

HAND IN HAND

FALL / AUTUMN ISSUE 2016



OUR WEBSITE : www.recovering-couples.org
TO EMAIL RCA : wso-rca@recovering-couples.org

In this issue:

Page 1	Contents list New RCA Board members 2016 Convention feedback
Page 2	<i>2016 Convention cont.</i>
Page 3	<i>2016 Convention cont.</i> UK camping weekend RCA announcements
Page 4	7 th tradition RCA needs you
Page 5	Tools of recovery
Page 6 & 7	Readers submissions

The RCA Board (including changes from the AGM):

Chair	Jim IRW Linda
Vice-Chair	Kate IRW Dan
Treasurer	David IRW Elizabeth
Secretary	Dick IRW Vicki

Other Board members:

Karl IRW Pat
Jade IRW Gladys
Annette IRW Widar
Gopal IRW Wendy
Robert IRW Sandy

(NB. There will be an article in the next issue giving more information on changes in the Board and other service positions)



'Healing together as a couple' – The RCA Convention 2016 in Atlanta

The annual RCA convention took place in August. Here are some points that one couple took back to their home group:

- **The idea of healthy touch** – what this is and how a couple can go about it.
- **Play and have fun** – how the idea of playing and having fun is deeply rooted in family of origin issues and that there is a lot for us to learn about our coupleship by looking at this issue.
- **Vulnerability** – the idea that connections are made through vulnerability. Not a new idea but to see such vulnerability on 'display' was inspiring and a good reminder that what we put in, we get back in spades!

(Convention continued...)

- **Step zero** – how we came in to RCA to begin with and what our issues were then – marking progress.
- **Agree on the definitions of things** – we can both think we're talking about the same thing, for example healthy touch but if our definitions of this topic are different then having good communication around the issue is going to be a problem.
- **Intimacy backlash** – this was a huge realisation for us. We suffer from this quite regularly but had never heard it discussed before in such depth and understanding. The idea that we are moving forward but, as people with a fear of intimacy, when we experience intimacy we then want to sabotage it in myriad ways, all of which cause pain in the coupleship. It was a great relief to know this is quite common and to keep moving forward in the hope that one day maybe we won't do that anymore.
- **Some notable quotes that touched our coupleship:**
 - I forgive me, I forgive everyone. I love me, I love everyone.
 - Miracles happen
 - We are perfect in this moment and this moment is perfect
 - What can I live with today?

We would like to thank the RCA committee who worked so hard to make us all feel welcome and at home. Thank you to those who did service at the convention and to those friends both new and old who we were so privileged to see and hear.

Reflections on the conference

Attending the Atlanta annual RCA conference felt like coming home. Being with others who share our experience and hope for our coupleship allows us to be real and learn new tools to grow in intimacy as a couple. We can be honest in this group and still be accepted. It is such a gift. We look forward to the next annual convention in Minneapolis in 2017.

Last Saturday we also attended the third annual 'Growing together' one-day conference which is co-ordinated by 4 groups in Virginia and 2 in Maryland. One day together can provide a LOT of growth and putting on a one-day event is much easier and less expensive than a three-day conference!

Reflections in Atlanta, August 12-14

My wife and I attended the RCA convention in Atlanta, GA August 12-14, 2016. We both experienced lots of love from so many couples there. We also attended part of the business meeting and were very uplifted by the sense of dedication and service that everyone gave to RCA and couples like us.

We certainly experienced tremendous growth by attending the workshops and listening to the speakers and sharing. We would like to share about two particular workshops. The first one is healthy touch. Here I learnt to touch my partner's foot with gentleness and by looking into her eyes. The bonding and the connection this gave caused a flood of joy-pain with a depth of emotion from me and a free flow of tears from my partner. This was truly a spiritual experience.

(Reflections in Atlanta cont.)

The other workshop was music with drums with the words “I am enough“. For people like us without appropriate levels of self- esteem and fear of judgment this soothed the wounded inner child within, as we experienced a unique flood of serenity and connection with everyone in that room.

The convention culminated with lighting of the twelve candles the glow from which symbolized the collective wisdom, experience, strength and hope from all the messages we heard that weekend. The organizers did a spectacular job and it was truly a memorable and spectacular weekend. We ended by taking in the historic sites of Atlanta and boarded our flight back home with a sense of rejuvenation and renewal and we understood how recovery happens with willingness to accept guidance of our Higher Power through our RCA family

Guildford goes camping!

During the last weekend of August, 35 RCA members and their children from the group in Guildford (UK) went camping. Fun was had by all – even during the pouring rain on Saturday night! There were copious toasted marshmallows eaten by the fire, sing-alongs and even jumping off a bridge into the Thames to swim in the cold water. It was a wonderful fellowship weekend and rejuvenated all our desires to nurture the RCA meeting and give it the love and attention it needs.



We talked about how easy it is to go through the motions in a meeting and before we know it, the meeting has lost its sparkle. Our camping weekend cleared the cobwebs and brought new life to all of us! Please enjoy the picture of our motley, delightful crew (all have given permission for their photo to be shown):

RCA Announcements

UK retreat

21st January 2017 at the Ladywell retreat and spirituality centre, Godalming:

<http://www.ladywellretreat.org.uk/home> all RCA couples welcome!

Format will be sharing, lunch and a workshop, cost is £54 per couple to include lunch and tea / coffee, pay on the day. To book, please email mbrittain2011@gmail.com (Mark IRW Janice)

Lighthouse retreat, California

24th-26th March 2017 in Pacific Grove, California. \$650 per couple (\$325 at time of registration and remainder due by Jan 15th). For further info please email

sharoni701@yahoo.com (Sharon IRW Art)



Meeting	Amount
A vision for two	118.00
Anaheim Friday night	100.00
Birmingham MI	150.00
Boise Tuesday night	10.00
Capital District	100.00
D-Watonna MN	50.00
El Segundo Saturday night	243.00
Ever Hopeful	220.00
GSN990 25	100.00
La Canada Special Focus	200.00
Merced	40.00
Orlando	50.00
Palm Dessert	50.00
Portland Alamo	300.00
Post Oak	125.00
San Clarita Thursday night	50.00
Saturday night couples	134.00
Segundo	165.00
St Paul Tuesday night	70.00
Sunday Trailblazers	25.00
Together in Hope	200.00
Yucaipa	134.76
Individual donations	510.00
Total	3,144.76

thank you!

RCA needs YOU!



2017 Annual Business Meeting

Anyone is welcome to submit a proposal for consideration at the 2017 Annual Business Meeting by the deadline of Dec 1st. The form can be found here :

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc3USkWh1FAKhaBsBm8UpSlSgbqcrpaCplwz3jNi-LMVsyqrQ/viewform?c=0&w=1>

Website team

Why not offer some of your time? You do not need to be a rocket scientist! We need people who know Twitter, Facebook and other social media that can help us get the word out about RCA.

We are also looking for people who are willing to review the website layout and content.

Please drop us a line at

web-team@recovering-couples.org

Couple stories

The Spanish translation committee currently needs couple stories for the translated edition of the RCA big book. Please consider sharing your story. Please mark your submissions 'SPANISH BIGBOOK' and email them to

articles@recovering-couples.org

HandInHand

We want to make the Hand In Hand a relevant publication in which we can share our experience, strength and hope with the wider RCA community. We are always looking for RCA couples to help with writing articles. Please submit them to

articles@recovering-couples.org (by Jan 2017 for next edition)



Series on Tools of Recovery

No.5 Reading recovery literature

Just as daily reading of literature can help keep the focus on our individual recovery, reflecting on RCA literature can help us focus on our coupleship recovery.

If our partner is in an individual recovery program, reading their recovery literature can help us grow in understanding and compassion for the challenges that they face.

Reading recovery literature has been an ever-faithful tool in my personal recovery since the early days. Reading the steps as adapted for my primary fellowship brings me identification, hope, new insights and a feeling of 'coming home'. When I can't reach anyone on the phone in difficult moments, literature is an ever-present source of encouragement and sanity!

Daily reflections such as those in 'As Bill Sees It' bring me new perspectives on current challenges at the start of my day instead of the 'to do' list that otherwise tends to dominate my morning thoughts. Starting with something that speaks of recovery and serenity can help me get on the right path for the day.

RCA literature is guiding me through the process of acknowledging the truth of our coupleship, stepping through shame, letting go of past hurts or misdemeanours and finding a new, much healthier and more loving way of relating. The stories in the literature provide me with identification and ideas about where I'd like to be and how I might get there. Reading the daily reflections in the basic text of RCA challenges me to see new ways for our coupleship to grow.

My partner and I share one fellowship in common outside RCA but we also differ in another, so I have read several of the texts relating to their different fellowship. This gave me a greater understanding of the challenges they face and how I may (knowingly or unknowingly) contribute to those patterns. I can then use that understanding either to take their inventory in that fellowship (not recommended!) or to help me support and grow with them (highly recommended).

Reader's Submissions (Many thanks!)



Seasons

Life, like nature, unfolds in seasons. Springtime mirrors childhood – full of new beginnings and fresh hope, a time of innocence and discovery. Summer, like our teen years, simmers with white-hot passion and the illusion of invincibility. Autumn speaks of maturity with its rich kaleidoscope of brilliant colours and settled calm. Finally, winter sneaks up and covers the ground with a blanket of white, just as age brings a covering of settled rest and quiet contemplation.

HP said No

I asked HP to take away my pride.

HP said “No”.

“It is not for me to take away but for you to give it up”.

I asked HP to make my handicapped child whole.

HP said “No”.

“His spirit is whole, his body is only temporary”.

I asked HP to grant me patience.

HP said “No”.

“Patience is a by-product of tribulations. It isn't granted, it's learned”.

I asked HP to give me happiness.

HP said “No”.

“I give you blessings, happiness is up to you”.

I asked HP to spare me pain.

HP said “No”.

“Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me”.

I asked HP for all things that I might enjoy life.

HP said “No”.

“I will give you life so that you may enjoy all things”.

This day is yours, don't throw it away.

To the world, you might just be one person but to one person you might be the world.

By Claudia Minden Weisz

Trial and error

Keeping an open mind is the most important step when learning to listen to divine guidance.

Anyone who has asked for divine guidance knows that it can be challenging to trust when it comes. This is because divine guidance comes in many forms and it is sometimes hard to locate it. We aren't sure if we are meant to trust our thoughts, our feelings, our dreams, or our intuitions to be the carriers of divine wisdom. We are not sure if advice from a friend is the form in which the guidance has come into the world, or if our own opinion is the source of wisdom we need to take seriously. The ability to sort all this out comes with trial and error, and the best way to learn to recognize divine guidance is to engage in the process of asking and receiving.

Sometimes when we ask for guidance, we already have a sense of what we want to hear. At such times, receiving guidance can be difficult, because we don't want to hear anything that appears to be in opposition to our desire. Therefore, one of the most important qualities we need to cultivate if we are to receive guidance is an open mind. It helps to acknowledge what we want, and then to symbolically set it aside, making room for whatever wisdom comes through to us.

Cultivating an active relationship with the divine is the essential ingredient to being able to receive and trust guidance when it comes our way. We can make a daily practice of this by using a set of runes, a deck of cards, or a pendulum. We can also use our journals, developing a relationship with the divine through the written word. As we request and receive guidance, we might take notes on our experiences. Over time, we will begin to recognize when we were able to hear correctly and when we were not. In this way, we will gradually attune ourselves to our particular relationship with the divine. Begin to trust the guidance you are receiving and soon you will find it flowing with ease.