

## This is a compilation of the Feedback Forms

Part I – Program: What did you find most meaningful about this retreat? What parts of the program do you think went well? What could be improved? How were the speakers? Did you set new goals or learn something significant as a result of this retreat?

- Nutrition Workshop
- Nutrition speaker was great. Unimpressed with doctor on the brain. I wish all people would hold off their comments/questions so speaker could talk.
- I found the nutrition very helpful. Yes I did learn more about diet and self-care. I believe that will help me in the future.
- Great Speakers, Good Format. Would like to see ACA Marathon meetings to be 24/7.
- I was skeptical of having speakers and yet curious and it worked well.
- All. Love it. Interesting and easy as ever. Maybe more ACA meetings with themes/target groups.
- Love the folders and schedule. The two morning speakers were excellent. I would have liked smaller group meetings to dig deeper. Orientation was lumpy, needed the intro of each person. Validation for us who feels separate from group. Love the name tags and maps.
- I was impressed with Dr. Pieri. Not having a workshop after lunch, give people time to rest. In the afternoon give 30 minute breaks between workshops. I did not see people of other ethnicities, African Americans, Hispanics.
- Meaningful: #1 Venue –nature, relaxing. #2 Program/topics/speakers Sessions went well, speakers were great, and raffle was fun. Improve: no leaders for ACA meetings. Learning: SSRI's –dendrite growth, add a bad habit=bad habit cables. Motivates me to build a healthy lifestyle brick by brick.
- Love Addiction, Love Avoidance was the best!
- ACA Meetings and Step work
- Speakers and Workshops were great!
- Excellent speakers, great program overall.
- This whole experience has been so positive and life changing. I have found a home!
- I will return for sure- but speakers lack ACA experience, strength and hope. We ACA's are tired of being told what to do. Philosophers: Don't label the tree, etc. **(Note: All of our speakers admitted being ACA's in their introductions).**
- Health and nutrition workshops, trauma release with Adam, candlelight meetings, campfire.
- We liked the workshops, not too much overlap, yes good classes.
- Connection to other campers at meetings and meditation during sharing. Sound healing should be planned indoors and to be more organized and equipment. Yes set goals, speakers were helpful with this.
- Dr Laura-Did not practice ACA principles. She was opinionated, dominating, and dogmatic; her direction went counter to ACA principles and practice. Naturopathic doctor: Excellent, very professional, fact based presentation. Meadows Therapist: Excellent Great mixture of professional and personal examples.
- How the brain works best—could improve with more meetings and last year there was a male only meeting.
- Speakers were great; appreciate the effort to get them. Needed more ACA info and activities and exponential. Too cognitive workshops, informative but too much lecture.
- Love Addiction Workshop was awesome! Hike to lookout awesome!

- The connection of “not being alone” most meaningful. The types of workshops being offered. Not blowing the whistle to get our attention. I set a goal of being more in my home.
- Professional speakers were outstanding.
- Good interaction of ACA’s from other areas. Natural medicine workshop interesting
- Great speakers, topics, workshops
- All the workshops were most meaningful to me. The presenters have inspired me to do research and purchase books. Most personal were Victoria Abel, Dr Judy Gianni, Irene Norman, and Dr Laura Pieri.

**Part II – Schedule: Overall, was the retreat conducive to your journey? How did the schedule work for you? Was there too much going on or not enough? Was there anything you would have liked to have done that we did not do? Let us know!**

- Staff awesome!
- The ACA meeting Friday at Chapel was unhosted and too dark.
- I was satisfied with schedule.
- The only downside to choices is when you want to attend two sessions at the same time.
- Multiple speakers at same time with more topics. Friends of Bill W meetings.
- Sometimes it was too much because I personally don’t want to miss anything and had to choose
- Perfect schedule, perfect speakers, and just more meetings.
- For the single out of towners, could use ice breakers or other get to know you exercise to encourage more retreat discovery.
- I loved the fact that you had many options and many workshops. I participated in as much as I could. I loved the rain.
- I would have liked a star gazing option.
- Who was the handsome Italian man with the beard?
- More Sunday Activities.
- Love the Campsite.
- Excellent, only suggestion would have been to start Friday evening with an ACA speaker. I loved everything and the flow of the schedule.
- Yes!
- Yes, all very organized. Congrats. Day pass is excellent.
- We need to have CODA meetings too.
- Would prefer to have a prayer/brief words before our meals, rather than camp song.
- Would have liked Tai Chi and Meditation at different times so able to do both. More options to attend all the workshops.
- Would prefer more scheduled ACA meetings. Ask people to lead meetings.
- Scent free hair products.
- Schedule was good.
- Maybe have journaling or step study workshops.
- Offer Tai Chi and meditation later in day, some workshops overlapped so I could not go.
- It was conducive to my journey. The schedule was perfect. Perfect of stuff happening.
- Thought it was very well organized.
- Good, too many classes meeting at same time. Hike and nutrition at same time.
- Have ACA Readings before breakfast on Sat and Sun.
- Have facilitator run hourly ACA meetings. If people show, different one each hour. Workshop scheduled next to registration. Could hear campfire, not good.
- Yes, journey was great.

### **Part III–Logistics/Facility: How were the sleeping arrangements? Location/Staff /Food?**

- I loved being able to set up my tent in the pine trees. What a serene experience. Thank you so much!
- Staff Awesome
- Great
- Everything was great. Dinner Friday was very good. I am limited to what I can eat. I was able to eat. I was not thrilled with Pizza for lunch. Salad was wonderful. I am allergic to eggs, so breakfast was not good.
- Staff was fantastic. Food enjoyable. Very accommodating for my food allergies.
- Beds OK. People respectful of others space. Great staff.
- Super.
- Nice. Big compliments to the kitchen staff for doing their best with gluten/lactose intolerances Appreciated simple directions and excellent information in advance.
- No more red punch (chemicals). I would also like no meat and no dairy. More healthy options.
- Sleeping arrangements very excellent and clean.
- Lovely to be out in nature. Dorm facility takes time to get used to for sleep. I admit the full body prayers before meals were just weird for me.
- Great. Should specify on site there is a lot of walking for older people with health problems.
- Food was outstanding. Nature environment very peaceful healing, love this location.
- Not my norm but fine. People were great. The room got cold, that was my only discomfort.
- Smiley face.
- I need to be in the big cabin each time.
- The woman with the short blonde hair drove our lodge crazy with her complaining. Glad she left early. I had to switch lodges.
- The golf carts were so much fun and really helped those of us who needed help getting around!
- Too many starchy carb meals. Need more protein at lunch. Staff helpful. Have meditation in a warmer room, not concrete floor in drafty room.
- Day pass was great.
- Great having water and fruit everywhere.
- Sleeping arrangements great because all my cabin mates were wonderful. Staff great, food adequate.
- Thought the sleeping arrangements were awesome. I would have handpicked my roommates.
- Excellent
- All great.
- Loved the camping. I'll bring my tent again next year for sure.
- Great. I had never stayed in a dorm. Thought I would not sleep but was pleasantly surprised.
- Make closing ceremony 1.5 to 2 hrs.
- Excellent. Should have quiet time after 10pm. Campfire people too loud.
- Yes, same spot as last year, great food as always.

### **Part IV –Event Date: Is there a month or week that you feel would work better for this event?**

- It's just right
- In Finland July and October is the typical holiday season, but who cares? Smiley face.
- It is a good time of year.
- This time was perfect.
- Still too hot in Phoenix to land for us out of state whimps. A month later.
- Nah!
- Like this date and month.
- NO
- Fine

- Not on the eve of a major Jewish Holiday.
- Think this is the best time weather-wise.
- This is a great time.
- This was good.
- September after Labor Day is always good.

## **Part V –General: Do you have any other suggestions to improve the retreat?**

- An activity or meeting Friday afternoon.
- Literature to purchase. Volunteers did a fantastic job coordinating and informing us.
- The woman who did the guided meditation is very talented. I felt uncomfortable when she chose to comment on people's shares after their experience. Felt unasked for and inappropriate.
- The T shirts could have had more color choices and different logo.
- I believe there needs to be people responsible to be there for a marathon meeting. Old timers heard there was a meeting Friday night. Newcomers came and no one to lead it.
- Loved the guided meditation with Diane. The room was a bit cold though.
- If gluten intolerant people are there, maybe you would like to deliver named portions to them? In case there were many, you would be able to prioritize the ones with Celiac Disease?
- Specific Inner child discussions and speakers. Codependence workshops.
- You guys did an amazing job coordinating and making everyone feel welcome.
- Having the meetings in one location, starting each hour with a new leader for each meeting. Having topic meetings with topics listed on the schedule. Offering some meeting for sharing about traditions, another one for 11<sup>th</sup> step practices, sharing our experience with...
- More professional speakers aka Irene Norman.
- Interested in doing a writing workshop for next year.
- No—Just adding an ACA speaker to kick off Friday evening, but truly loved this retreat. Thank you John and David and retreat committee for your service. Outstanding weekend.
- Thank you.
- Ask speakers to relate to our ACA model—like the man who ran the sound workshop. Use recovery words, it is a huge attraction. I will bring 10 -20 people if you announce it beforehand.
- When there are location changes, post in writing somewhere so everyone knows. The dining hall room is very loud and it is very easy to dissociate with so many people.
- This evaluation should be redesigned. Too many points covered on each question, so impossible to answer. Dr Laura's Talk Title included addiction but she never addressed it. Titles should match content.
- Opening session do icebreakers—inform people. Eliminate WSO info, can be typed handouts.
- Intergroup/WSO lecture too long and dry. Orientation should be more uplifting. Trauma demos not appropriate for large orientation setting.
- It would be helpful if there was more time between meals and speakers. Maybe an extra 15 to 30 minutes to have time to get from dining hall to my lodge to gather my things and have time to get to the event w/o feeling rushed. Offer literature to purchase.
- Better map to camp.
- The campfire jam sessions were the best I have ever attended
- I did not know I would be so affected by altitude. I felt tired most of the time. But was a wonderful nature spot. Next time I will know what to expect. Central bulletin board for announcements. Chicken not so overbaked next time!
- Sell literature—BRB's, workbooks, meditation books, bookmarks.
- Promote signing up for retreat next year during retreat. Pass out registration forms to everyone. Put registration forms for next year in everyone packet.
- Religious camp prayers before meals could be offensive to some members. Tell people to bring warm clothes and chairs to candlelight meetings.

- Yoga for depression was so beneficial to me. I would return for that one if it were the only event on the agenda.
- Recycle bottles. Put out recycling bins at lodges, dining hall and meeting halls.
- 15 minute breaks in between workshops and meetings. Raffle at orientation was too long and could be offensive to gamblers. Sound workshop demo should not have been in orientation.
- Orientation should have been more welcoming, fun, informative of weekend.
- Nutrition lecture too short (x 3)
- Victoria Abel needs at least 90 minutes, invite her back in 2016.

**How satisfied were you with the value you received for your money?**

(22) Very Satisfied     (7) Satisfied     Dissatisfied     Very Dissatisfied

**How likely are you to return in 2016 and to refer this event to your friends?**

(2) Very Unlikely     (2) Somewhat Unlikely     (18) Likely     (35) Definitely

**How satisfied were you with organization?**

(21) Very Satisfied     (9) Satisfied     Dissatisfied     Very Dissatisfied

**How satisfied were you with the speakers?**

(18) Very Satisfied     (11) Satisfied     (1) Dissatisfied     Very Dissatisfied

**How satisfied were you with the workshops?**

(15) Very Satisfied     (10) Satisfied     (1) Dissatisfied     Very Dissatisfied

**How satisfied were you with the materials provided?**

(13) Very Satisfied     (7) Satisfied     (5) Dissatisfied     Very Dissatisfied

**Do you feel the length of sessions were too long, just right, or too short?**

(1) Too Long     (21) Just Right     (7) Too Short

**The following is feedback from email or website**

My first retreat experience was a very positive one. The pre information, follow up emails, agenda, workshops, facility, food, staff and activities were beyond my expectations.

I think it was very well organized, quick and appropriate adaptations to weather and changes, with lots of quality and quantity throughout the weekend. My check in process went smooth. Unfortunately I arrived late and missed the orientation and scavenger hunt but still was able to find things easily and everyone was extremely helpful and kind. I particularly liked Adam's workshops on music/emotional work and think he adapted well to the equipment issues. All of the speakers were fabulous.

I plan to attend again next year and am happy to tell others of the positive, uplifting, peaceful and beautiful weekend.

Thank you for making it happen!

Warm regards,

Hi, Here are my thoughts about the retreat....

First of all, how amazing to get to be a part of a large ACA community and among some who had been in recovery for 30 yrs! Thank you again for allowing me to come from Outside.

I appreciate the fact that the schedule allowed me the ability that I could most of the speakers.

Excellent speakers- especially "How the Brain Works, Love Addiction, and the Self care Strategies-Natural Medicines. (I missed the Nutrition for Recovery)

Well organized and scheduled with adequate time to transition between sessions/activities.

Great and well organized folders. ....possibly some notes about the Clean up Responsibilities would have been helpful. I didn't know what I was to do it seems that all we had to do was to clean up after ourselves and leave our sleeping quarters like we found them.

One of the lodges porch mats got muddy and dirty so I began sweeping it as it was going to track into the lodge and make a real mess. I was told that I was taking someone else's job by doing that. Since I struggle with boundaries, I was conflicted. Had I known, I would have been able to reply and feel good about sweeping. HA! who knows..... It's all a journey..

Excellent food and wonderful providers!

A great camp/space, absolutely beautiful. Loved the ability to be amongst a group, but also having buildings/areas where I could go for solitude.

- It's not a big deal, but I was confused about the color of the dot on my name tag, and was told different things that actually were incorrect. I thought they had meaning and still don't know what. I just kept thinking that I'd be pulled into a "blue"group for some activity..... As I say, not a big deal, it just communicated something that may have not been intended.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

---

My life was changed by being a part of this magic weekend. I came with no expectations whatsoever. Bless you for giving me a place to heal and be myself.

---

Thank you for your tremendous efforts. This was my first ACA Retreat and I am so grateful! The speakers were amazing. The food was very good and the surroundings were beautiful. And of course, my fellow travelers were wonderful. I highly recommend this retreat to newcomers and old-timers alike. There is something for everyone and always something to learn.

Thanks again!

---

I loved all the speakers.

---

thank you all so much, I appreciate all you have done to make such an awesome event...

---

Awesome 2015. Great selection of speakers & topics. Victoria Abel needs 90 minutes minimum, as she takes questions in the middle of her workshop & doesn't get to all the material. Be sure to invite her back. Her talk this year paralleled her workshop in 2014, but was different information. Love the ACA Retreat t-shirt; hope you'll do them again for 2016.

I'll send the feedback form, as I was waiting to add comments to Irene Norman's talk, & we ran out of time.

---

I sent in a written retreat feedback, but have more. The fresh fruit was a great idea. More thanks to all who worked on the committees to get this retreat up on the mountain. As always it was magical Hugs

---

Honestly Fri and Sat meals terrible, last year seemed better. Four years ago was the best. Otherwise, speakers were good, enjoyed everyone. Only issue was \*\*\*\*\*who sored like a freight train rolling through a tunnel (shakes the whole town). Hope, I was of service enough. Next time, you want to number the cabins let me

know I can drive up there and get the correct numbers. John and David you both organized well. It always works out when the traditions are followed and God(s) is in charge. I am still processing with such clarity in my issues. Sorry I refuse to travel down in the heat this year. May be next year I can stay down there to attend the last meeting before the retreat. The ACA marathon meetings were they attend at all?

---

I had a fantastic time. Please let me know how I can help next year!!

I would suggest:

1. Coffee mugs or water holders for sale with retreat logo
  2. Reducing plastic/recycle
  3. Reminders of noise around cabins. Especially early in am and late in pm
- 

Golf carts were GREAT-bring them back

Orientation should be more engaging and exciting, no sound treatment at orientation, lost people on that.

Maybe make raffle a bit shorter? I am interested in being a part of creating and growing the 2016 retreat

I think there could be more 'go to' people to help newcomers

Victoria - she needs to be able to speak longer, like 2 hours, she should not be rushed, so many people had questions

Bring back the women's and men's focus meeting

Thank you for all you did John and David!!

---

Thank you for the retreat. I was a first-timer. I know it is a lot of work, and you all did a great job. It was a wonderful experience. I do have some suggestions, though.

a) I think it would have been helpful to have had a large whiteboard to list important information and any changes. I know there was some announcement of changes to the dorms, and the events, but I could not hear over the din of the dining room.

b) The Pavilion sign-in was good, and the scavenger hunt was fun. The big name tags with home city were great, too.

c) I think having some literature on ACA would be good. I was involved in ACA a long time ago, but it hasn't been my primary 12-step program for a number of years. A lot has changed. I would have liked to have looked at or bought one of the books. An Arizona or a Phoenix meeting list would be nice, too.

d) I can understand the value of educating people about WSO, but I did not like the talk on WSO. The time would have been better spent reading the 12 steps or Traditions. Maybe put a talk on the WSO at the end and have it be optional. A talk about sponsorship would have been better, if anything.

e) I guess people have really liked the sound program, but I had never heard of it. At least, explain first what you are doing before demonstrating it. Frankly, I didn't think much of it.

f) I really, really wished there could have been a marathon meeting at a convenient place. Or if not a marathon meeting, have a cabin or someplace specified for meetings. I understand whoever was to lead the meeting at the outside chapel cancelled, but there were several of us who were left hanging. It was too dark up there to find at night.

g) I could have used a description of the speakers. Maybe there was one before the retreat which I didn't look at. For the most part the speakers I heard Saturday were good, although I was confused with the brain one. It just became a Q&A with everybody asking all sorts of tangential questions.

h) Limit the raffle prizes. It just went on and on. Time would have been better spent with a large group meeting.

i) The food and staff were great. It was a stretch packing everybody into the dining hall. I don't know what remedy for that would be.

j) I think it would have been good to have had a big meeting in the big meeting room there on the first night. Having people split up for different activities was unnecessary. You could have a big group meeting but have people break up into smaller groups for some sort of common activity, then regroup. It's an opportunity to hear from others.

k) Some years ago I attended an OA retreat at Embry-Riddle outside of Prescott. I don't know if that facility is still available, but if the ACA retreat continues to grow, it might be something to consider. It wasn't as scenic, but they could accommodate a large group. Food and lodging went well.

Don't get me wrong. All in all, it was totally excellent. And I thank you very much. Unfortunately, I had to leave early. I was camping. I brought my tent, but the first night was so nice, I didn't bother to set it up. During the downpour all my stuff got soaked. I saw the clouds coming up, so it was my own stupid fault. I know I could have worked it out to stay. I had an offer from one of the staff to loan me a sleeping bag. But I had some new gear, and I wanted to get home to dry it out. So my leaving was absolutely nothing to do with the retreat. I wish I could have stayed, but it was the right decision for me at that time.

It was a fantastic turnout. I will definitely return if I can. I don't want to commit myself just now.

---

Hello,

This is Gaby H. from Austin, TX.

As promised, I created a private gallery that is password protected to share the pictures I took at the retreat.

Please check them out at [www.aca-arizona.org](http://www.aca-arizona.org)

All I ask is that they are used for personal purposes only and not commercial. There is a note on the gallery that specifies this. Of course, I am okay with the using the pictures in the <http://aca-arizona.org/> website.

Yes, I'm fine with you guys sharing the link and password with the attendees.

I had a great time. You guys did an excellent job putting this event together.

Regards,

Gaby

---

Retreat was fantastic, I really enjoyed myself. Food was excellent; lectures were good. I would like to suggest inviting speakers to talk about Course in Miracles, invite Greg Baer, MD to speak about Real Love. In gratitude

---

My absolute favorite part of the retreat was the singing by the campfire. The wind-down at the end of the day was so relaxing and hearing the beautiful voices and talented guitarists really touched my soul. It is so much better than the boring talent shows of the past.

Tent camping at the retreat was so cool, even with the short rain.

How can we tone down the chatter in the dining hall so I can hear the announcements?

I liked the speakers that were in attendance. Very informative. I liked Victoria Abel the best. Hopefully, she can come back next year.

I saw the impact that Dr Pieri had on people in the audience. People were crying and wiping tears from their eyes. What an emotionally charged presentation.

Food was good. I have dietary restrictions, so between the food I brought up and the food I could eat in the dining hall, everything worked out good for me. I was worried about that being a problem, but it turned out to be a non-issue.

The orientation on Friday night went on too long, the WSO information was a bit dry. Maybe cut back on the prize give outs.

The most emotionally charged part of the weekend was the closing ceremony. It was great. Too bad the rain started coming down because I would have liked to hear more of the shares. The moderator did a great job. Thank you for a great experience. Your speakers were top notch. Your hard work was noticed and appreciated. I thought the retreat was excellent! The speakers were great, the food was great, and especially all of the people were great. I don't have a bad things to point out. I'll see you next year for sure! : )

Happily at home in Finland, we had an amazing trip. And the camp was for me the cherry in the cake: it was unbelievable to see the ACA magic works globally!! A big portion of thanks for this experience goes to you, the organizers. You did make it easy for us to come, join, and participate. I sincerely see you as both talented and warm-hearted people. Your input is greatly appreciated.

I will speak good things about the event whenever possible and hope many others from Europe will join Mingus in the future. And I will do my best to come over one year again, sooner or later. If there was anything that could be done here by me to promote your activities, just let me know?

With warm regards, -----

I loved reconnecting with my Arizona, Tennessee, Texas, California friends! And making new friendships from Florida and Minnesota.

I LOVE THESE PEOPLE! BIG HELLO FROM-----

Wow! This was the best retreat ever!!

Awesome people and it was a great time. I'm glad I went to my first retreat

**A note from the organizer's:** Thank you all for the feedback. Your comments will help us shape the 2016 Retreat, which will accommodate even more ACAs. We need your help in getting the word out. If you really want to be of service, ask your recovery friends to register. Be the retreat voice of your meeting. The most

difficult aspect of any ACA retreat is helping ACA's get past their fear to register, and then actually attend 😊

Yours in Service,

The ACA Arizona Intergroup, Retreat Committee



**Support Your Local Intergroup!**