

CAN DO COMMITMENT VERSUS DEFEATISM SYNDROME

By

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The American Callers' Association in its attempt to be of service to all callers, dancers, and associations provided current, timely, and effective information on new dancer recruitment from 2000 to 2018.

ACA really appreciates the positive comments, encouragement to continue, and contributions from callers and dancers all over the country and from abroad to continue these initiatives. ACA will continue to provide information that will help the square dance community recruit, retain and retrieve square dancers as well as encourage the dancers to speak out on the cumbersome dance programs.

Problem: Square Dance clubs have difficulties in recruiting new square dancing students. What clubs and callers do when they get down to the bottom with red ink and empty squares all around them? Close the club and dancers exit square dancing.

This month's ACA Viewpoints offers suggestions to clubs and callers for use to recruit new dancers to join square dancing. Recruiting new dancers has become and is a never-ending task year round task. With an estimated 10% decline in the number of dancers, clubs and callers, the recruiting of new dancers is more critical today than ever before. One might suggest that there is a certain element of defeatism in the minds of many square dancers. The defeatism might be interpreted as follows: "If the problem of decline in the number of square dancers is everywhere, what can I do to help?" "I am just one person; I have already asked everyone I know." Why not invite people you meet year around.

ACA recognizes that many of today's dancers in the baby boom, generation X, generation Y and generation Z desire a more instant gratification for their time and money spent. Unlike the senior's category, these newer groups want a simple way to start having fun. They appear to state that they do not want a long-term set of instruction. This apparent contradiction between the needs and wants of potential future square dancers and that the square dance product appears to complicate and denigrate new dancer recruiting.