

## Welcome to Our ASCA Step Work Meeting

Welcome to our ASCA Step Work Meeting! In this meeting, we will share with each other many resources, experiences, and ideas. **We encourage you to develop your own understanding of the step being discussed.** You do not need to be an expert on the 21 steps to participate in this Step Meeting. **None of us is an “authority” on the steps. Every participant’s opinion is equal and welcome!**

**Note:** In order to participate in this meeting, **you will need the *Survivor to Thrive Step Work Manual*.** You can (at no charge) download the manual from our ASCA website, at [www.ascasupport.org](http://www.ascasupport.org). You can also purchase a printed copy at an affordable price. Please ask one of the meeting facilitators.

### How the ASCA Step Meetings Flow

There are three stages in the ASCA program. Each stage consists of seven steps. We study each step in sequence for seven weeks. We then conduct two transitional meetings before moving on to the next stage.

#### STEP WORK STUDY MEETING

SEGMENT	TIME
1. Welcome	5 min.
2. Check-In	5 -10 min.
3. ASCA Stages & Steps	5 min.
4. Step Reading from Manual	5 min.
5. Individual Journaling, Art work, or other exercise [Quiet Time]	10 min.
Group Share [Breakout into two groups if more than 10 people]	
6. Round 1: Uninterrupted “Go-Around” Group Share	18-20 min.
7. Round 2: Tag Shares with Feedback	45 min.
8. Checkout	5 -10 min.
9. Encouragement to Use Buddy System Between Meetings	1 min.
10. Closing	5 min.
	<b>120 min.</b>

#### STEP WORK TRANSITIONAL MEETING

SEGMENT	TIME
1. Welcome	5 min.
2. Check-In	5 -10 min.
3. ASCA Steps for Prior Stage/Next Stage of Study	2 min.
4. Transition Reading from Manual (2 <sup>nd</sup> Transition Week only)	3 min.
5. [Quiet Time] Group Collage/Mural or Individual Journaling, Art work	15 - 20 min.
Group Share [Breakout into two groups if more than 10 people]	
6. Round 1: Uninterrupted “Go-Around” Group Share	18 - 20 min.
7. Round 2: Tag Shares with Feedback	45 min.
8. Checkout	5 -10 min.
9. Encouragement to Use Buddy System Between Meetings	1 min.
10. Closing	4 min.
	<b>120 min.</b>

### ASCA Step Work Meeting Ground Rules

Do's and Don'ts	<i>Please remember that we <b>all bear responsibility</b> to keep this step work meeting <b>helpful and safe.</b></i>
<b>Do:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Show respect for each other and for the group</li> <li>◆ Stick only to the requested feedback categories</li> <li>◆ Speak about your own feelings/experience and use “I” statements</li> <li>◆ Stay focused on the step and agenda</li> <li>◆ When in doubt, tone down your comments or ask for clarification from the Co-Facilitators</li> </ul>
<b>Don't:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Don't shout or use excessive profanity in the group</li> <li>◆ Don't use “should” statements</li> <li>◆ Don't criticize, belittle, attack, or “tease” anyone in the group</li> <li>◆ Don't try to psychoanalyze or “take another person's inventory”</li> <li>◆ Don't interrupt another speaker or have side conversations</li> </ul>

In addition to our **Ground Rules**, we ask that you observe the same guidelines as all ASCA meetings:

1. **Please arrive on time and remain until the conclusion of the meeting.** If you need to leave the room to get a drink of water or use the restroom, please do so during the “Quiet Time”. Latecomers will be asked to wait outside so that speakers who are sharing are not interrupted. There are three opportunities for entry: a) just prior to the group check-in, about 6 minutes into the meeting, b) just prior to the Step Manual reading, about 15 minutes into the meeting, and c) at the beginning of “Quiet Time”, about 20 minutes into the meeting. No one will be allowed in after this time.
2. **ASCA meetings are exclusively for adult survivors of physical, sexual, or emotional childhood abuse.**
3. **This is an anonymous meeting. Only first names are used.**
4. **What you hear today is told in confidence and should not be repeated outside this meeting.**
5. **We ask that no one attend our meeting under the influence of alcohol or drugs, unless it is a physician-prescribed medication.**
6. **ASCA meetings are not intended for survivors who are currently perpetrating abuse on others.** Talking about your own acts of present perpetrator type behavior is not permissible. Talking in detail about past perpetrator behavior is also not permissible.
7. **Language that is considered derogatory concerning race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or other minority status is unacceptable in our meeting.**
8. **By participating in this meeting, we all agree to abide by the spirit of ASCA, our guidelines and any interventions by the Co-Facilitators.**

### Categories of Feedback

<b>Remember:</b> feedback is <b>not</b> a mini-share. It is an opportunity to say something supportive directly to another person.	
<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
1. Supportive Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Mirroring the speaker by sharing your own experiences</li> <li>◆ Offering direct acknowledgement and encouragement</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Nurture</i> - I think you were courageous to do what you did.</li> <li>• <i>Affirm</i> - I agree with you. It takes a lot of hard work to transform our lives.</li> <li>• <i>Validate</i> - What you said made so much sense. I can really appreciate how you are feeling.</li> </ul>
2. Information and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Helpful hints</li> <li>◆ Resource information such as books, tapes, movies, or groups that you may have found helpful</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Hints</i> - I discovered a wonderful way to calm myself when I feel bad memories overwhelming me at work. I use a breathing technique called 4-box. It consists of...</li> <li>• <i>Resources</i> – I am reading a book called, _____, that's giving me so many insights on how to set better boundaries with my family and friends. I've tried some of the suggestions and they worked. I highly recommend it!</li> </ul>

## ASCA Stages and Steps

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

## Using the "Buddy System": Some Suggested Guidelines

**Purpose and benefit:** You may find this tool helpful. Working with another person on a step, and checking in with each other between meetings, can help us reach our goals sooner than working alone. It's much more motivating to work on something difficult when you get support from someone who is working on similar issues.

Participants in this meeting are encouraged to **self-select** someone with whom to work on the steps between meetings. For example, you can ask a friend, who is also attending the step meetings, to act as your buddy for the entire 21-step cycle. You can also pair up with a different person each week. Remember that using the Buddy System is totally **voluntary**.

1. Talk with your "buddy" after the meeting to schedule a check-in day before the next Step meeting.
2. Set 1 - 2 goals for yourself that week (concerning the step work). You can work on the step for next week's meeting or any other step, on which you want to work, at this point of your life.
3. Check in with your buddy at the agreed upon time.
4. Discuss how your work on the steps is going, what questions or issues have come up, how you're addressing them, etc. Ask for feedback and let your buddy know what kind of feedback you want to

receive. We suggest you stick to the two categories of Supportive Comments and Information & Resources.

5. Listen to your buddy talk about his/her goal for the week. **If asked**, give feedback to your buddy on his/her questions.
6. Are you ready to set your next goal? If so, you can let your buddy know what that goal is. If not, you can discuss and ask him/her for ideas on this.

## Meeting Tips

- You may experience some strong feelings that may seem unexplainable or unexpected. See if you can allow yourself to experience these feelings here among other survivors.
- Should you feel safer leaving the room, please do so quietly. If you would like someone to accompany you, quietly ask one of the co-facilitators, or raise your hand so that we may ask for a volunteer to go with you.
- If you disagree with an intervention by a Co-Facilitator, please discuss the matter with the Co-Facilitator after the meeting. Please do not disrupt the meeting by trying to engage the Co-Facilitator about an intervention during the meeting. This creates an unsafe environment for everyone.

## Daily Survival Tips

Here are some suggestions about what to do when the memories, feelings, thoughts or sensations get to be more than you think you can handle. Start with the first tip and go down the list as needed until the crisis subsides.

1. Just let them happen, don't fight them. Experience what they are.
2. Write about them in your journal.
3. Talk to someone you trust.
4. Remember your strengths that helped you survive as a child.
5. Do exercise, yoga, meditation or a relaxation exercise.
6. Go to your safe place or call on your Higher Power.
7. Do art - drawing, painting or collage - to express your feelings, organize your memories and demonstrate your strength.
8. Call a recovery "buddy" or someone on the phone list.
9. Call your therapist.

## A Partial List of Feelings

We experience a variety of feelings in any given situation. Sometimes our feelings may even seem contradictory. Reviewing this list might help you associate a label or word with the feelings you are experiencing **right now**.

<b>A</b>	<i>Abandoned, abused, accepted, accused, admired, adventurous, affectionate, affirmed, afraid, aggressive, aggravated, agitated, alarmed, alienated, alive, alone, ambivalent, angry, annoyed, antagonistic, anticipated, anxious, apathetic, appreciated, apprehensive, approved, arrogant, ashamed, assertive, attacked, attractive, awed, awkward,</i>
<b>B</b>	<i>Balanced, beaten, belligerent, betrayed, bewildered, bitter, blamed, bored, bothered, bugged, burned up</i>
<b>C</b>	<i>Capable, cared for, castrated, caustic, chagrined, challenged, cheated, closed, comfortable, comforted, compassionate, competent, complacent, compromised, concerned, confident, confused, congruent, connected, consumed, contaminated, controlled, out of control, creative, cross, cruel, crushed, curious,</i>
<b>D</b>	<i>Dead, deceived, defeated, defensive, defiant, degraded, dejected, delighted, deserving, desired, desperate, destroyed, devastated, dirty, disappointed, discontented, disgusted, disillusioned, disjointed, dismayed, distant, distorted, distracted, distressed, disturbed, dominated, domineering, drained, dread, drowning, drugged, dumb, dying,</i>
<b>E</b>	<i>Eager, edgy, egotistic, elated, embarrassed, embraced, empty, endangered, enraged, enthused, envious, evasive, exasperated, exhausted, exhilarated, exploited, explosive, exposed,</i>
<b>F</b>	<i>Failed, failure, fat, fatigued, fearful, fighting mad, floundering, fooled, forgiven, forgotten, fouled, free, friendless, friendly, frightened, frustrated, furious,</i>
<b>G</b>	<i>Galled, generous, genuine, gifted, gracious, grateful, gratified, greedy, grumpy, guilty,</i>
<b>H</b>	<i>Hate, hated, hatred, healed, heavy, helpless, hopeful, hopeless, hostile, hurt, hyperactive, hypocritical,</i>
<b>I</b>	<i>Ignored, immobilized, impatient, impotent, inadequate, indifferent, incompetent, inconsistent, in control, indecisive, independent, indignant, inferior, infuriated, inhibited, injured, insecure, irked, irritated, isolated, intense, integrated, intimate, intimidated, irrational, irritable,</i>
<b>J</b>	<i>Jealous, joyful, judged, judgmental, liberated, light, limited, lonely, like a loser, lost, lovable, loved, loyal,</i>
<b>M</b>	<i>Mad, manipulated, marked, masked, masochistic, melancholic, miffed, misinformed, misunderstood,</i>
<b>N</b>	<i>Naked, needy, neglected, noxious,</i>
<b>O</b>	<i>Obligated, offended, optimistic, outraged, overlooked, oversized, oversexed, overwhelmed,</i>
<b>P</b>	<i>Pain, panic, paranoid, passionate, peaceful, persecuted, perturbed, pessimistic, phony, pissed-off, playful, pleased, pleased, possessed, possessive, powerful, powerless, precious, preoccupied, pressured, private, protective, proud, provoked, punished, purposeful, put down, put out, puzzled,</i>
<b>R</b>	<i>Rageful, rambunctious, reassured, rejected, resentful, responsible, responsive, restrained, resurrected, revengeful, reverence, rewarded, rigid,</i>
<b>S</b>	<i>Sacred, sad, sadistic, scapegoated, scared, secretive, secure, seductive, seething, selfish, sensual, shaky, shamed, shocked, shy, sick, sincere, sinful, smothered, soiled, sorrowful, spontaneous, spiteful, stressed, strong, stubborn, stupid, subservient, superior, supported, suspicious, sympathetic,</i>
<b>T</b>	<i>Teed off, tender, terrified, threatened, ticked off, tired, tolerant, tolerated, traumatized, tranquil, triumphant, trusted, trusting, turned off,</i>
<b>U</b>	<i>Ugly, unable, unappreciated, unbalanced, uncertain, understood, unfulfilled, unhappy, unique, unloved, unprepared, upset, unresponsive, unlikable, uptight, used, useful, useless,</i>
<b>V</b>	<i>Vain, valuable, vengeful, vicious, vindicated, vindictive, violent, vulnerable,</i>
<b>W</b>	<i>Warm, weak, weary, whole, withdrawn, wonderful, worn out, worthless, worthy</i>
<b>Y</b>	<i>Youthful, yearning</i>
<b>Z</b>	<i>Zany, zealous</i>

## ASCA Closing Statement

**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.

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