

MONTEREY BAY ACA INTERGROUP MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, July 25, 2020 2:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Intergroup Representatives

Group#	Intergroup Member Meeting	IGR Name	Present	Proxy	Votes
CA1277	SUN 3:30 pm PAMF "Adult Loving Parent"				0
CA1264	MON 9:30 am Scotts Valley "ACA Scotts Valley"	Jeannie	X		1
CA1337	MON 11:00 am "Quiet Fellowship" <i>meeting on hiatus</i>	Laura	X		0
CA1371	MON 5:30 pm Scotts Valley "Stepping up in ACA"	Beverle	X		1
CA1308	MON 7:00 pm Quaker Meeting House "Authentic Men"				0
CA682	MON 7:30 pm Palo Alto "Monday Night Book Study"	Rachel	X		1
CA1233	TUE 12:30 pm Red Church "Inner Loving Parent – Inner Child"				0
CA1258	TUE 7:00 pm Boulder Creek "Healing the Past"				0
CA1241	WED 6:00 pm Salinas "Freedom from the Past"	Mark	X		1
CA1373	WED 7:00 pm "ACA@UCSC"	Ursula	X		1
CA477	WED 7:30 pm Palo Alto "Wed. Night Book Study"				0
CA1169	WED 9:30 am Live Oak "Serenity Seekers"	Darren	X		1
CA1170	THU 5:30 pm Quaker Mtg House "Women in Recovery"				0
CA971	THU 7:00 pm Red Church "Serenity Seekers"				0
CA1313	FRI 7:15 pm Barn Studio "Friday Night ACA"				0
CA1075	FRI 7:30 pm Los Gatos "Friday Freedom"				0
CA1276	SAT 9:00 am Barn Studio "Heart Circle"	Sue	X		1
CA1354	SAT 10:10 am "Saturday Serenity" San Jose				0
CA1015	SAT 4:00 pm "Circle of Hope" Palo Alto	Jean S	X		0

Attendees: Officers, Committees and Visitors

Title	Name	Present	Proxy	Votes	Visitor's Name
Chair	Jean S	X		1	Mark M
Vice-Chair	Laura	X		1	Ashley (San Jose)
Secretary	Renée	X		1	Cate L
Treasurer	Emily	X		1	Kyhiera
WSO Rep				0	
Committee	Chair	Present	Proxy		
Website / Zoom	Chris				
Literature	(vacant)				
H&I	(vacant)				
Boundaries Workshop	Jean S	X			
Relationships Workshop	Jean S	X			
Inner Child Workshop	(vacant)				
Potluck Speaker Meetings	(vacant)				
Outreach	Jeannie	X			
Retreat	(vacant)				

Opening: Jean S opened the Zoom meeting at 2:05 pm with the ACA Serenity Prayer and members read the Mission Statement, Commitment to Service, the 7th Tradition, the 7th Concept, and Behavior Goals for ACA Business Meetings. A quorum was established, see attendance above. (IGR's, proxies and officers vote; visitors and committee chairs do not. One vote per person even if filling multiple roles.) 11 voting members were present, meeting our one-less-than-2/3 quorum requirement of 8. Laura counted 11 and two others in the meeting counted 12. The last count showed 11 and the meeting continued.

Minutes:

Motion: (Jeannie/Rachel): Approve minutes of 6/27/20 meeting with one correction (WSO registration number for the Monday 11:00 "Quiet Fellowship" meeting is CA1337, not CA1377). (11-0-0), (Approve-Reject-Abstain)

7th Tradition: Jean announced how to contribute to Intergroup via Venmo @Emily-Feucht.

REPORTS

Chairperson –Jean S reported that WSO has announced the release of the video recordings from the AWC held in April. The recordings can be downloaded for free from <https://shop.adultchildren.org/collections/audio>. Renée clarified that these are audio recordings. Jean thanked Renée.

Jean S reported that the weekly speaker meeting on Thursday nights is looking for 3 fellow travelers to co-manage the audio recordings from that meeting. Contact Virginia at 720-456-9489 for more information.

Jean S has been corresponding and meeting with Brianna who would like an ACA meeting brought into an outpatient addiction center in Los Gatos. Since the Intergroup has no one serving as the H&I Chair, Jean reached out and contacted the individual about the request. Jeannie volunteered to assist in contacting the Friday night Los Gatos meeting to see if they might arrange to fulfill or assist in this H&I request. Jean said she will email Jeannie and Brianna with an introduction. Jeannie will bring an update to next month's meeting. Anyone else who would like to work on this is welcome.

Jean S requested that her next agenda topic be quoted verbatim:

"The next topic for me is a very difficult one and since our last meeting I've been working with Higher Power and my ACA program on all levels on how to address this issue that has come up. I have been honored to meet with other ACA Intergroup Chairs within the US asking to hear from their strength, experience and hope in addressing the issue. So here is the issue: our Intergroup has a personality that is driving away group members. After last month's meeting we had an IG group rep resign stating very specific reasons pointing to this. I have spoken to other fellow travelers in the last six months who have had similar experiences who we have lost. In general, while we all attend this meeting knowing we each bring our own responsibility to voice when we feel we are not treated respectfully, we are not all in the same place recovery wise and able to vocalize if this is happening to us.

I know I have spoken up when I felt this, but last meeting I failed to speak up when it happened to somebody else... and for that I apologize. It is not enough to think someone else should speak up as it is happening to me or others, or another, then others fear to speak up for themselves or speak up for another.

In the last 6 months we have lost 5 people - Intergroup Reps and some of those Reps held Committee Chair positions.

So I open the floor to discussion. I'm going to ask that we be respectful but it's a hard discussion to have. Every inch of my ACA inner children scream not to do it. Some of the thoughts that I gathered over the last month from the other Intergroup reps were to on one hand reach out and talk to the person one-on one, the other was to bring it up to the meeting. Another idea and thing that another group had brought to their group when they had a similar situation was they brought in somebody from the WSO level to monitor their meeting for several months and then ask for kind of like a consultation type thing where they brought ideas back to the meeting and they took some and didn't take all. So that's what I wanted to bring up, so if anyone would like to unmute and bring anything towards the discussion, I welcome that now."

At this point in the meeting, Darren questioned whether this topic should be treated under New Business and Jean S answered that she had made the decision to make it part of her Chair Report.

(Person speaking will be denoted with ***Bold Italics.***)

Rachel asked who the five people are that resigned and who this is directed at.

Jean S answered that last month Paul resigned due to feeling shamed in the Intergroup meeting. In the past month, one person has resigned - Evie (Retreat Committee Co-Chair). In the past year we have lost James, Tamara, and in previous years we have lost Pat and someone else whom she could not recall. She said some but not all these people had resigned due to this person's behavior.

Rachel said that she has been triggered in these meetings but it's not just one person. She asked that the individual be named and Cate echoed that request.

Jeannie said there were two issues: (1) last meeting a person felt shamed and he left because of one particular person, and (2) the other four resignations we don't know what happened. Jeannie thinks one issue should be removed because this one person is being shamed for all five resignations.

Jean S reported having had conversations with three of the other people and it is of the same nature that Paul mentioned. She said it might have been bad that she had not brought it up to be resolved, but it is a repeat issue.

Darren asked if the person is aware that this concern is being brought up at this meeting.

Jean S said she does not know the best way to handle the situation and it's one of the hardest things she's ever had to do.

Laura said she has often felt unsafe in this meeting and that she had been a perpetrator in the past. She thinks it is important to be able to speak up when she sees others being shamed, corrected or cross-talked and doing so is important to the health and safety of the Intergroup. She does not want to shame anyone but we are driving people away. Laura reported that four individuals she spoke with had told her that one individual was responsible for them not coming back to Intergroup and she said it was painful to hear. She has wanted to leave Intergroup many times as it does not feel safe. She does not feel safe at meetings or workshops when this person is present. Laura thought it was important to hold this person accountable. She was grateful Jean S brought up the subject and she thought it was more important than an agenda item.

Sue said she had been very close to quitting Intergroup and doesn't want to be here because there is one person in the meeting who makes her nervous. She doesn't like feeling like she doesn't want to attend the remainder of the year's meetings. She said she felt shamed, yelled at, and belittled during her very first Intergroup meeting. Sue only shows up because she loves her Saturday group and wants to represent them here. She said it feels good to tell the truth in the safety of this meeting.

Rachel said this person is Renée. She shared how Renee was her sponsor and Renee has taught her a lot about tough character that she was fearful of. She has had felt unsafe around Renée and has had to talk herself through stuff and got to confront things. She has felt nervous because Renee is being put on the spot and Rachel wants to take care of Renee. She has felt unsafe with Renee and with other people at Intergroup. Rachel admits being unsafe for others too.

Jean S reiterated she needed to bring this up but did not have a resolution and waited a year to bring it up. Some of her ideas were to table the discussion or take the subject to our Higher Power. She reminded the group that we have adopted some very effective Behavior Goals for this meeting.

Jeannie stated she is here to learn to let go of dysfunctional tools learned in childhood and today she chooses to recover. If everything is tempered with principles over personalities, we will get farther faster.

Cate said she has felt unsafe at Intergroup and she thinks the Laundry List Traits are at play during these business meetings. She said Renée is the polar opposite of herself and Renée has taught her to stand in her strength. She said Renée hurts her because Renée does not consider Cate's feelings. The people who have left Intergroup, that is a part of their journey. She was able to speak to Renée and is sorry others won't talk directly to Renée and tell them how they feel about her behavior. Cate said she was sure Renée is being triggered too and that Jean S was brave to discuss this issue. Cate said she loves us all and needs us all and wants us to get through this.

Laura said it is her responsibility to defend and protect her recovery and she hoped that someone would stand up for her if she was being cross-talked or corrected or snarked at. Her skin crawls when she sees others perpetrate. She won't give perpetrators a free pass. She expects others to hold her accountable for stepping out of line or other bullshit behaviors and ask her to change. She said she will not rock in her chair and smile during meetings, waiting for people to figure their shit out. She said she wants to be held accountable for her behavior and she expects other people to be held accountable for their behavior. She heard that recovery is to work on relationships and our worse selves can show up in meetings. She asked to be called on it and to be held accountable, just as she will hold others accountable. Laura stated she does not care if somebody sponsors half the county and leads lots of workshops and holds positions of service if that person is driving people away and making a space unsafe, it is not okay. Laura said she is not giving anyone a pass. She would want others to hold her accountable as she will hold others accountable.

Darren said he has dealt with difficult personalities in the past by taking a group conscience. He said he didn't think the Intergroup meeting is the environment for this discussion but it's already happening. He said the issue is now in the open and he hoped that we can come up with a plan so everyone can feel safe. We have all been victims of treatment and wondered if there is support or help for Renée or a task force to help.

Rachel said she thinks that we don't have to keep beating down Renée and that the point has been made. Now is the time to be gentle and kind.

Sue shared she has been learning by watching Jean S and liked when Jean S spoke up and said, "I don't like the way you are speaking to me," and Renée apologized later. Sue thanked Jean S for modeling in-the-moment responses.

Beverle shared that this Intergroup is like a family and she enjoys the Intergroup meetings and had looked forward to coming to today's meeting. She feels a part of this community. She shared that when she shakes a finger at someone, three fingers are pointing back at herself. Beverle is happy to be a part of this community.

Ursula thanked Jean S for strength of leadership and everyone for a good recovery opportunity and she does not think this issue should be tabled as it needs to be talked about to find a resolution. It is important to be able to express oneself but switching roles and people ganging up on someone is not constructive and is alienating to everyone. She said we should support each other and wanted a resolution but she does not know what the next step should be.

Jean S thanked everyone for their comments and that she was open to a resolution or a motion and she doesn't know the next step.

Ursula said she thought it was important for Renée to have a voice in this.

Renée thanked everyone for sharing their honesty and experience but not much hope. She takes responsibility for her actions, feelings, and behavior. She made amends to the meeting for any shaming or adverse behavior and leaves any further action to the group conscience because she believes in it. She said she wanted to reflect that some people in this group have treated her poorly in today's meeting, and she will not name them, but let them sit in their shit and stew. She wished anyone who had felt mistreated would confront her personally and she realized some people were not yet able to do so. She agreed that's what recovery is for – to

gets the balls to stand up for oneself. Renée said she would not defend herself but she reminded everyone to remember what she has contributed to this group and to each one here personally.

Rachel said she is learning to confront individuals but that she was not able to do this in her family of origin. She said we need to nip this problem in the bud and to practice with individual confrontation and face our fears. If no one tells us what they have done to us, we will continue doing it. It's our personal responsibility to learn how to confront.

Darren said as Renée's dear friend, he will be there for Renée and for the group. He said Renée had made endless contributions to him, and that a character trait needs attention according to the group. He hopes we can be as supportive as we can be. He said talking in a family group like this is new and takes courage today. His heart was with the people who are hurt, but mostly with Renée and his prayers were with all of us.

Rachel said she loves Renée and that she is happy for what Renée has given her. She said this process will restore us. She put out the restoration and love and appreciation.

Laura said that 5 people in the last 6 months have left and more will leave if it continues. One can love a perpetrator but the behavior must change. We have all known people who talk the talk but do not walk the walk. If there is no change in behavior, it is not an amends. She is extremely upset that people have left ACA because they did not feel safe or stand up for themselves and their recovery is at risk. Today she felt upset and uncomfortable here and has wanted to walk away from Intergroup but she cannot watch people get bullied, criticized, corrected or shamed. Even if we don't agree, there is a love we share because we come from similar places. But love is not enough if behavior doesn't change.

Ursula said it would be a good idea to start to talk about solutions and living amends in Intergroup to make it a safer place to learn and grow. One option would be that WSO attend our meetings to monitor. She suggested journaling and reworking some Traits and she would like to hear any recommendations.

Cate volunteered to be a process person for any newcomers who need to process a trigger at an Intergroup meeting. Getting triggered has given her the biggest gifts of her life. Cate is available for anyone triggered in this meeting. In the Sunday night meeting, they are discussing what safety is for each person. They are polling everyone on safety guidelines. We are all leaders here in Intergroup and we all love ACA.

Jean S said she could send an email to everyone asking for their top 3 ideas on how to address safety. We already have Behavior Goals. We could come up with a new reading, but she is not sure what to do. We are here to support the meetings as Intergroup Reps and this issue affects ACA at all levels. But the buck stops here for her because she can only change herself. She could call a "time out" if she hears something said that was sharp because she doesn't want it to continue.

Sue stated she does not think it's time for a motion now and that it's not only newcomers that are affected. We have safety guidelines. Everyone could go away and reflect on our own behavior and come back to the next Intergroup meeting with a new consciousness about how our words and tones and actions affect others. And to speak up for ourselves and others. This self-reflection should result in being kinder and more compassionate and more loving to each other.

Mark M, a newcomer and visitor to the Intergroup, shared a reading from the Big Red Book, page 211 and another reading from the Daily Affirmations for Parents.

Jean S thanked Mark M and said she didn't know where to go next and was open to suggestions.

Rachel said she wanted to reflect like Sue suggested and come back.

Motion: (Sue/Ursula) We each leave this meeting and reflect on our behavior and how we treat one another and may we come back with a new understanding of how to interact in our meeting with compassion, kindness, with love, may we stand up for ourselves when need be and go on from there. (11-0-0)

Jean S thanked all for stepping up in giving service in this business meeting on steroids. She said this has not been easy. She stated her appreciation for everything Renée has brought to the table in starting the Intergroup and each meeting because it allows her to work on her program at the Intergroup meeting.

Due to time constraints, the rest of the agenda items were not covered.

The meeting closed at 3:32 pm with the Unity Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Renée H.
Recording Secretary 8/2/2020