

ASCASM

Meeting Format

Sunday, October 01, 2006

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Revised 10/1/2006

1 Co-Secretary One —

Good evening and welcome to ASCA.

My name is _____

and I will be the Co-Secretary for this meeting along with _____.

**As we begin our meeting, let us pause for a moment of silence,
to reflect on what we are feeling and what we want to accomplish here
today.**

Pause for about 30 seconds.

**The purpose of ASCA is to bring together
within a nurturing and supportive community,
we who were abused as children either physically, sexually, or emotionally.
Our meetings empower us
to transform our identities from victims, to survivors, to thrivers.**

**We will now pass around the Telephone Support Sign-Up list.
Signing the telephone support list is totally voluntary.**

2 Co-Secretary Two —

**By participating in this meeting we all agree to honor and abide by
the guidelines contained in the *Welcome to ASCA* handout, the philosophy
and spirit of ASCA, as well as any interventions made by the Co-Secretaries.**

Hold up the Welcome to ASCA handout.

Look around the room to insure that all participants have the handout.

**The *Welcome to ASCA* handout describes important information
concerning how to safely participate in our meeting and
how to maximize your experience.**

1 Co-Secretary One —

We, the Co-Secretaries, are responsible for maintaining safety and will intervene if the guidelines or meeting procedures are crossed. If you disagree with an intervention by a Co-Secretary, please discuss the matter with the Co-Secretary after the meeting.

If Rotation A, Co-Secretary One says —

We will now pass around our Statement of Philosophy and the Stages and Steps. Feel free to read in turn or pass.

Pass the Statement of Philosophy, and the Stages and Steps to the first volunteer reader, who reads the first section and then passes it along to the next reader, and so on.

If Rotation B or C, Co-Secretary One says —

We will now pass around our Statement of Philosophy. Feel free to read in turn or pass.

Read at all meetings.

Statement of Philosophy

Volunteer Reader One —

We are here today to face our past and reclaim our lives as survivors of childhood abuse. We know intuitively or objectively that we were physically, sexually, or emotionally abused as children. We believe that our abuse has affected who we are as adults today. We are determined to remake our lives by taking back what was once taken from us — our innocence, our power, our right to determine who we are and how we will live in the world.

Volunteer Reader Two —

We hold our abusers responsible for the abuse, whomever they may be, for we, as children wanted only their love. We hold that only we are responsible for our lives as adults. We accept that recovery involves discussing the memories of our abuse. We believe that there is power in remembering despite the pain that it will bring. We accept that we cannot do this alone. We need the help of others to transform the shame into self-compassion, self-empowerment, and self-acceptance.

Volunteer Reader Three —

We believe that everyone has their own unique story to tell. We pledge to listen to every member's efforts to remember, grieve, and heal. We will offer respect, support, and hope to help challenge the self-judgments, self-criticism, and self-blaming that holds us hostage to our past. We will hold in confidence what we hear of others' most vulnerable secrets. We will allow everyone to take the lead in deciding what the past means for them.

Volunteer Reader Four —

We are prepared to commit our hearts, our minds, and our spirit to change our lives. We understand that we as children were victims. We believe that today as adults we are survivors. We trust that tomorrow with recovery we will live as thrivers. We pledge today to stand together united in our best efforts to heal from the past. We make this pledge to ourselves in the company of our peers on this day forward.

The Stages and Steps are recited in Rotation A only.

Stages and Steps

Volunteer Reader Five —

STAGE ONE: REMEMBERING

- 1. I am in a breakthrough crisis, having gained some sense of my abuse.**
- 2. I have determined that I was physically, sexually or emotionally abused as a child.**
- 3. I have made a commitment to recovery from my childhood abuse.**
- 4. I shall re-experience each set of memories as they surface in my mind.**
- 5. I accept that I was powerless over my abusers' actions which holds THEM responsible.**
- 6. I can respect my shame and anger as a consequence of my abuse, but shall try not to turn it against myself or others.**
- 7. I can sense my inner child whose efforts to survive now can be appreciated.**

Volunteer Reader Five —

STAGE TWO: MOURNING

8. I have made an inventory of the problem areas in my adult life.
9. I have identified the parts of myself connected to self-sabotage.
10. I can control my anger and find healthy outlets for my aggression.
11. I can identify faulty beliefs and distorted perceptions in myself and others.
12. I am facing my shame and developing self-compassion.
13. I accept that I have the right to be who I want to be and live the way I want to live.
14. I am able to grieve my childhood and mourn the loss of those who failed me.

Volunteer Reader Seven —

STAGE THREE: HEALING

15. I am entitled to take the initiative to share in life's riches.
16. I am strengthening the healthy parts of myself, adding to my self-esteem.
17. I can make necessary changes in my behavior and relationships at home and work.
18. I have resolved the abuse with my offenders to the extent that is acceptable to me.
19. I hold my own meaning about the abuse that releases me from the legacy of the past.
20. I see myself as a thriver in all aspects of life - love, work, parenting, and play.
21. I am resolved in the reunion of my new self and eternal soul.

2

Co-Secretary Two —

Thank you.

Rotation A **Today's meeting has an open agenda. This means that our shares may relate to any aspect of our childhood abuse histories, the Stages and Steps, or any of the issues or challenges we are confronting in our recovery.**

Rotation B **In today's meeting we will concentrate on Step _____. (N) _____ will now read the section on Step _____ from the *Survivor to Thriver* manual.**

*At this time a designated volunteer reads the section from *Survivor to Thriver* which pertains to this Step.*

Prior to the meeting, the Co-Secretary has arranged for a volunteer to do this. Reading the material from Survivor to Thriver manual takes the place of reading the full Stages and Steps like in Rotation A.

Rotation C

Today's meeting is topic oriented.

Our topic for today is _____.

(N) _____ will now read a passage about _____ (topic).

At this time a designated volunteer reads a selected passage. Prior to the meeting, the Co-Secretary has arranged for a volunteer to do this. Refer to the list of topics and suggested readings. The meeting should also come up with some of their own topics.

Meetings continuously rotate among A, B and C. One week is open agenda for shares, with the following week concentrating on one of the Steps, and the following week having a specific topic. The meeting then begins the rotation sequence again, and so forth as the weeks progress.

2

Co-Secretary Two continues —

Co-Secretary Two checks the door for any people who may have arrived late.

(N)_____ has volunteered to be our presenter for this meeting and will have 15 minutes to share.

Or

Who would like to be our 15-minute presenter today?

Wait quietly for someone to indicate that they will be the presenter.

(N)_____ , I will let you know when you have one-minute remaining in order to wrap-up your share. Thank you for being our presenter today.

Presenter shares for 15 minutes. Co-Secretary Two times the presenter, setting the timer for 14 minutes, and then for 1 minute.

1 Co-Secretary One —

Thank you for your share (N)_____ .

Do you want to receive some supportive feedback from the group now?

If the presenter responds that s/he wants feedback from the group, proceed accordingly.

If not, then skip to the next page and begin with — "We will now have the tag share part"

Since (N)_____ has indicated that s/he would like some supportive feedback from us, I want to remind everyone that a supportive comment is the only type of feedback that we offer to our presenter during the meeting.

If you are new to our meeting, please review the information in the "Art of Supportive Feedback" found on the third page of your *Welcome to ASCA* handout. Before proceeding however, does anyone have a question concerning what a supportive comment entails?

*If there are questions the Co-Secretary responds to them making reference to the directions provided in the *Welcome to ASCA* handout on page 32. The Co-Secretary then continues.*

2 Co-Secretary Two —

Remember that our feedback is for (N)_____ 's benefit.

Our feedback is most helpful when direct, clear, and focused.

Each respondent will have a maximum of one minute.

(N)_____ will choose from among those who raise their hands.

Feedback can be anxiety provoking for either the provider or receiver, so it may take a few moments for the feedback process to begin.

Who would like to offer (N)_____ some supportive feedback?

Presenter selects first person. Co-Secretary Two monitors the time. After 10 minutes of feedback, Co-Secretary One continues ...

1 Co-Secretary One —

**Thank you, everyone. That is all the time we have to offer feedback.
You can also offer additional supportive feedback after the meeting.**

**(N)_____ would you like to take a few moments to share with us how you are
feeling having just heard the feedback and to respond to the feedback?**

Allow the Presenter to respond for 1-3 minutes.

Thank you (N) _____.

2 Co-Secretary Two —

Co-Secretary Two checks the door for any people who may have arrived late.

**We will now have the tag share part of our meeting.
This means that the first volunteer picks the second speaker
from among the people who raise their hands.
And the second speaker then picks the third speaker,
And so on, until our time is up.**

**For the tag share, we ask that you limit your shares to _____ minutes
or less, so that as many people as possible can have an opportunity to speak.
The timer will sound after _____ minutes.
You will then have _____ in order to wrap-up your share.**

1 Co-Secretary One —

**There is no crosstalk allowed during the tag share portion of our meeting.
Crosstalk is defined as referring to another person in the group in anyway
or commenting on another person's share.**

If you want to respond directly to a speaker,

please do so in a respectful manner after the meeting is over.

2 Co-Secretary Two —

If Rotation A **Today's meeting has an open agenda.**

This means that our tag shares may relate to any aspect of our childhood abuse histories, the Stages and Steps, or any of the issues or challenges we are confronting in our recovery.

If Rotation B **In today's meeting we are concentrating on Step ____.**

Simply read the step itself. The selection from the Survivor to Thrive manual pertaining to this step has already been read.

We encourage everyone to focus their shares on this Step today. But if you need to share something else that is okay as well.

If Rotation C **Since today's meeting is topic oriented, we encourage everyone to focus their shares on today's topic. But if you need to share something else that is okay as well.**

Today's topic is . . .

*Briefly and concretely state the topic.
A passage has previously been read by a volunteer concerning today's topic.*

1 Co-Secretary One —

Before starting our tag shares, let us pause for a moment, to gather our thoughts and feelings concerning what we want to share.

Pause for 30 seconds and then continue.

Do we have a volunteer to start the tag sharing?

Co-Secretary One selects a volunteer from among those who raise their hands to start the tag shares. When the time has concluded for sharing, Co-Secretary Two continues. . .

2 Co-Secretary Two —

Thank you for your shares. Before we conclude our meeting, we want to give anyone who wishes to do so, an opportunity to make a brief comment, of about 20 seconds or less, on how they are feeling as we prepare to close our meeting.

I will begin and we will proceed in a round robin fashion. If you do not wish to speak, just say “pass.”

(Co-Secretary Two begins with h/her closing comment and then gestures to the next person.)

2 Co-Secretary Two continues —

Thank you. That is all the time we have for now. We will now pass around the Telephone Support list again.

We are also going to pass the basket for contributions.

Rotation A **Next week will be an open agenda meeting.**

Rotation B **Next week we will concentrate on Step _____. (Read the Step.) We recommend that you review Step _____ in your *Survivor to Thrive* manual in order to better prepare for our next meeting. Doing some of the exercises will also help in preparing for next week's meeting.**

Rotation C **Next week will be a topic oriented meeting. Our topic for next week will be _____.**

(Briefly state next week's topic. Some meetings find it helpful

to distribute the topic description so participants can better prepare. If the topic is in the current TMC Bulletin remind members about this.

In general anything you can say to encourage people to prepare for next week will be helpful for individuals and the meeting.)

2 Co-Secretary Two continues —

Who would like to be our 15-minute presenter next week?

(Wait quietly, encouragingly looking around the room for someone to raise their hand.)

Are there any other announcements relating to ASCA?

1 & 2 Co-Secretary One & Two — Moment of On-Going Education

(If a subject of on-going education has not yet been discussed today, this is the time to do so. Co-Secretaries will spend a few moments reviewing some aspect of the meeting to refresh everyone's understanding.)

1 Co-Secretary One continues —

It is our tradition to recite our Closing Statement together.

A copy of the Closing Statement is located on the last page of your handout.

(Pause for a moment and then begin.)

**We have come together to face our past, united in survival,
determined to rebuild our lives, by healing the pain, and transforming our
shame.**

**We will find comfort in our safe places wherever they may be.
Feelings can be felt, memories can be recalled and sensations can be soothed.**

**We close our meeting now with renewed faith in our power,
armed with self-knowledge, fed by our strength drawn from survival,**

empowered by the challenge of change, and graced with a sense of hope for what our future can be.

1 Co-Secretary One —

Please join us again next week. Thank you for your participation and support.

Remember that you may be feeling very tender and vulnerable after a meeting like this. So, be very gentle in all your interactions...especially with yourself.
