



Hand in Hand

Winter Issue 2014

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Board Members

Chair: Liz irw Mike
Vice-Chair: Michael irw Rachel
Treasurer: David irw Dixie
Secretary: Al irw Sandra
Buddy irw Jennifer
Tim irw Tracy

From your Chair - Liz irw Mike (excerpts from the E-news)

As we all traditionally look back at the previous year in review, your RCA Board is doing that as well; and more! We have been quite busy reviewing many, many areas of the fellowship in regards to function, quality, goals, the mission, growing the fellowship, finances, etc. We recently had a very tedious and productive work session focused on many areas of the structure of the RCA fellowship.

There have been many impressive things accomplished over the years by our dedicated trustees, and our fellowship has been the recipient of "continuous improvement". We decided that our "legacy" as a board this year was to do some housekeeping and organization in those areas referenced above. We are truly grateful to those servants of the fellowship who have come before us, and part of our goal this year is to make the transitions easier for those that come after. We have high hopes for the future of the RCA fellowship. I sincerely trust we will do you all proud!

Budget we have formed a finance subcommittee tasked with the goals of creating a well understood budget, developing a new chart of accounts to more easily report our financial position, researching unfamiliar expenses or postings and presenting to the fellowship an accurate "financial dashboard". Stay tuned for more information on this very tedious process.

Website ... We have formed a subcommittee to review whether we should redesign & upgrade the site (new?) or just perform minor cosmetic changes and procedures on the existing. There is room for improvement as you can imagine with the speed of change in the tech world. The trustees believe some changes will help us to avoid future headaches and unnecessary expenses we are incurring today. The subcommittee will be making recommendations to the Board at our February meeting.

Daily Reader - We understand this still is a very important project to the fellowship. Our Vice Chair (Michael irw Rachel) will be heading up the subcommittee to get this in motion. Those wanting to be involved in this very important project need to contact Michael. Many willing hands will be needed to make light work of this. The Board is very excited about this prospect and want to create a

source of new revenue for the fellowship, in addition to a great tool for couple recovery. Stay tuned! We hope to have a sample ready at the Convention in London this August.

Convention Guidelines - the guidelines currently in place will continue to benefit from ongoing revisions and additions. We are currently looking at the possibility of having the annual Convention being more directly connected to the RCA WSO to allow for more support and consistency. We would like the Convention to be a very important opportunity each year for recovering couples around the world and a highly sought after piece of the couple recovery puzzle. We feel a greater connection to the WSO may help the broader fellowship become more aware and involved in the happenings of planning and executing a Convention. We will be forming a subcommittee to review and make recommendations to the Board as to what would be in the best interest of the fellowship.

Service Manual/Committees: Our Vice Chair is working diligently on all aspects of committees and their functions. We voted to remove the Guidelines for Service from the P&P Manual as most of these items are already covered there as well as the Traditions and now Concepts of Service. He is also working on a Service Flow Chart to help those that come after us.

Growing the Fellowship - headed up by Tim irw Tracy, is looking for input from the fellowship as to what they would like to see as far as Outreach opportunities.

Thank you for your patience as we (the new Board) are getting our footing this year. There are lots of things going on behind the scenes and we are hopeful they will all be positive changes for the fellowship. If you have any questions or comments that you would like the Board to consider or be aware of, please don't hesitate to email any Board member at rca-board@recovering-couples.org. Thank You for your commitment to RCA!



~Important note~



The deadline for submissions of motions to be considered at the next Annual Business Meeting is March 25. All motions need to be submitted to the Structure committee for consideration.

Would you like to serve on the Hand in Hand Committee? We are looking for people to help with writing articles, organizing and editing the Hand in Hand, or formatting the final draft. Please send us an email to

articles@recovering-couples.org.

Right Side of the Bed

What side of the bed did you get up on this morning?

Is it true that you get up on the same side every day?

Maybe you sleep in the same groove of your mattress, in the same position? Rising to put your feet on a little patch of floor, or into the slippers left the night before? Touching down with unconscious contact, and plodding the path through the bathroom door, the same steps taken, a thousand, thousand times or more?

It's okay, no sin in repetition, but then how mindless we become; no longer seeing choice beyond our rituals, or desiring another way, unaware of our movements, perhaps even enslaved.

It makes me wonder what it might be like to get up from the other side. And what it would take to inspire such a change. If I did, would I feel differently? More empowered, or thrown off center? It might be marvelously freeing.

Would it make a difference in my day to begin in such a mindful way?

Maybe it doesn't matter, and none of this means anything. But something is fluffing the mundane out of my pillow! I am remembering there are two ways and committed to choosing.

If I get up on the left side, instead of right, I give impetus to the motive to really live my life, awake! To be alive to fresh possibilities, to the power of decision, and to the longing to undo the rote habits of a body that would slosh and slumber through.

2014 will be better when we awaken from yester-

~All Group Contact Couples (GCC's) and members of RCA - Please make sure you are registered on the RCA website. You will need your log-in information to access certain parts of the website, as well as where to sign up for newsletters, info., etc. (Hand-in-Hand, E-news)

~Please don't forget to share all this important information with your groups.

SILENT AUCTION QUILT ALERT !!

This is an urgent call for the people who bid on two particular items in the Silent Auction at the 2013 Convention in Hyannis. They were: a wedding ring quilt, and a crocheted bed cover.

No one kept a record of who made the winning bids. If you were one of these people would you please contact me? If you know who these people were, would you please contact them or me?

The items are ready for shipping, and I would be most grateful for any information.

Elise W. (510) 235-6111

Our Virtual Office Coordinator (VOC) has now established a "Virtual Office" where all of our historical documents and information will be stored. Any information for Board meetings, agendas, call in information, etc. will be stored there.

See the website: [You need to be registered to access the Virtual Office.](#)

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding the design/function of the website, please forward to web-team@recovering-couples.org



RCA Growing the Fellowship

Why Should Each Couple Contribute to Growing the RCA Fellowship?

To build awareness in their local community of what RCA is, and how RCA can be used as a viable couple's recovery tool.

To increase the number of new groups in the U.S., Canada and other countries. Our goal is that couples will find help and hope in every community, whether at home or when traveling.

To grow and develop in our own recovery. Step Twelve asks us to carry the RCA message of hope to other couples who are still suffering.

Suggested Activities for Growing the RCA Fellowship:

Reach out to the local professional community, such as addiction and marriage therapists/counselors.

Reach out to the local clergy.

Provide literature/exhibits/speakers at wellness/health fairs and appropriate community events.

Plan a flyer/poster campaign. Flyers/Posters can be placed in public places, such as 12-step clubs and recovery homes, churches and synagogues, hospitals and medical buildings, community centers and libraries (where permitted).

Stamp literature with the RCA website address and/or a local contact phone number and/or meeting time and place.

Check with tapers of speakers at recovery conventions and workshops about placing RCA CDs and literature at their table.

Where appropriate, mention that you and your partner participate in a 12-step couples' recovery program while sharing at your individual 12-step meeting.

Conduct a potluck dinner/panel discussion at a local 12-step club or church, and invite members of other 12-step programs.

Resources and Service Tools for Growing the RCA Fellowship:

The RCA Merchandise Committee has developed two different outreach packets that can be made available at your request:

Reaching out to professionals — 3rd edition Blue Book, letter to the professionals, the "Recovering Couples Anonymous Who Are We?" pamphlet, RCA website address and/or a local contact who is willing to answer questions. The International Institute for Trauma and Addiction Professionals (IITAP) website has an available directory of members on its website that local groups can use for contacts.

Reaching out to recovering people — 3rd edition Blue Book, pamphlet "Is RCA for you?" and other RCA pamphlets, information about your local meeting and/or a flyer that includes meeting information.

Email a letter to local professionals. A draft letter is available on the RCA website under the tab "For Professionals."

More ideas are available in the RCA pamphlet "Suggested Guidelines for Media Relations and Public Information," available through the RCA virtual office coordinator.

REMEMBER: Reaching out to your community need not be complicated or time consuming. Work with other couples. Consider an outreach service position in your local RCA group. We need never do anything alone in RCA!

Recovering Couples Anonymous

Healing Together as Couples
4th Annual Retreat
Steps 8 and 9

Recovering Our Peace of Mind

May 2–4, 2014

Starts 8 p.m. Friday

Roswell, Georgia

\$40 per couple if registered by Feb 14, \$50 if registered by April 1, and \$60 after April 1
Any registration received before May 1 includes free lunch on Saturday.

Saturday night there will be an Open Speaker Meeting. Saturday dinner is \$10 a person.
(On Friday night, there is also a dinner option at a local restaurant across from the hotel.)

Hotel 400

1500 Market Blvd., Roswell, GA 30076

770-992-7200

Rooms: \$72 a night including breakfast. Suites: \$92.

Mail retreat reservation to: RCA Norcross, PO Box 769332, Roswell, GA 30076

Make checks payable to **RCA Norcross**

Questions? Call Matt (404-849-2190) or Tami (404-849-2189), or email rcanorcross@yahoo.com

1st Name & 1st Initial of Last Name: _____

City & State: _____ Email: _____

1st Name & 1st Initial of Last Name: _____

City & State: _____ Email: _____

The Three-Minute Hug

When we first came to RCA, we were like two burn victims, only our wounds were invisible — yet they covered our entire bodies from the inside out. We both felt very distrusting of intimacy and vulnerability. Sometimes just touching could feel painful. We needed to find ways to feel safe and trusting of sharing our vulnerability and establishing intimacy with one another. Thanks to RCA, we took a specific action in beginning to practice safe ways to open up to each other and our coupleship. We still find it incredibly helpful, even after four years of being in RCA, in reconnecting when we are undergoing slips or in pain, or are just in need of a safe, nurturing connection.

One partner asks the other for a three-minute hug, and the other partner has to agree. This involves the couple finding a place to sit, or lie down, and a timer is used (watch, clock, anything with a timer). Set the timer, and the partner who agreed to give the three-minute hug holds the other partner until the timer goes off. This hugging period has safety boundaries: no talking, and no sexual touching. (A prayer before and after is optional.) You can also adjust the time to what feels comfortable and safe for you as a couple. :) It is suggested that the person who asks for the timed hug does not do any of the hugging during the agreed-upon time. The point is simply to be hugged by our partner. When the timer goes off, it is up to the other partner to ask for a return timed hug from their partner if they so desire. We encourage as many hugs as possible!!!! :)

Dwayne irw Mandy: Doing this three-minute hug was very uncomfortable to me, at first. I had to learn to be vulnerable and open, not only in giving Mandy the hug, but also learning to ask for one. Over time and with practice, it became easier, and we started to add time to the hug. Asking for it has really helped me to learn to be open and vulnerable, but also in being able to give to Mandy, and help her to feel safe.

Mandy irw Dwayne: When we were going through the utterly painful experiences of coming into recovery due to our addictions, I felt so unsafe, constantly. Through my own recovery and RCA, I began to learn about self-care, and nurturing. Although I acknowledged my need for hugging, it felt so unsafe for me. I needed safety boundaries around hugging because I didn't know what the expectations were, my partner's, or my own. Was it an opening for sexual touching? Was I supposed to pull away from the hug first? Did I leave it up to my partner? I had no idea how to end the hugging safely.

So Dwayne and I both started looking at ways to feel safely nurtured by hugs *without any expectations*. We decided we would try a timed hug, and came up with three minutes. These timed hugs turned out to be an amazing gift to our coupleship! When I asked for one, I knew I could just lie there, with my partner's arms around me, and not have to do anything but learn to rest in his nurturing gift. It was difficult at first, to be vulnerable enough to reach out for these hugs. There were times we'd have been through, or were going through, huge conflicts, but I was learning how to recognize my needs, and, thanks to recovery, take a risk and ask for a three-minute hug. I didn't even have to face my partner; oftentimes, I'd curl up in a ball like a little girl, and my partner would hold me from behind. I began to feel truly cared for, and to trust that my partner could be there for me.

Dwayne and Mandy: After years of practicing this tool for safe intimacy and nurturing, we are able to recognize that this tool is one of progress in action. We don't have to be perfect in order to practice nurturing our coupleship. But learning safety was key for us as a couple, as we learned to trust little by little. Perhaps there were days in which we had little or no trust throughout the day, but, in asking for and receiving the three-minute hug, we began stepping into trust in those moments.

In Recovery, Gratitude and Service,
Dwayne and Mandy



THIS IS LONDON CALLING...YOU!

Last summer we made our annual pilgrimage to visit family in England right after the RCA convention in Cape Cod. London and the English countryside were intoxicating (Caution: may be habit forming!). Seeing trees leafed out and flowers blooming added an extra layer of enjoyment for me, Elise, as we have previously visited for the winter holidays. We can't wait to return for the RCA International Convention in Guildford, near London in 2014, August 22, 23, and 24.

I (Elise) had hardly traveled at all when David and I became a couple. After I got over my initial awe and fear, I realized how very possible it is. It just takes some planning, and yes, some cash. To encourage first time travelers, particularly if you don't have much money to spend (like us), we want to share our experience, strength, and hope with you.

GETTING THERE – These days an economy class return ticket can cost \$1200. Fares get a little better the last week of August, but not much. If you use a travel agent, you have a professional to help if anything goes wrong with your booking. Don't fly in on Thursday or Friday morning for the convention. We plan on three to five days for jet lag recovery, and after such an expensive flight from California, we try to stay on in Europe as long as we can. Booking ahead more than one month is not so important, unless you have frequent flyer miles. Some cheaper fares fly into Gatwick rather than Heathrow, but both have good rail transport into central London. From Heathrow (LHR) it's cheapest to take the underground (tube) into town. You can purchase an Oyster travel card in LHR at the tube station there (ask for a tube map, too), which will save you lots of ticket hassle at stations, whilst getting you the best price into and around the city.

BEING THERE – London is expensive, but "Keep calm and carry on". Hotels out of the center can be cheaper, especially the chains (those away from the airport anyway). There are also lots of bargains in London. London transport is moderately priced, and most of the great museums, art galleries, parks, and gardens are FREE! You will have to pay for special exhibitions at the big museums and galleries, but major venues like the Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern, the Tate Britain, the Wallace Collection, and the vast collections at the British Museum and National Gallery are all free. Smaller museums may not be free but they tend to be inexpensive, and there is a museum to suit every quirky interest. There is a lot to see on the street, traditional street markets, walks along the river Thames, extensive parks, major sights, and the shops (Harrods, Selfridge, and the amazing Liberty near Oxford Circus) are all free for browsing. Just remember, whatever you buy you will have to carry it with you all the way home!

FOOD in London is expensive, even snacks can add up quickly (Coffee and hot chocolate at Starbucks or Pret a Manger seems to be about twice the US price). However, small supermarkets like Tesco, Sainsbury's Local, and Waitrose often sell coffee and a great variety of picnic items, salads, and prepared foods for dinner. Farmer's markets are also good for hot lunches. Carry a stash of tasty snacks with you so you don't get strung out while exploring. As in the rest of the UK, the water in London is safe to drink right out of the "tap", so refill your water bottles. Pubs love selling non-alcoholic beverages because they aren't taxed, and they often serve hot foods.

PEOPLE can be fascinating to watch as you visit different areas: London is a cosmopolitan city. Housing all over London is expensive, but some areas are just plain "stupid," as the locals say. Mayfair and much of Westminster is like that, but try Peckham Rye (Google images of Peckham Rye Market for a preview) for its Afro-Euro-Asian Caribbean culture. You will be among the few visitors ever to have ventured this far from the tour bus. London is made up of many interesting villages that got swallowed up during the 19th century. Try sedate Hampstead Heath with Freud's last home nearby, sleepy Dulwich with its baby-grand picture gallery, or Camden High Street for contemporary culture and music. When you get tired just pull out your Oyster Card and tube map and make a strategic withdrawal back to your hotel to regroup, ready for your next foray. After the work day calm settles over the city. How about an evening bus or train ride to Greenwich (with clipper ship Cutty Sark), and then a super-fast catamaran ride home along the Thames at night?

CONVENTION CONNECTIONS - To get to the RCA convention you can take the train to Guildford from London Waterloo station. Go to www.railsaver.co.uk/South_West_Trains.html for train details, but they run frequently, and this website indicates that you can use an Oyster Card to pay.

To get to Barnet Hill (the name of the actual venue of the RCA convention) from Guildford, go to sundialgroup.com and click on Surrey (the county in which Barnet Hill is located), and then click on guest information for directions. Sounds like a taxi from Guildford is the best bet.

There is an RCA meeting in Guildford on Sunday evenings at 7:30 pm at St Nicholas' Church, 15 minutes walk south from Guildford train station, on the corner of High Street and Bury Street. Call Thomas at 447733402825 if you get lost.

CALL TO ACTION! - For a tantalizing preview of almost everything that is happening in London during your visit, try Time Out, <http://www.timeout.com/london> This site lists and describes every kind of current event and ongoing attraction. How exciting!

Hope to see you there! Elise and David in recovery together

RCA Convention 2014



22nd - 24th August 2014

This is an update for the RCA 2014 convention.

The venue for this year's gathering will be at the elegant Queen Anne style Barnett Hill conference centre in Surrey, England. RCA have exclusive use of this tranquil setting which includes 26 acres of beautiful grounds. Situated in the relaxing rolling Surrey Hills just outside of Guildford and only 45 minutes from London via train.

We are looking forward to confirming the content of the conference which we hope to announce in the spring edition of Hand in Hand. Our ambition is to provide a unique experience for couples in RCA.

Registrations are continuing to grow at a fast pace with 54 couples already booked. This is great news at this stage, but it also presents a degree of urgency if you would like to attend. Please don't delay if you are thinking of coming, as space is limited.

WSO has agreed to pay for half of the day rate for couples attending, on behalf of their groups, the RCA Annual Business Meeting. This meeting is the only time all year that the Fellowship, through the participation of their chosen delegate couples, gets to explore and express the collective group conscience. This meeting is vital to the health of RCA and, bearing in mind this year's location, we would encourage couples to make plans to be able to attend.

The meeting, convention opening and featured workshops will be open to VIRTUAL attendance.

There are rooms also available for couples wishing to stay on the Wednesday and Sunday night before and after the conference.

For those who have booked, you will need to make sure that in addition to paying the conference registration fee (if needed), you have also booked your accommodations. Also, everyone attending needs to pay the day rate.

If you have any questions, please email the Conference Committee at rca2014london@recovering-couples.org.



Coupleship Recovery

English & European Style!!

RCA International Convention

London, England August 22-24 2014

Celebrate RCA's expansion and growth in Europe and beyond!



For 2014 enquiries and to receive
2014 updates write to
rca2014london@recovering-couples.org.

For London & England attractions,
travel tips, things to do, transport,
and more, you can go to
www.visitlondon.com and
www.visitbritain.com

**RCAers in the UK are inviting
couples from RCA Sweden,
RCA Netherlands, & RCA Germany
as well as RCA Canada,
RCA USA and elsewhere!!**



Battersea Park Children's Zoo

Shakespeare's Globe Theatre

London Bridge Experience

Thames River Boat Cruise

Benjamin Franklin House

Chunnel Train to Paris

Changing of the Guard

Beatrix Potter Gallery

Abbey Road Studios

Westminster Abbey

Ascot Racecourse

Strawberry Fields

Tower of London

Bath

Harrods

Hyde Park

London Eye

Stonehenge

Kew Gardens

Tate Museum

Hadrian's Wall

Cadbury World

Dickens' World

Windsor Castle

British Museum

Sherlock Holmes

A special note to all groups of our RCA. We have heard some conflicting rumors around the RCA block that groups are not feeling like we need to have their **7th Tradition contributions** due to the large sum of money in our bank account. Let us set the record straight. Although we voted at last year's ABM to move a large sum of money into a savings account, we did that based on inaccurate information regarding our finances/budget. Based on our current expenses, we are not in a great place. More to come on this...

~Please prayerfully consider as a group what your part of the RCA fellowship is. The RCA fellowship will not be able to continue it's crucial mission of serving those that still suffer without your help. This includes all groups and individuals. We have not made any irrational decisions at this point regarding expenditures to be going out in the future. We are really trying to get our finances in order first before we decide what is the best use of our funds, if there are any available at that time. We still believe GTF is going to need funds every year to service specials projects/goals to fulfill our mission. We still need your 7th Tradition contributions, as we always have. The Board appreciates all you and your groups do on behalf of the RCA fellowship. Keep them coming!

Greetings, Couples/Friends in recovery, from Montreal:

We have restarted our RCA meetings in Montreal at a new location on Saturday mornings.

In the past, we have welcomed out-of-towners to our small meetings. We love visitors!

Please note the following PSA information. If you are in the Montreal area, even if not on the first or third weekend, we could still greet and share!

In thanks to HP for RCA,

Recovering Couples Anonymous (RCA): a 12-step group for couples desiring to remain in a committed relationship.

rca.montreal@hotmail.com

Info. 514-691-0641

www.recovering-couples.org

RCA Meetings:

the first and third Saturdays, 10h00 (10:00 a.m.)

At the Chabad Lifeline (formerly Project Pride)
4615 Cote Ste. Catherine, Montreal, QC H3W 1M1

(beside the Jewish General Hospital,
Metro Cote Ste. Catherine)

**Seventh Tradition Contributions
RCA Groups and Individuals
October, November, December 2013**

Albuquerque, NM	\$100.00
Ashburn, VA	\$120.00
Bellevue, WA	\$68.00
Boise Tuesday Night	\$75.00
Cape Cod Convention	\$3,780.00
Chicago: Swedish Covenant Hospital	\$62.00
El Segundo, CA	\$141.00
Fort Worth, TX	\$300.00
Gaithersburg, MD	\$46.00
Individual / 7	\$1,390.00
Lakeshore (Grand Haven), MI	\$100.00
Merced, CA	\$10.00
Naples - Bonita Springs, FL	\$20.00
New Beginnings, Herndon, VA	\$47.70
Norcross, GA	\$107.00
Norwell, MA	\$50.00
Orlando, FL	\$100.00
Richmond, VA "Being In The Solution"	\$50.00
Riverhead/Manorville, NY	\$50.00
Santa Clarita, CA	\$25.00
St. Paul, MN	\$150.00
Tucson, AZ Tuesday Night	\$78.00
Walnut Creek, CA Friday Night	\$350.00
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$7,219.70</u>

Please remember to use your **group number**, which can be found on the website, when you place orders for literature.

This same number will help us keep track of 7th tradition contributions.

**The Hand in Hand is your newsletter!
To have an article included, please send it to
articles@recovering-couples.org**

The next article deadline is

March 15, 2014

June 15, 2013

September 15, 2013

December 15, 2013

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

2014 Convention is in LONDON, ENGLAND

2015 is in California

The Board is Accepting bids for 2016

**We are still looking for submissions for the
Daily Reader.**

This will be a daily Meditation book for RCA Couples.

**Please send your ideas to:
dailyreader@recovering-couples.org**

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