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# TWELVE CONCEPTS

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## CONCEPT I

The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for ACA World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

## CONCEPT II

Authority for the active maintenance of our world services is hereby delegated to the actual voice, the effective conscience for our whole Fellowship.

## CONCEPT III

As a means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relationship between the ACA meetings, the ACA WSO Board of Trustees and its staff and committees, and thus ensuring their effective leadership, it is herein suggested that we endow each of these elements of service with the traditional “Right of Decision.”\*

## CONCEPT IV

Throughout our structure, we maintain at all responsible levels a traditional “Right of Participation.”

## CONCEPT V

Throughout our structure, a “Right of Petition” prevails, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of grievances will be carefully considered.

## CONCEPT VI

On behalf of ACA as a whole, our Annual Business Conference has the principal responsibility for the maintenance of our world services, and it traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Annual Business Conference also recognizes that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters would be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of the World Service Organization when they act among themselves as the World Service Organization of Adult Children of Alcoholics.

## CONCEPT VII

The Annual Business Conference recognizes that the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws of the Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization are legal instruments: that the Trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all of the world service affairs of Adult Children of Alcoholics. It is further understood that our World Service Organization relies upon the force of tradition and the power of the ACA purse for its final effectiveness.

## CONCEPT VIII

The Trustees of the World Service Organization act in this primary capacity: with respect to the larger matters of overall policy and finance, they are the principal planners and administrators. They and their primary committees directly manage these affairs.

## CONCEPT IX

Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization.

## CONCEPT X

Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority – the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description or by the Operating Policy and Procedures Manual and Bylaws.

## CONCEPT XI

While the Trustees hold final responsibility for ACA’s world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate trustees, executives, staffs and consultants. Therefore the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner

of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.

## CONCEPT XII

In all its proceedings, Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization shall observe the spirit of the ACA Traditions, taking great care that the conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion vote and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no WSO action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that though the WSO may act for the service of Adult Children of Alcoholics, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the fellowship of Adult Children of Alcoholics which it serves, the WSO itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

*\*The right of decision as defined herein refers to 1) the right and responsibility of each trusted servant to speak and vote his/her own conscience, in the absence of any contrary mandate, on any issue regardless of the level of service; 2) the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and the Commitment to Service will be followed by trusted servants in decision making; 3) delegates to the Annual Business Conference (ABC) are trusted servants and therefore equally guided by the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts and the Commitment to Service; 4) standard practice that decisions made by subcommittees are subject to the authority of the service body which creates its mission and defines its parameters.*

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## SUGGESTED COMMITMENT TO SERVICE\*\*

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*I perform service so that my program will grow and be available for myself, and through those efforts others may benefit. I perform service and practice my recovery:*

- by affirming that the true power of our program rests in the membership meetings and is expressed through our Higher Power and through our group conscience;
- by confirming that our process is one of inclusion and not exclusion, showing special sensitivity to the view 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;
- by placing principles before personalities;
- by keeping myself fit for service by working my recovery as a member of the program;
- by striving to facilitate the sharing of experience, strength and hope at all levels – meetings, intergroups, service boards, and World Service;
- by accepting the differing forms and levels of service and allowing those around me each to function according to their own abilities;

- by remaining willing to forgive myself and others for not doing it perfectly;
- by 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 taking care of others, controlling, rescuing, being a victim, etc.;
- by remembering I am a trusted servant; I do not govern.

*\*\*This document was introduced at the ACA CSB/ IWSO Business Conference, January 17, 1987, in San Diego, California, and is not presented as the definition of service, but as a sharing of information.*

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## Twelve Concepts for ACA World Service

*and*

## Suggested Commitment to Service

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