



Adult Survivors of Child Abuse (ASCA) Global Newsletter

Fall 2017

In this issue, we share an update on our name search for the UPLIFT newsletter, and introduce you to our new Volunteer Director. We also share some creative forms of self expression from some Adult Survivors of Child Abuse. Finally, we learn more about the benefits of our ASCA meeting guidelines.



As our Quarterly newsletter will sometimes feature survivor's personal stories, please be advised some content could be triggering for some people.

The Morris Center and the ASCA Program continue to grow worldwide with over 50 support group meetings. We need your help to reach more survivors. Please consider [volunteering](#), following us on [Facebook](#), or by making a [donation](#) in any requested amount that feels right for you. The Morris Center wants to remind all of you that you are awesome and appreciated.

[The Morris Center for Healing from Child Abuse](#)

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We want to give a big **thank you** to all who submitted name suggestions for our monthly newsletter UPLIFT. The good news is that the group who owns the website "upliftconnect" has graciously agreed to allow us to continue using the name UPLIFT for our monthly newsletters. So... for now, we will stick with our original name. Again, a big thank you to those who submitted suggestions!



There are many tree branches

That do not become known

Until you reach out for them

Artwork by Amaroq
Words by Echosaisis

MEET SCOTT: OUR NEW VOLUNTEER DIRECTOR

For a long time, years and years, my primary mechanism for recovery from childhood trauma was individual therapy. When the therapists were competent, it helped, but I always felt something was missing. I once told a therapist that I wanted to try group therapy so I could be with others like me. But he discouraged the idea.

Decades passed, and then came the Internet. A web search introduced me to the ASCA program. The ASCA program looked very promising, but there were no groups in my city. I started one. The act of starting a support group was healing.

Sure enough, sitting with others who have been through what I had been through, was very healing.

No longer was I passive. I became the leader of my own healing. I was even helping others to heal. As much as anything, since childhood trauma can cause a feeling of helplessness and powerlessness, this community engagement was good for me.

Now, I'm helping others [volunteer](#) to help childhood trauma survivors. The ASCA program at the Morris Center is looking for volunteers, for an assortment of activities including the following:

- Start a support group
- Fund-raise by hosting a bake sale, wine and cheese tasting, car wash.
- Grant writing
- Pass out flyers introducing ASCA or a local support group
- For therapists and organizations - start a provider led group
- Translate the survivor to thriver manual from English into another language
- Spread awareness by creating art and displaying in a library, school, or community center
- Help manage the ASCA discussion board

Maybe you have some other ideas, ways of helping ourselves as a community of survivors.

Please write to Scott at tmsascavolunteer@gmail.com



Facing The Storm
by I Marcheselli

This drawing is part of a series of over twenty survivor sketches done in color pencil around 1997

[I Marcheselli](#)

Debbie: If Roses Were Blue

I found ASCA long after beginning my recovery work. What I liked about ASCA was its appeal to adult survivors of child abuse. At the time, there were many organizations helping children but few with a priority of helping adult survivors. When I found ASCA, I was thrilled to find the Survivor to Thriver Manual available for download. I was immediately impressed with ASCA's acknowledgment and explanation regarding other step programs that are not particularly suited to a survivor's healing journey. As a survivor, I also found

this to be true. ASCA's step model and so many of its components were all helpful elements in my own healing, so I knew its value. Plus, ASCA provides links to other resources, such as articles and organizations, recognizing that there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach. Survivors need a variety of resources to help them find what's best for them and their journey.

The same is true for including ASCA in the small resource section of [If Roses Were Blue](#).

I know that a children's book of this nature can appeal to the child within of adult survivors. I know that memories, fears, and behaviors-unresolved-can remain trapped in the body/mind at the time they were created. Adult survivors need to know not only that they are lovable and worthwhile now, but that they were also lovable and worthy then.

ASCA Meetings: Let's talk about cross talk

First, sharing is a two-way street. We share and disclose for the purpose of liberating ourselves from our secrets, our shame, our humiliation, our painful story of childhood abuse, the negative effects on our lives. We also share to relate our successes, our strategies, our growth and unfolding as human beings who have been impacted by childhood abuse.

Yet we share in the context of a community of ASCA members, people who have been through similar experiences. Thus our shares are meant not only as a catharsis and an opportunity to gain insight and support for ourselves, but also to connect with others through our sharing. We all know how various shares impact us - how we nod in empathy, how we squirm with discomfort, how our agitation oozes out, how our sadness releases tears, as we listen to others share.

The topic of cross-talk often comes up, especially for new comers to ASCA meetings.

During the shares no cross-talk is permitted. According to the instructions read by the co-facilitator during every meeting prior to the tag shares, cross-talk is defined as "referring to another person in anyway or commenting on another person's share." What does this mean from a practical perspective and what is the reasoning underpinning this guideline?

First, the no cross-talk guideline exists to increase the level of safety for participants. Participants need to be able to share

without the concern or fear that someone will, in any way whatsoever - criticize, demean, challenge, contradict, minimize, censure, question, etc., what they are feeling, thinking and sharing. When someone is sharing, the role of others in the ASCA support group is to listen and take-in, to internally resonate and empathize. The group becomes a respectful, receptive vessel receiving whatever a member is sharing. There is no judgement, no evaluation, no opinion, no advice.

Second, responding to the speaker happens only during the formal feedback period for the meeting. Participants can also "respond directly to a speaker" in a respectful manner following the closure of the meeting. Referring to the group (for example, by using the word "*you all*" or "*you guys*") or an individual in the group during our feedback and shares is also considered crosstalk. By following the guidelines on feedback and comments during the shares of the meeting, we help foster a more trusting environment.

Third, the purpose of sharing is to focus on ourselves and what we are feeling and working on. When we begin a share by referring to or referencing someone else in the group, we are refocusing on that person rather than focusing on one's self. If permitted to persist, this could have a negative influence on the ASCA meeting dynamic. Fourth, perhaps the biggest slip for new comers concerning the no cross-talk guideline is the spontaneous acknowledging of a previous speaker and how the speaker has stirred them. From one perspective, this seemingly innocent gesture of acknowledgement seems harmless. *What is important for ASCA meetings is consistency.* The ASCA guidelines around no cross-talk are not meant to be impolite or unnatural. Rather the guidelines are for consistency and safety.

Finally, these are not perfect guidelines, and people may have varying ideas about the "no cross-talk" guideline. But for consistency, continuity, safety, and the common good, by participating in an ASCA meeting we all agree to honor and abide by the stated guidelines and procedures of ASCA, and any interventions made by the co-facilitators.

Support The ASCA community

If you would like to [volunteer](#), have comments, or would like to provide supportive feedback for anyone featured in this newsletter, send an email to ascanewseditor@gmail.com .When providing supportive feedback, please remember to include that person's name in the subject line of your email. The Morris Center provides training,

coaching and mentoring for Adult Survivors of Child Abuse who are interested in volunteering. New volunteers are always welcome.

Be featured in the ASCA Newsletter

Please submit: your own stories, photography, artwork, poetry and other self-expression, book reviews, and upcoming events to ascanewseditor@gmail.com.

A special thank you, to all those who have made a [donation to the Norma J Morris Center](#). We would not be here without you.



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