

**4**th Meeting of month: ( As Conscience meeting held at end of evening, end open sharing at - 8.55pm )

 Read and ask volunteers to read:

 **Tradition In Red Book corresponding to the number of the current**

 **Month eg: if March meeting, Tradition Three** ( p491 to p554 )

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 **OPEN MEETING FOR SHARING**

The meeting is now open for sharing until 9.10pm(8.55pm if 4th meeting of month). Sharing can be on the Reading, or on anything the sharer chooses. So that as many people as possible have a chance to share, we ask that you keep your sharing to within …… minutes please.

 Would someone volunteer to be the Timer for shares please? And would someone care to be the Timer whilst the Timer takes their share please? And would someone care to be the volunteer to say when it is 8.30pm, for those who are using landlines please? Thank you. The Timers carry out their task not as an authority figure, but as an act of service in recovery, for and on behalf of the group.

 **END OF OPEN SHARING: CLOSING**

**Read, or ask a volunteer to read: THE 12 PROMISES** ( p591 Red Book )

 Thank you for joining us and please keep coming back. If you needed to share and there was insufficient time, please speak to someone after the meeting. The telephone is our lifeline between meetings; if someone said something that has special meaning in your recovery and you would like their telephone number, please go through Rich, who is the Leeds Tuesday meeting contact on the website, at adultchildrenofalcoholics.co.uk/meetings.

What you hear at this meeting, leave at this meeting. It is not for gossip or public disclosure. Please respect the privacy of what is shared. Before closing the meeting, does anyone have any ACA related announcements they want to make?

 In closing I would like to say that by accepting and reuniting with the vulnerable child we keep hidden inside, we begin to heal the broken pieces of our shattered selves and become whole human beings, capable of interacting in the world with confidence and trust. We need the security, strength, positive support and confidentiality we find in ACA to grow to independence.

Will all who care to join me in the Serenity Prayer?

 Using the word God as we understand it for ourselves:

***God, Grant me the Serenity***

***To Accept the People I Cannot Change***

***The Courage to Change the One I Can***

***And the Wisdom to know that One is Me***

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 4th meeting of month: **CONSCIENCE MEETING**

Read, or ask a volunteer to read: **The Twelve Traditions** (p592 Red Book)

1. Ask for volunteers to Chair a meeting in the coming month
2. Group service position review:

 Contacts for the group: a) Telephone: Male/Female

 b) Email

 3. Any Other Business

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