

## Introduction

Welcome to the Sunday Video Trailblazers meeting of Recovering Couples Anonymous. This meeting lasts for an hour and a half. This is an open meeting; both singles and couples are welcome. I am \_\_\_ in coupleship with \_\_\_, and we will be leading the meeting today.

You are asked to keep your video on, and we will conduct this like a face-to-face meeting. To have the full face-to-face experience, we recommend you use the Gallery View in the upper right-hand corner of your screen to see everyone at the same time. (Use can also use Ctrl F2) Please mute your line using the button on zoom, if you are not sharing.

Please treat this as a face to face meeting and please try to refrain from talking during the meeting. If you need to get up please do so between couple shares.

*[Leader: Only when there is a pending time change (spring and fall), read:*

*Trailblazer meetings start at 7 pm Copenhagen, Denmark time, except for a few weeks each year, as Europe and the US change to and from daylight savings time at different times. To determine the current time, please go to: [www.worldtimebuddy.com](http://www.worldtimebuddy.com) and compare your local time to 7 pm Copenhagen, Denmark time.]*

We hope you will find in this Fellowship the help and friendship we have been privileged to enjoy. Let's open the meeting with a moment of silence, followed by the Couples Serenity Prayer.

*Start Sharing Screen Use Desktop share and maximize your browser.*

## SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant us the serenity

to accept the things we cannot change,

courage to change the things we can,

and wisdom to know the difference.

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Would *[leaders select a member couple]* read: Page 50 in the basic text (4th edition)

## RCA Preamble

**Ours is a fellowship of recovering couples. We suffer from many different addictions and dysfunctions, and we share our experience, strength, and hope with each other that we may solve our common problems and help other recovering couples restore their relationships. The only requirement for membership is a desire to remain committed to each other and to develop new intimacy.**

**There are no dues or fees for membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. We are not allied with any organization. We do not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorse nor oppose any causes.**

**Although there is no organizational affiliation between Alcoholics Anonymous and our fellowship, we are based on the principles of AA. Our primary purpose is to stay committed in loving and intimate relationships and to help other couples achieve freedom from dysfunctional relationships.**

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Would [*leaders select a member couple*] read: Page 51 in the basic text (4th edition)

### **How It Works Part One**

**Rarely have we seen a couple fail who have thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing a manner of living which demands mutual and rigorous honesty.**

**There are those, too, who cannot or will not make a commitment to their partner. There are those who suffer from grave emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest. Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps.**

**At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas, and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.**

**Remember that we deal with addictions – cunning, baffling, powerful. We also deal with all those memories of past hurts, misbehavior, and vows violated. Without help our anger, hurt, and mistrust are too great for us. But there is one who has all power; that one is God. May you find God now.**

**Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked God's protection and care with complete abandon. Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery.**

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Would [*leaders select a member couple*] read: Page 52 in the basic text (4th edition)

### **The Twelve Steps of RCA**

- 1. We admitted we were powerless over our relationship – that our lives together had become unmanageable.**
- 2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to commitment and intimacy.**
- 3. We made a decision to turn our wills and our life together over to the care of God as we understood God.**
- 4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of our relationship together as a couple.**
- 5. We admitted to God, to each other, and to another couple the exact nature of our wrongs.**
- 6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character, communication, and caring.**
- 7. We humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.**
- 8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**
- 9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**
- 10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it to our partner and to others we had harmed.**
- 11. We sought through our common prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.**

12. **Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to other couples, and to practice these principles in all aspects of our lives, our relationship, and our families.**
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*Leaders read the tradition of the month:* Page 56 in the basic text (4th edition)

### **The Tradition of the Month**

1. **Our common welfare should come first; couple recovery depends upon RCA unity.**
  2. **For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving God as known in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.**
  3. **The only requirement for RCA membership is a desire to remain in a committed relationship.**
  4. **Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or RCA as a whole.**
  5. **Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry its message to recovering couples who still suffer.**
  6. **RCA ought never endorse, finance, or lend the RCA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.**
  7. **Every RCA group should be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.**
  8. **Recovering Couples Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.**
  9. **RCA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.**
  10. **Recovering Couples Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the RCA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.**
  11. **Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, and films and other media.**
  12. **Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.**
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*Would [leaders select a member couple] read:* Page 54 in the basic text (4th edition)

### **How It Works Part Two**

**Many of us exclaimed, “What an order! We can’t go through with it. Our love is lost, our vows forever violated, our communication destroyed, our families broken beyond repair.”**

**Do not be discouraged. No couple among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles.**

**We are not saints, our love is not perfect, our energy not unbounded, nor our relationships ideal. There is no such thing as the ultimately caring and nurturing partner or perfect intimacy. The point is that we are willing to grow together along spiritual lines.**

**The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection. In our spirituality we claim the goal of greater caring, communication, and intimacy.**

**Our understanding of our addictions, dysfunctions, and our personal histories before and after recovery make clear three pertinent ideas:**

1. **That our relationship had become unmanageable. That despite our best efforts we were headed for separation and/or divorce.**
  2. **That probably no human power could have restored us to commitment and intimacy.**
  3. **That God could and would if God were sought.**
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## **Introductions**

Now is the time we introduce ourselves by our first names. Please let us know where you are joining us from. If there are any newcomers to our meeting or RCA, please let us know, so that we can welcome you.

## **NEWCOMERS**

**Leaders: Please ask if there are any newcomers. If so, read the following text and send to NEWCOMERS ONLY in chat window.**

The love and respect we offer to newcomers is a reflection of the love and respect we are learning to offer ourselves. If your coupleship is new to RCA, we encourage you to contact the Welcome Couple via email at [welcomecouple@RCATrailblazers.org](mailto:welcomecouple@RCATrailblazers.org) to request a welcome letter that will give you information for requesting a newcomer packet, which will be mailed to your home directly. Also, for additional support to your coupleship, instructions are posted in the welcome letter for adding your contact information to the Trailblazers Contact List.

Please feel free to stay after the meeting to have any questions addressed by the Welcome or Greeter Couple.

***Please copy this information as it will disappear when you close zoom***

**Leaders, if the Welcome Couple is not present at the meeting, ask for stand-in Greeter Couple.**

Would a couple be willing to stay after the meeting to serve as the Greeter Couple for our newcomers today? Thank-you \_\_\_\_\_.

Business meetings are held on the last Sunday of the month, immediately following the recovery meeting. Please email the Secretary Couple at [Secretary@rcatrailblazers.org](mailto:Secretary@rcatrailblazers.org) to have an item added to the agenda, and then attend the business meeting as a couple. We encourage everyone to stay for the business meetings and help to keep our group working well! You are welcome to stay on the video channel for fellowship after the meeting.

Here are the Trailblazers [announcements. \(click here\)](#) [The Secretary Couple will read the announcements.]

To request or be added to the contact list, please email the Contact List Couple at [ContactListCouple@RCATrailblazers.org](mailto:ContactListCouple@RCATrailblazers.org)

Is there a couple who will volunteer to be our spiritual time keepers for the meeting today? The group has decided to allow each individual 2 minutes to share, so please set your timer for 2 minutes. Please use the audio as well as visual cues to let people know their time is up.

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## The format for today's meeting is:

### **1st Sunday – Step Meeting**

<http://rcatrailblazers.org/our-services/>

Ask a couple to read the entire step for the month (e.g. Jan = Step 1) from the RCA basic text.

### **2nd Sunday – Speaker or Topic Meeting**

Ask if any couple is willing to share their experience strength and hope. (10 min. per couple)

Otherwise: Topic meeting – please choose and read a daily reflection from chapter VI (pgs 233-296) in the basic text followed by general sharing.

### **3rd Sunday – Traditions Meeting**

<http://rcatrailblazers.org/our-services/>

Ask a couple to read the entire tradition for the month (e.g. Jan = Tradition 1) from the RCA basic text – open meeting for sharing on either the tradition or anything from your coupleship.

### **4th Sunday – Newcomer and Anniversary Meeting**

Ask if there are any newcomers and welcome them.

Ask if there is a couple celebrating an RCA anniversary. If so they get 10 minutes each to share their experience strength and hope.

If not the chair can read, or ask another couple to read either a Reflection (pp. 233-296 of the Blue Book) or the [Characteristics of Functional/Dysfunctional Couples](#), then open the meeting for sharing.

### **5th Sunday – Reflection or Topic**

Please choose a reading/contract from any of the RCA literature and open the meeting for sharing.

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Would [*leaders select a member*] read: Page 55 in the basic text (4th edition)

## Safety Guidelines

**Anonymity and mutual respect of boundaries are essential to providing a healing experience to each of us. Most of us have had great difficulty establishing our boundaries, assertiveness, and personal space. We are sensitive to cross-talk. Our purpose is not to give advice or try to fix one another, but rather to create a safe environment where we can experience and share our pain, hope and joy.**

**We have found that:**

- 1. It is OK to feel.**
- 2. It is OK to make mistakes.**
- 3. It is OK to have respectful conflict.**
- 4. It is OK to have needs and ask for them to be met.**

5. **It is important to respect others (partners and others in the group). It is important to avoid self-righteous statements, baiting or button-pushing statements, case-building statements, and the taking or sharing of another persons inventory.**
6. **It is important to respect ourselves and to avoid self put-downs and self-pity. It is helpful to take ownership of our own story and to take credit for our progress and work in recovery.**
7. **Anonymity is our spiritual foundation. Whom you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here.**

**We have care and concern for ourselves and our coupleships. We meet to both receive and provide the nurturing our relationships need to grow and endure. For that reason, it is important for us to act and speak respectfully to our partners and others. As we do this, we value the group and the relationships in it.**

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### **Sharing Guidelines (leaders read)**

As this is an open meeting; both singles and couples are welcome. All are welcome to share whether your partner is present or not. We ask that you keep your sharing focused on your own part in the coupleship as stated in the RCA Safety Guidelines.

We ask that we avoid cross-talk. Cross-talk is giving advice to others who have already shared, speaking directly to your partner, rather than the group, and questioning or interrupting the couple sharing or leading the meeting at the time. In our meetings we make I statements, as opposed to you statements. If you would like to respond personally to what someone has shared, we suggest that you talk to that person one-to-one after the meeting. These guidelines apply to the use of the chat window.

In RCA, we suffer from many different addictions and dysfunctions. In this group, we ask that you be mindful of crosstalk, appropriate dress and who and what appears on your screen. At any time anyone can send a gentle reminder message to a couple, or message safety to ALL. The facilitators will stop the sharing and address the issue.

We have 2 minute shares. We will time each share, and you will see a signal when your time is up. The meeting is now open for sharing on the topic, the reading or your coupleship issues.

#### ***NOTE:***

- ***15 minutes before meeting ends – Leaders ask, “Are there any newcomers who haven’t shared, but would like to share?”***
- ***5 minutes before meeting ends – Read next section on 7th Tradition***

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### **7<sup>th</sup> Tradition**

Now is the time we practice the Seventh Tradition which states we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Your group contributions go to newcomer welcome packets, group expenses such as the Trailblazers web-site, as well as support of RCA World Services. Be mindful of your own needs first, and give only as you can. Please go to [www.rcatrailblazers.org](http://www.rcatrailblazers.org) and push the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition button to make your contribution via PayPal.

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## Closing

[if newcomers, say:] Welcome again to our newcomers. Please email: [WelcomeCouple@RCATrailblazers.org](mailto:WelcomeCouple@RCATrailblazers.org), so we can send you a welcome letter.

[If a speaker couple meeting, say:] Let's thank our speakers!

[On last Sunday of the month say:] We encourage everyone to stay for the business meeting today. Please help us keep our group working well! The business meeting will begin at 40 past the hour to allow for newcomers to connect in fellowship.

[If not the last Sunday, say:] You are welcome to stay on the video channel for fellowship after the meeting.

**Is there a couple who would be willing to lead next week's meeting?**

In closing, we would like to say that the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you like and leave the rest.

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Would [*secretary selects a member*] read: Page 59 in the basic text (4th edition)

### RCA Promises

**If we are honest about our commitment and painstaking about working the Twelve Steps together, we will quickly be amazed at how soon our love returns. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will learn how to play and have fun together. As we experience mutual forgiveness we will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. Trust in each other will return. We will comprehend the word serenity, and we will know peace.**

**No matter how close to brokenness we have come, we will see how our experiences can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness, shame, and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our partners, families, and others. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook on life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will be better parents, workers, helpers, and friends. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.**

**Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.**

**For those of you who are new to our fellowship, there are no problems that you have experienced that are not common to many of us. Just as our love for our partners has been imperfect, we may not always be adequately able to express to you the deep love and acceptance we feel for you. Keep coming back; the process of loving and communication grows in us, and with each other, one day at a time.**

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Would those of you who are willing un-mute and join us in the Unity Prayer? [Page 60 in the basic text (4th edition)]

### **Unity Prayer**

**I put my hand in yours,**

**and together we can do**

**what we could never do alone.**

**No longer is there a sense of hopelessness.**

**No longer must we each depend**

**upon our own unsteady willpower.**

**We are all together now,**

**reaching out our hands**

**for a power and strength greater than ours.**

**And as we join hands,**

**we find love and understanding**

**beyond our wildest dreams.**