



## *The ACA Twelve Concepts*

**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.\*

*\*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 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and the Commitment to Service will be followed by trusted servants in decision making;*
- 3) delegates to the Annual Business Conference are trusted servants and therefore equally guided by the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, 12 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.*

**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.

Adult Children of Alcoholics®/Dysfunctional Families World Service Organization, Inc.  
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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 over-all 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 Twelve 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 Twelve Concepts are reprinted and adapted from the original Twelve Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous and are used with the permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

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