

2021 Conference Committee on Literature

ITEM C: +Consider proposals related to a possible Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Background Notes: +Agenda item forwarded from the 70th G.S.C.

Excerpts from February 1, 2020 TLC Meeting Report:

The trustees' Literature Committee reviewed and **agreed to forward** to the 2020 Conference Committee on Literature requests to develop a Fifth Edition of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*:

- Consider a proposed addendum to a Fifth Edition foreword of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* at the time it is published.
- Consider developing a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* with updated stories and revisions to Appendices III and V.
- Consider development of a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Excerpts from November 2, 2019 TLC Meeting Report:

The committee reviewed requests for proposed Conference agenda items related to the possible development of a Fifth Edition of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The committee recognized the priority of addressing whether or not a Fifth Edition of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, might be developed before addressing items related to content and format changes. The committee will continue discussions at the February 2020 meeting.

The year was 1997 when the following advisory action was made:

A draft Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed and a progress report be brought to the 1998 Conference Literature Committee, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that:

"The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface³, the Forewords, 'The Doctor's Opinion,' 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare,' and the Appendices remain as is."

The proposal was forwarded to the 1997 Conference Literature Committee from the trustees' Literature Committee at the November 1996 meeting. There were follow-up

advisory actions in 1998, 1999, 2000 and finally 2001, the latter being the one that approved the final draft.

The first printing of the 4th Edition was done in October 2001 and distributed shortly thereafter.

Background:

1. Develop a Fifth Edition.
2. Develop a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* with updated stories and revisions to Appendices III and IV.
3. Add a proposed addendum to a Fifth Edition foreword of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* at the time it is published.
 - i. 9.23.19 Emails between Conference Coordinator and submitter of proposed agenda item to add addendum to the Fifth Edition of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, when published.
 - ii. Proposal to include an addendum in the Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* at the time it is developed.
4. History and actions for the development of the Fourth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, in English

12/08/19

To: Patrick C.
Conference Coordinator

From: Robert S.
Delegate, Panel 68, Area 20 Northern Illinois

Re: 2020 General Service Conference Agenda

Dear Patrick:

I am writing on behalf of Northern Illinois Area 20 and District 52. We are requesting that the Trustees Literature Committee place the following on the agenda for the 2020 GSC:

That work begins on the development of a fifth edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous.

This motion was brought to our Area Assembly on December 7th, 2019 and passed unanimously.

Respectfully;

Robert S.
Panel 68, Area 20 Delegate

CONFIDENTIAL: 71st General Service Conference Background

Motion: District 52 moves the Area support a motion on the General Service Agenda to develop a Fifth edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous.

Background:

The following motion was passed by the Assembly at the Fall Assembly 2018.

The Bourbonnais Terrace Group asks for the Area's support that the Delegate write a letter to the conference coordinator for consideration of the item below as an agenda item at the 2019 GSC. That a Fifth Edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous be developed.

The Editions of the book Alcoholics Anonymous have been published in somewhat regular intervals.

The First Edition was published in 1939

16 years later came the Second Edition was published in 1955

21 years later came the Third Edition was published in 1976

25 years later came the Fourth Edition was published in 2001

CONFIDENTIAL: 71st General Service Conference Background

Proposed Items for the Agenda of the 2020 General Service Conference*

Below is a list of items that have been submitted for the Conference Agenda. These proposed items are not the final agenda items for the Conference committee agendas. These proposed items will be reviewed by trustees' committees, who may forward them to a Conference committee, keep them at the Board level for additional background and consideration, or route them to the A.A.W.S. or Grapevine Boards. The final list of Conference committee agenda items will be available in early February following the General Service Board meeting.

Item	Date Received	Proposed Item	Forwarded to	Status
5	6/3/19	Consider a proposed addendum to a Fifth Edition forward, of the book Alcoholics Anonymous, at the time it is published. The addendum of gender terms is written with the intent that all who are seeking answers (help) for a drinking problem are encouraged to give Alcoholics Anonymous a try.	Trustees' Committee on Literature	Under consideration by trustees' committee: The committee reviewed requests for proposed Conference agenda items related to the possible development of a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee recognized the priority of addressing whether or not a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, might be developed before addressing items related to content and format changes. The committee will continue discussions at the February 2020 meeting.

CONFIDENTIAL: 71st General Service Conference Background

Item	Date Received	Proposed Item	Forwarded to	Status
9	8/30/19	That the General Service Conference consider creating a 5th Edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous with the removal of the Chapters 'To Wives', 'The Family Afterward', and 'To Employers'.	Trustees' Committee on Literature	Under consideration by trustees' committee: The committee reviewed requests for proposed Conference agenda items related to the possible development of a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee recognized the priority of addressing whether or not a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, might be developed before addressing items related to content and format changes. The committee will continue discussions at the February 2020 meeting.
10	8/26/19	Consider a motion to develop a 5th edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous.	Trustees' Committee on Literature	Under consideration by trustees' committee: The committee reviewed requests for proposed Conference agenda items related to the possible development of a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous. The committee recognized the priority of addressing whether or not a Fifth Edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, might be developed before addressing items related to content and format changes. The committee will continue discussions at the February 2020 meeting.

CONFIDENTIAL: 71st General Service Conference Background

To the General Service Board and Trustees Literature committee

District 52 Area 20 would like to request a motion for the development of a 5th edition of Alcoholics Anonymous be placed on the 2020 Agenda for the General Service Conference.

I am currently the DCM of District 52 in Illinois Area 20. I am writing this letter on behalf of my district. I was given this task by a unanimous vote. At the 69th General Service Conference a motion to develop a 5th edition of the Big Book was considered. The motion was not passed because the Trustees felt they were too busy doing other things, as per the report from our delegate. The Big Book is our strongest tool in 12 step work after one alcoholic face to face with another this excuse seems weak. The Trustees will always be busy.

The stories in Alcoholics Anonymous need to reflect our changing society to reach the still suffering. If the alcoholic cannot identify with any of the stories due to the age of the stories that alcoholic may continue to suffer. We have an obligation, stated in the Traditions, to reach the still suffering. For the alcoholic to identify the stories need to reflect the current socio-economic experiences of the average person. As the last edition was published in 2001, and there have been vast changes in our society over the intervening years, there are no stories that reflect the current societal experience.

Our district voted to bring this issue to our Area 4 years ago. Due to the inexperience of our DCM there was no action. Our district has been considering a 5th edition Alcoholics Anonymous for some time and is unanimous in supporting its development. A group in the district took the initiative last year and brought a motion asking that the delegate write a letter requesting a 5th edition of Alcoholics Anonymous be considered. This same request was brought by another Area. There is support for a 5th edition in more than one Area.

Thank you for your service and careful consideration in this matter.

Heather S. DCM 052 Area 20

Cc: Robert S., Mark E.

LITERATURE
Item C
Doc. 2

CNCA Delegate Panel 69

Teddy W.



Patrick C.
Conference Coordinator
General Service Office
PO Box 459
New York, NY 10164

By Post & Email: conference@aa.org

December 10, 2019

Dear Patrick,

Area 06, California Northern Coastal, requests that a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* be published and that the Conference take this up as an Agenda Topic.

The actual motion, passed at our Fall Assembly on November 24, 2019 is:

That the Trustees' Literature Committee add to its agenda to consider publishing a Fifth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, with updated stories to more broadly reflect our current fellowship, as well as updates or additions to Appendices III and V"

When we voted on the motion at our Fall Assembly on November 24, 2019 the result was 79 in favor, 33 against-substantial unanimity in favor. The minority opinion was heard, following which a motion to reconsider was made. The vote on the motion to reconsider failed 52/55.

The motion began its journey at the *We Have Arrived* group in San Jose, where it passed after three months of discussion. In the course of their discussion, the group's members decided that they had no desire to change the first 164 pages of the book. The motion then made its way to the sub-district where it passed unanimously after two months of discussion. It was then discussed at the district level for another four months after which it passed unanimously. The

.../-

Area considered the motion for a year and a half, including robust discussion at four assemblies, before passing the motion as noted above.

Here are the highlights of the presentations and our discussions, both pro and con...

Pro:

1. It seems that an interpretation of the current (4th) edition has to happen between sponsor and sponsee due to evolution in language and changes in society since these stories were published. Newer stories may help someone relate more to A.A. and those who want to read the book before making the decision to join A.A. and find a sponsor. It's important to make the stories more modern and inclusive because it's harder to look for similarities and easier to look for the differences in respect to many of the stories due to the passage of time.
2. The updates are congruent with an increasingly diverse fellowship. The 4th edition saw the inclusion of gay alcoholics, young people, and a new appendix that includes the 12 Concepts.
3. We can update the stories to be more diverse. Some potential ideas for new stories from members who are: transgender (who possibly had struggled finding sponsorship), Asian-American (who need to break down barriers of cultural shame in order to take Step One), dually or cross-addicted, court ordered, those who use technology for 12 step work such as armed service members who use video chat to communicate with sponsors/sponsees, Loners/Internationalists, and people with disabilities who attend online meetings. None of this is intended to take anything away but to add more stories to help the newer generation relate more to the book.
4. Look to a new range of demographics not currently represented: non-US, incarcerated, 40+ years of sobriety, non-nuclear families, remote communities, immigrants, atheists, non-Judeo-Christian spirituality, veterans of more recent wars, seniors, and Deadheads that go to concerts sober!
5. Reflect issues that people struggle with now: mental health, homelessness, social media, the modern treatment paradigm, using technology to get and stay sober, chronic relapse, cross-addiction, dual diagnosis, sex work, prescription meds, depression in sobriety, struggles with emotional sobriety.
6. Include stories from people with a variety of socio-economic backgrounds.
7. Add more to the pioneers' section, like women, people of color, etc.
8. Stories should emphasize current *sobriety*.
9. The request to update the appendices isn't intended to remove any of the current language, but rather to expand on existing ideas in Appendices III and V.

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CONFIDENTIAL: 71st General Service Conference Background

10. Update Appendix III (The Medical View on A.A .) to include more information on mental illness. The language could be similar to (or directly lifted from) "The A.A. Member - Medications and Other Drugs." Specifically, page 6 of the pamphlet, where it talks about some alcoholics needing medication.
11. Appendix III references a pamphlet that is now out of print. It says, "This address is now available in pamphlet form...under the title 'Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W' ."
12. Update Appendix V and include perspectives from different faiths. Currently, the only perspectives offered are from Father Ed Dowling, who was Catholic, and an Episcopalian magazine. There are many other faiths that can be included - Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, etc.
13. The fellowship is overdue for a new edition of the book. Historically, there is an approximately 20-year average between the different editions of the Big Book (1st edition, 1939; 2nd edition, 1955; 3rd edition, 1976; 4th edition, 2001).
14. The 4th Edition was released in 2001- which was a time significantly different than now.
15. We need to keep up with the times and make our Big Book a living document. New stories will breathe new life into what should be a living text.
16. Updated stories will tell us who we're sitting next to in meetings.
17. A new edition might reverse any decline in sales.
18. The length of all stories could be edited down to 7-8 pages.
19. It's not about what we want, but what the people not sitting in our meetings need.
20. Consider a new special section-They thought they were different- for underserved groups.
21. Consider a new Appendix that provides the historical context for the first 164 pages or a Foreword that explains this.
22. Consider a glossary of archaic terms used in the book.

Con:

1. The scope of the changes doesn't go far enough. There are issues of relevance implicit in the first 164 pages that need to be addressed- the role of women in society, changes in the workplace, attitudes towards minorities, and a gendered God.
2. It will be an unnecessary expense at this time.
3. Timing should not be an issue. Not that much has changed in the past 20 years.
4. The publishing department has other priorities at this time, such as bringing A.A. into the modern age.
5. The next edition is likely to be the last one (who'll want another book 25 years later?) and so we have a special responsibility to get this one right, for the ages.

CONFIDENTIAL: 71st General Service Conference Background

6. The place for new stories is the Grapevine/La Vina and this is an opportunity to use those publications more.

It should be noted that while we achieved substantial unanimity in favor of the motion and while the first 164 pages were not within the scope of the motion, a substantial unanimity of groups concurred with the sentiment expressed by the *We Have Arrived* group and conveyed their wish that the first 164 pages not be altered.

It should also be noted that we suspended consideration of this motion at the Area level once it became known that a Fifth Edition to update the stories was an Agenda Topic for the Literature Committee at the 69th General Service Conference. The area fully informed me on that Agenda Topic and some of what I heard is reflected above, where pertinent, and for completeness.

I look forward to hearing what happens next and, meantime, thank you and all our special workers, trustees, non-trustee directors, and appointed committee members for your service to our fellowship.

In love and service,

Teddy W.

9.23.19 Emails between Conference Coordinator and submitter of proposed agenda item, to add addendum to the Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* when published.

Hi Patrick,

Thank you for all your help and for the update.

Linda B.

On Mon, Sep 23, 2019 at 11:56 AM Conference <conference@aa.org> wrote:

This is a response to recap our conversation held on 9/21/19.

We confirmed the following:

1. Your group discussed the suggestions provided by the Conference Coordinator regarding clarification of what the group intended to accomplish with the proposed agenda item submitted. The group wants to forward the proposal as submitted.
2. Your group initially discussed sending the proposal to the area and delegate for further discussion, but, decided that it is not going to do that. The group is simply submitting the proposed with the district's vote of support.
3. The Conference Coordinator will move the proposed agenda item forward through the process and will send an acknowledgement once he has confirmed the disposition for trustee committee discussion.

This is the proposed agenda item language I have pulled from your proposal:

Consider a proposed addendum to a Fifth Edition forward, of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, at the time it is published. The addendum of gender terms is written with the intent that all who are seeking answers (help) for a drinking problem are encouraged to give *Alcoholics Anonymous* a try.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Patrick C.

5/281/9

To: General Service Office

From: Fifth Traditionist Alcoholics Anonymous Newcomers' Meeting

Bloomington, IN

GSR: Linda B [REDACTED]; I

Subject: Proposal to be considered at the 2020 General Service Conference

Our AA Group, Fifth Traditionists, Bloomington, IN would like to move forward this proposal to be inserted into the fifth edition of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous. We would like for this to be considered at the 2020 General Service Conference. We know a Fifth Edition is a proposal to be voted on in the 2019 Conference, but if it is or isn't approved at this time, we would still like to ask that this proposal be in the forward to the Fifth Edition whenever it is published.

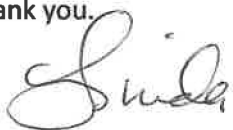
We are listed as a newcomers meeting and as our group name implies, we wish to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the alcoholic that still suffers. We find there are many who find the gender terms of the Big Book somewhat insensitive in this era. AA addresses many "issues" people find problematic in the program but the bias of the gender terms in the Big Book are not undertaken anywhere that we can find.

Our proposal mentions adding as an addendum and since this is what we voted on, I am not changing the wording but it is meant as an addition to the forward. I had to find the dictionary meaning of addendum for the group and am stating it here. Addendum: "An addendum is a section of new material that is added after the first edition or first printing of a book. The author may be correcting something in the original book, updating the information in the book, or providing an explanation for the author's work. In any case, it's an afterthought." We realized if this proposal is approved, the proper GSO committee will have the authority to edit the wording as is necessary.

I took this proposal to our Indiana District 10 meeting and they voted unanimously to support it. I have attached the minutes of that meeting.

I can be reached at [REDACTED] if you have any further questions, suggestions, or concerns.

Thank you.



CONFIDENTIAL: 71st General Service Conference Background

Proposal submitted to be considered at the 2020 General Service Conference

Some of the gender terms in the book Alcoholics Anonymous may give the impression that most of those struggling with a drinking problem are men, and that the message of recovery is meant mainly for the male alcoholic.

This addendum is written with the intent of assuring that all who are seeking answers (help) for a drinking problem are encouraged to give Alcoholics Anonymous a try.

The early members of Alcoholics Anonymous who wrote this book within four years of its founding were almost all men, and almost all "low-bottom drunks". At that time, recovery from alcoholism was almost unheard of, so these early AA's knew their recovery, therefore their survival, was contingent on following a few simple suggestions. One of the most important of these suggestions was to carry their message of recovery to the alcoholic who was still suffering the consequences of drinking. In those days almost all those showing up in hospitals and sanitariums from the effects of drinking, therefore available for contact by recovering alcoholics, were male. So it is not surprising that when these early recovering alcoholics wrote a book describing their experience of recovery, that its message was addressed primarily to the male alcoholic. For the same reason, and in like manner, references to, and examples of, family members of an alcoholic are most frequently presented as female.

Alcoholism makes no distinction regarding age, ethnicity, nationality, economic status, or gender orientation. It is one hundred percent unbiased, entirely open-minded and equanimous, neither favoring nor shunning anyone with a drinking problem. Thus the message of recovery from Alcoholics Anonymous is likewise egalitarian.

So, if you are seeking a solution to a drinking problem, have begun reading this book, and encountered difficulty (sometimes insurmountable) with its gender terminology and seeming prejudice (as many AA members have), we beg of you to undertake whatever means necessary in order to remain with us on the road to recovery, whether that means scratching out the "he's" and "men's", "husbands'" and "wives'" and writing in terms more appropriate and relatable or inserting epithets in the margins: after all the message remains the same.

At any rate, we hope terminology of any kind in this book is not a cause for anyone to turn away from the solution it offers to the problem of alcoholism.

Fifth Traditionists Alcoholics Anonymous Newcomers' Meeting

GSR: Linda B. [redacted]@gmail.com

CONFIDENTIAL: This is background for the 71st General Service Conference, and as such may be a confidential A.A. document. Distribution is limited to A.A. members. Placement of this material in a location accessible to the public, including aspects of the Internet, such as Web sites available to the public, may breach the confidentiality of the material and the anonymity of members, since it may contain members' full names and addresses.

May 5, 2019

District 10, Business Meeting Bedford, IN

Meeting Called to Order: Ellery L., 1:00pm, Open with Serenity Prayer

12 Traditions long form: Read by Linda B.

New GSR : Arielle M.

Attendance : 8 with 6 voting members

Secretary's Report: Read by Jerry N. for the month of March 2019. Motion made to accept report, report accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer not present, motion made to table report, report tabled.

DCM Report: Ellery gave brief review of Pre-Conference passing of items for the upcoming GSO Conference. The District 10 website (Area23aa.org/district-10) is up to date waiting for new Meeting List. District 10 can also be found on Area23aa.org, and selecting District 10 from the Districts in Indiana.

Meeting

Election for Alternate Secretary and IC/CPC Committee Chair, for the year beginning in January. No accepted nominations for Alternate Secretary, motion was made to table Alternate Secretary election until June meeting, motion accepted Alternate Secretary election to be held in June. IC/CPC Committee Chair, found Arielle M. nomination for Committee Chair with no other nominations. Arielle was elected by majority vote.

Old Business

Paul S., announced upcoming GSR Workshop and panel discussion on Court System and AA Relationship. Date to be Determined

New Business

Steve B., Phone Committee Chair gave a brief presentation on District 10 Hotline. In order for a person to be eligible to carry the phone requires a minimum of six months sobriety. The calls received are inquiries for additional information from individuals for themselves or someone else in need. The plan is to assist the caller in finding fellowship. Carrier of the phone will find member on the list who will contact caller and assist in 12th Step Call or meeting. Also discussed were suggestions for maintaining Call List. The Handout shared at today's meeting is very useful. Next meeting we can have training on how to carry the phone.

Linda B., GSR from 5th Traditionists presented Addendum of Gender Terms her group composed for District 10 approval. It is hoped this Addendum can be added to the forward in the fifth edition of the Big Book. The Addendum of Gender Terms is written with the intent of assuring that all who are seeking answers (help) for a drinking problem are encouraged to give Alcoholics Anonymous a try. Motion was made for voting on the addendum as presented to District 10. The vote was unanimous for Approval by District 10. This District Approval allows Addendum to move forward to Area and AA Board of Trustees with Area Delegate direction.

Committee Reports

Corrections: Linda B.

Treatment: No Report

Meeting List: No Report

Literature: Diane E., two new pamphlets, The God Word, and AA Al Anon / Mental Health Issues & Their Sponsors.

Phone: Steve B. will contact Treasurer Marcie M.

IC/CPC: No Report

Group Announcements: Spencer Meetings, Sunday, Big Book of Hope Study Group 7:00pm. Thursday, Keep it Simple Group 7:00pm. Next Area Assembly, June 23, Jonesville Rd, Columbus, IN

Meeting Adjourned: Ellery L., 3:00pm

Part 1:

Trustees' Literature Committee History and Actions: Fourth Edition "Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*"

January 29, 1994 Trustees' Committee on Literature:

Discuss and Consider the need for a Fourth Edition of the "Big Book" Alcoholics Anonymous: The committee forwarded an area request for a Fourth Edition of the Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous to the Conference Literature Committee, with the suggestion that more information be gathered on need and interest from the Fellowship.

July 30, 1994 Trustees' Committee on Literature:

Discuss Big Book Issues

- a. Fourth Edition- Two letters were sent to delegates and alternates seeking Fellowship input on the desirability of a Fourth Edition of the Big Book Alcoholics Anonymous, and that their input be returned by October 28, 1994 for review by the trustees' Literature Committee.

October 29, 1994 Trustees' Committee on Literature:

Discuss Big Book- whether to do a fourth edition or not

In response to a request from the 1994 Conference Literature Committee that "a letter be sent to all delegates seeking fellowship input on the desirability of a Fourth Edition" the trustees' Literature Committee discussed the feedback from areas.

It was reported to date that 29 areas have responded with a "yes" to go ahead with a Fourth Edition (without changing the first 164 pages), and 18 areas have responded with a "no" to not go ahead with a Fourth Edition, and 5 areas were evenly divided or abstained. The total is 52 areas responding as of Friday, October 28, 1994.

In the meantime, an additional 150 letters have arrived at G.S.O.'s literature desk from A.A. members individually, from A.A. groups and from districts. Many areas developed detailed questionnaires in order to respond to the letter seeking Fellowship input, and some areas asked for more time.

The committee suggested a researcher be asked to help compile this extensive material and that a more comprehensive report be submitted to the trustees' Literature Committee for further evaluation.

January 28, 1995 Trustees' Committee on Literature:

Alcoholics Anonymous

- a. Discuss report (responses from areas)- whether to move toward publication of a Fourth Edition of the Big Book

The trustees' Literature Committee recommended that the report "Should There be a Fourth Edition of the Big Book, A Report on Area Responses" be forwarded to the Conference literature Committee for review. The committee recognized that the postscript, pp. 41-43 in the report, was not solicited nor endorsed by the committee.

October 28, 1995 Trustees' Committee on Literature:

Report of the Subcommittee re: Big Book Questionnaire and Outline

Fran P. reported on the progress of the Big Book Questionnaire Subcommittee. Fran is gathering suggestions from the Committee which he will receive, collate, prepare and report on prior to the January Board weekend.

January 27, 1996 Trustees' Committee on Literature:

Report of the Subcommittee re: Big Book Questionnaire and Outline

The committee heard the report of the Big Book Questionnaire and Outline subcommittee and forwarded the draft outline of proposed content of a Fourth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, to the Conference Literature Committee for its feedback and further guidance on how to proceed.

July 27, 1996 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Old Business

It was decided that the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, possible Fourth Edition be the first item on the Trustees' Literature Committee agenda at their November meeting and that the information on Confidentiality being prepared by the Publication Department for a *Box 459* article be a topic of discussion at the same meeting.

November 2, 1996 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous- possible Fourth Edition

- a) The trustees' Literature Committee recommends to the Conference Literature Committee the development of a draft Fourth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, in keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that:

The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Prefaces, the Forewords, "The Doctor's Opinion," "Dr. Bob's Nightmare," and the Appendices remain as is.

- b) The trustees' Literature Committee recommends that a separate publication be developed to include stories dropped from the First, Second and Third Editions of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous.
- c) Once developed, each of the above publications would be reviewed by the trustees' Literature Committee and recommendations would be made to the General Service Conference through the Conference Literature Committee.

February 2, 1997 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, be unchanged without approval of three quarters of the groups of Alcoholics Anonymous

The committee discussed the request that the Big Book be unchanged without approval of three quarters of the groups of Alcoholics Anonymous and will respond with a letter to the sender explaining that the Conference has taken such action that it can in regard to protecting the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous.

August 2, 1997 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Draft of Fourth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous

A Subcommittee on the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous was appointed with Richard R. chairing and Jackie J., David E., Garry Mc. and staff secretary as members. The Subcommittee chairperson noted that the first of two meetings to be held before the next full meeting of the committee would discuss the process to be followed and bring that approach back to the trustees' Literature Committee in November.

November 1, 1997 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Fourth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous- Subcommittee Report

The committee heard the subcommittee report on the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous. The subcommittee continues to move slowly and deliberately in its considerations. All areas of discussion related to the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Big Book remain open.

Book of Dropped Stories- Big Book Subcommittee Report

The committee took no action on this agenda item since little progress could be made on the development of this book until decisions are made relative to the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Big Book.

January 31, 1998 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

The chairperson of the Subcommittee on the Fourth Edition Big Book gave a progress report to the Trustees' Literature Committee, which will be forwarded to the Conference Literature Committee.

New Business

b) Consider an area's request to add Dr. Bob's Story (Dr. Bob's Nightmare) as Chapter Twelve to the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

The Trustees' Literature Committee considered an area request to remove Dr. Bob's Story (Dr. Bob's Nightmare) from the story section and add it to the Fourth Edition as an additional chapter to the current main text of the 164 pages of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, thereby increasing the number of chapters from eleven to twelve and referred the matter to the Subcommittee on the Fourth Edition Big Book.

e) Request from a group that the Conference adopt a resolution regarding stories for possible inclusion in a Fourth Edition of the Big Book.

The Trustees' Literature Committee considered the request from a group that the Conference adopt a resolution regarding stories for possible inclusion in a Fourth Edition of the Big Book and referred the matter to the Subcommittee on the Fourth Edition Big Book.

f) In a unanimous decision, the Trustees' Literature Committee moved that members of this committee not submit their stories for possible inclusion in the Fourth Edition of the Big Book.

August 1, 1998 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Draft of Fourth Edition Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

The committee discussed the progress of the draft copy of the Fourth Edition Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The chairperson of the subcommittee on the Fourth Edition Big Book reviewed the process established by the subcommittee to accomplish its work as this project continues to be developed.

The subcommittee is always mindful of the two following Advisory Actions:

1997

It was recommended that:

“A draft Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed and a progress report be brought to the 1988 Conference Literature Committee, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that:

‘The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Dr. Bob’s Nightmare,’ and the Appendices remain as is.’

1998

It was recommended that:

“A draft Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous* continue to be developed and a progress report be brought to the 1999 Conference Literature Committee, keeping in mind, that if a Fourth Edition Big Book is published, it will require Conference approval and the 1995 Advisory Action that: ‘The First 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Dr. Bob’s Nightmare,’ and the Appendices remain as is.”

In order to address certain editorial issues related to the Fourth Edition Big Book project, recommendations from the subcommittee on the Fourth Edition Big Book were accepted by the trustees’ Literature Committee will to be forwarded to the Conference literature Committee. These recommendations are as follows:

1. In keeping with the 1997 and 1998 General Service Conference Advisory Actions, the trustees’ Literature Committee recommended to the 1999 Conference Literature Committee that the Publications Department of the General Service Office maintain the following editorial responsibilities regarding the Fourth Edition Big Book Project:
 - Editorial “fine tuning” such as footnotes, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, updating, jacket materials, page numbers, etc. Thus, page numbers are likely to change for content after page 164.
 - Coordinating the flow of work between the book designer, typesetters, proofreaders and the production people, who order the paper and schedule the printing with the book manufacturer;
 - In the case of the proposed Fourth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the G.S.O. editors would prepare or coordinate new material and changes such as:

New Material	Changes
Cover and jacket design	Title Page
Jacket copy	Contents page
Preface	Factual material that appears in footnotes
Foreword to the Fourth Edition	Introductions to personal stories
Index	

2. The trustees’ Literature Committee recommended to the 1999 Conference Literature Committee that based on past precedent in regard to previous editions of the book

Alcoholics Anonymous, the A.A. history book, and the *Daily Reflections*, any draft copy of the Fourth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* be considered a work-in-progress, and as such, is confidential; the operating principle being that any story material brought forward to the Conference Literature Committee will be done on a for “their-eyes-only” basis adhering to the principle of the “right of decision,” and not brought forward for any other general distribution until publication.

Old Business

Draft of book of stories dropped from the First, Second and Third Editions of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

The committee reaffirmed the statement of its November 1, 1997 meeting:

“The committee took no action on this agenda item since little progress could be made on the development of this book until decisions are made relative to the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Big Book.”

October 31, 1998 Trustees’ Literature Committee:

Draft of Fourth Edition Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

It was reported that a first round reading of all 1,222 stories submitted for possible inclusion in a Fourth Edition Big Book had been completed.

The chairman of the Subcommittee on the 4th Edition gave a brief summary of the committee’s activities. The committee then reviewed a report given by the Subcommittee Chairperson on April 23, 1998 to the 48th General Service Conference. The report is titled, *Progress Report to the 48th General Service Conference (1998) by the Subcommittee on the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*- April 23, 1998*. This report will be sent out to all Panel 47, Panel 48 and Panel 49 Conference members as background material related to the proposed Fourth Edition Big Book. It will be accompanied by an additional report entitled, *The Big Book and The General Service Conference of A.A.*, along with a copy of the two recommendations made by the trustees’ Literature Committee at their August 1, 1998 meeting.

The subcommittee has set for itself two tasks for its next meeting:

1. To complete a second round review and evaluation of stories #931 through #1222.
2. To review and re-evaluate stories #431 through #930 in the category called “On Hold.” These are stories that 4 out of 6 committee members liked. Any member may bring forward a story from this category for reconsideration. This reconsideration may lead to a story being moved from the “4 out of 6” to the “5 out of 6” or “6 out of 6” category. Once the reconsideration work has been completed, only stories in the categories, “6 out of 6,” or “5 out of 6” will be kept for review in the final story selection process (stories #1-430 have been read and evaluated three times).

January 30, 1999 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Progress Report on the Fourth Edition Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous

The chairperson of the Subcommittee on the Fourth Edition Big Book gave a progress report to the trustees' Literature Committee which will be forwarded to the Conference Literature Committee.

July 31, 1999 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Discuss Ongoing Projects:

- a) Draft Fourth Edition Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous
 - The Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Fourth Edition Big Book gave a brief report of the subcommittee's July 30, 1999 meeting to the trustees' Literature Committee.
 - The committee formed a new Subcommittee on the Fourth Edition Big Book, consisting of the following members: Garry Mc., chair; David E., Marne H., Beth R., Jim C., John K., Vinnie Mc. and Lois F., to continue work on developing a draft copy of the Fourth Edition Big Book.
 - The trustees' Literature Committee forwarded a request to the trustees' Conference Committee for an opportunity for the chairman of the Subcommittee on the Fourth Edition Big Book to make a report to the 50th General Service Conference.
- b) Draft of book of stories dropped from the First, Second and Third Editions of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous

The committee, again, reaffirmed the statement of its November 1, 1997 meeting:

"The committee took no action on this agenda item since little progress could be made on the development of this book until decisions are made relative to the publication of the Fourth Edition of the Big Book."

October 30, 1999 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Fourth Edition Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous

Garry Mc., chairperson of the subcommittee, gave a brief report of the subcommittee's October 27, 1999 meeting. The subcommittee plans to send the Conference Literature Committee a representative sample of the selected stories to obtain feedback. Non-subcommittee members who receive stories will be asked to adhere to the confidentiality policy of the subcommittee. The Trustees' Literature Committee will meet with the Conference Literature Committee prior to the opening of the Conference to discuss the stories and receive input from the Conference Literature Committee. Following the Conference, the subcommittee will make its final selection of stories

and then pass the stories on the Publications for editing. The proposed draft of the Fourth Edition Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, will then be forwarded to the General Service Conference for approval.

January 29, 2000 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Fourth Edition Big Book

Garry Mc., chair of the subcommittee, reported that the subcommittee has met twice since the last Board weekend. After hearing his report and the recommendations from the subcommittee, the trustees' Literature Committee recommends that the Conference Literature Committee be sent the 38 stories selected by the subcommittee and a list of stories in the Third Edition that are suggested to be included in the proposed Fourth Edition. These stories will be on special water-marked paper marked "confidential" and the members of the Conference Literature Committee will be asked to adhere to the Confidentiality policy of the subcommittee. In addition, that same information will be sent to the members of the trustees' Literature Committee not currently serving on the Big Book Subcommittee.

In anticipation of a joint meeting of the trustees' and Conference Literature Committees on Saturday, April 29, Richard R. will work with Bill A., Garry Mc. and Lois F. in developing an Agenda for the meeting. The Big Book Subcommittee looks forward to receiving input about the selected stories at the joint meeting. Following the Conference, the subcommittee will give serious consideration to all input received from the Conference Literature Committee prior to recommending to the trustees' Literature Committee which stories should be forwarded to Publications for editing. After the stories are edited, a draft of the Fourth Edition Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous* will be forwarded to the General Service Conference through the Conference Literature Committee for approval.

July 29, 2000 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Fourth Edition Big Book

Marne H. reported that the Fourth Edition Big Book Subcommittee met Thursday, July 27, 2000 and held a lunch meeting on July 29. The subcommittee found the joint meeting of the Conference and trustees' Literature Committees very helpful in terms of selecting new stories for inclusion in the Fourth Edition Big Book.

After reconsidering 17 stories from the Third Edition Big Book proposed for inclusion in the Fourth Edition, the subcommittee unanimously chose to drop one story and add one story. It was emphasized that no final decision has been made regarding the number of stories to be included in the Fourth Edition pending final determination of the length and content of the book.

The subcommittee discussed adding Twelve Concepts (short form) to the Fourth Edition and could not reach consensus.

The Publications Department plans to send to subcommittee the edited stories in early October to review before their next scheduled meeting on October 26, 2000.

October 28, 2000 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Fourth Edition Big Book

Marne H., vice chair, reported that the Fourth Edition Big Book Subcommittee met Thursday, October 26th and briefly on Saturday, October 28th. A report of these meetings will be sent to all committee members Tuesday, October 31, 2000. The draft compilation of revised stories with editing notes will be distributed to the subcommittee the first week of January 2001 and to the Conference Literature Committee and non-subcommittee trustees' Literature Committee members with working titles after the January 2001 board meeting.

Based on the subcommittee's request, the committee agreed to forward a suggestion to the Conference Literature Committee that, since the Preface which is found on Page xi of the Third Edition of the Big Book was not written by Bill Wilson, the Preface be replaced by a new Preface in the Fourth Edition of the Big Book. This suggestion will appear as a separate agenda item with background material for consideration by the 2001 Conference Literature Committee.

Based on a request from this subcommittee, Jim C. reported that the trustees' Conference Committee has agreed to include a brief presentation and question and answer sessions on the history of the committee process for the Fourth Edition of the Big Book in the opening session of the 2001 General Service Conference. This presentation would not advocate for or against the Fourth Edition, but would recap the process that has been used to prepare the draft.

January 27, 2001 Trustees' Literature Committee:

Fourth Edition Big Book

Marne H., vice-chair of the Fourth Edition Big Book Subcommittee, presented minutes of the subcommittee's Thursday, January 25, 2001 meeting.

The committee agreed to forward a request from the Fourth Edition Big Book Subcommittee that the Publications Department be responsible for the order of the presentation of stories in the Fourth Edition Big Book following Page 164 and "Doctor Bob's Nightmare" to the 2001 Conference Literature Committee.

The committee agreed to forward a request from the Fourth Edition Big Book Subcommittee to the General Service Office to contact all current and previous subcommittee, trustees' and Conference Literature Committee members after the 2001 General Service Conference to request that any material in their possession pertaining to the Fourth Edition Big Book be returned to the General Service Office. The draft manuscripts of the 1,222 stories originally submitted for consideration for the Fourth Edition Big Book have been held in trust by all involved. This is a customary request to protect the confidentiality of all stories submitted by A.A. members.

The committee agreed to forward the binder presentation of draft stories for the Fourth Edition Big Book to the 2001 Conference Literature Committee.

Requests for Conference Agenda Items

- The committee discussed four different proposals to change the Fourth Edition Big Book Conference distribution process. The committee reviewed the 1999 General Service Conference Advisory Action which reads as follows:

“Based on precedent in regard to previous editions of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the A.A. history book, and *Daily Reflections*, any draft copy of the Fourth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* be considered a work-in-progress, and as such, is confidential; the operating principle being that any story material brought forward to the Conference Literature Committee will be done on a “for-their-eyes-only” basis adhering to the principle of the “right of decision” and not brought forward for any other general distribution until publication.”

This 1999 Advisory Action was also reaffirmed by the 2000 Conference Literature Committee.

The committee forwarded these four proposals to change the Fourth Edition Big Book Conference distribution process to the 2001 Conference Literature Committee.

- The committee forwarded the following request: “That in the future no draft copy of any literature be submitted for approval by the General Service Conference without Conference members having the opportunity to review that literature” to the 2001 Conference Literature Committee.

July 28, 2001 Trustees’ Literature Committee:

Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

The committee discussed two requests for changes to the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*: a request to add a glossary to future printings of the Big Book and a request to restore “The Doctor’s Opinion” to page 1 of the future printings of the Big Book. It was noted that the Fourth Edition of the Big Book Subcommittee had discussed many requests for changes to the Big Book and had decided to make no changes. The committee unanimously agrees, keeping in mind the precedent set by the Fourth Edition Big Book Subcommittee and the 1995 Conference Advisory Action which reads, “The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Doctor Bob’s Nightmare’ and the Appendices remain as it, “the no action be taken on these two requests.

Part II

Conference Literature Committee Advisory Actions: Fourth Edition “Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*”

1997

It was recommended that:

A draft Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed and a progress report be brought to the 1998 Conference Literature Committee, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that:

“The first 164 pages of the Big book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Dr. Bob’s Nightmare,’ and the Appendices remain as is.”

1998

It was recommended that:

A draft Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, continue to be developed and a progress report brought to the 1999 Conference Literature Committee, keeping in mind that, if a Fourth Edition Big Book is published, it will require Conference approval and the 1995 Advisory Action that: “The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Dr. Bob’s Nightmare,’ and the Appendices remains as is.”

1999

It was recommended that:

A progress report and/or a draft copy of the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be brought to the 2000 Conference Literature Committee, keeping in mind, that if a Fourth Edition Big Book is published, it will require Conference approval and the 1995 Advisory Action that: “The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Dr. Bob’s Nightmare,’ and the Appendices remain as it.”

The Publications Department of the General Service Office maintain the following editorial responsibilities regarding the Fourth Edition Big Book Project:

- Editorial “fine tuning” such as footnotes, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, updating, jacket materials, page numbers, etc. Thus, page numbers are likely to change for content after page 164.
- Coordinating the flow of work between the book designer, typesetters, proofreaders and the production people, who order the paper and schedule the printing with the book manufacturer;

- In the case of the proposed Fourth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the G.S.O. editors would prepare or coordinate new material and changes such as:

New Material

Cover and jacket design

Jacket copy

Preface

Foreword to the Fourth Edition

Changes

Title Page

Contents Page

Factual material that appears in footnotes

Introductions to personal stories

Based on precedent in regard to previous editions of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the A.A. history book, and *Daily Reflections*, any draft copy of the Fourth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* be considered a work-in-progress, and as such, is confidential; the operating principle being that any story material brought forward to the Conference Literature Committee will be done on a “for-their-eyes-only” basis adhering to the principle of the “right of decision,” and not brought forward for any other general distribution until publication.

2000

It was recommended that:

Following serious consideration of the comments and suggestions expressed at a joint meeting of the trustees’ and Conference Literature Committees about the proposed new stories from the Third Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* to be included in the Fourth Edition, a draft copy of the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, or a progress report be brought to the 2001 Conference Literature Committee, keeping in mind that if a Fourth Edition Big Book is published, it will require Conference approval and the 1995 Advisory Action that: “The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Dr. Bob’s Nightmare,’ and the Appendices remain as is.”

2001

It was recommended that:

The Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be approved keeping in mind the 1995 Conference Advisory Action which reads, “The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Dr. Bob’s Nightmare,’ and the Appendices remain as is” and keeping in mind the 1999 Conference Action which reads, “The Publications Department of the General Service Office maintain the following specific editorial responsibilities regarding the Fourth Edition Big Book Project:

- Editorial “fine tuning” such as footnotes, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, updating, jacket materials, page numbers, etc. Thus, page numbers are likely to change for content after page 164.
- Coordinating the flow of work between the book designer, typesetters, proofreaders and the production people, who order the paper and schedule the printing with the book manufacturer;

- In the case of the proposed Fourth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the G.S.O. editors would prepare or coordinate new material and changes such as:

New Material

Cover and jacket design

Jacket copy

Preface

Foreword to the Fourth Edition

Changes

Title Page

Contents Page

Factual material that appears in footnotes

Introductions to personal stories

Note: In keeping with the 1997 Conference Action which requested the development of a publication of stories dropped from the First, Second and Third Editions of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the committee asked that the trustees' Literature Committee bring a draft manuscript of these stories to the 2002 Conference Literature Committee.

Keeping in mind the 1995 Conference Advisory Action which reads, "The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, 'The Doctor's Opinion,' 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare,' and the Appendices remain as is," the current Preface be updated for the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

The Publications Department of the General Service Office be responsible for the order of stories in the Fourth Edition of the Big Book following page 164 and "Doctor Bob's Nightmare" which will remain as the first story in the "Pioneers of A.A." section.

Note: The committee suggested that the Personal Stories Section Titles in the Fourth Edition of the Big Book remain "Pioneers of A.A.," "They Stopped in Time," and "They Lost Nearly All."

The Twelve Concepts (short form), with a brief introduction, be added to the Appendices Section in future printings of the Big Book.

G.S.O.'s A.A. Web site address be added to the Appendix "How to Get in Touch with A.A." in future printings of the Big Book.

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2021 Conference Committee on Literature

ITEM D: +Consider development of a draft Fourth Edition of the book *Alcohólicos Anónimos*.

Background Notes: +Agenda item forwarded from the 70th G.S.C.

Excerpt from February 1, 2020 TLC Meeting Report:

The trustees' Literature Committee reviewed and **agreed to forward** to the 2020 Conference Committee on Literature a request to consider development of a draft Fourth Edition of the book *Alcohólicos Anónimos*.

Excerpt from November 2, 2019 TLC Meeting Report:

The committee tabled discussion on the 2019 Conference floor action which resulted in an Advisory Action: "That the proposed floor action that 'A draft Fourth Edition of the Spanish Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, be developed and a progress report be brought to the 2020 General Service Conference' be committed to the trustees' Literature Committee" until the February 2020 meeting.

Excerpt from July 27, 2019 TLC Meeting Report:

The committee requested the staff secretary explore additional background information to provide for the committee to review the topic further at the November 2019 meeting.

2019 Conference Advisory Action:

Note: The following FLOOR ACTION resulted in an Advisory Action:

The proposed floor action that "A draft Fourth Edition of the Spanish Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, be developed and a progress report be brought to the 2020 General Service Conference" be committed to the trustees' Literature Committee.

NOTE: A motion to commit or recommit a recommendation (or floor action) is a procedural action. It does not approve or disapprove the recommendation under debate, nor does it mean that the recommendation will be implemented. The motion to recommit moves the discussion of the recommendation from the floor of the Conference to a trustee's committee or corporate board.

(Over)

Background:

1. History of the Third Edition of the book *Alcohólicos Anónimos*.
2. 1.6.20 Report on feedback received by Publishing Department related to the Third Edition of the book *Alcohólicos Anónimos*.
3. Distribution rates for the Third Edition of the book *Alcohólicos Anónimos*.

Development of the Third Edition Spanish-language Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*

Background:

April 2004 Conference Advisory Action: “It was recommended that: A draft Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, be developed by the trustees' Literature Committee and that a progress report be brought back to the 2005 Conference Literature Committee, in keeping with the trustees' recommendations on contents, process and story solicitation, as follows:

I. Contents

- A. The Third Edition Spanish-language Big Book to be similar in page count to the English Fourth Edition Big Book.
- B. The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, the Preface, the Forewords, “The Doctor’s Opinion,” “Dr. Bob’s Nightmare,” and the Appendices will undergo a complete review to assure accuracy of translation and consistency of style and tone throughout the text. As in translations of all languages, the Publications Department strives to reflect the best possible translation of Bill W.’s writings and does not require Conference approval.
- C. Personal Stories:
 - Retain selected stories from current Spanish-language Second Edition.
 - Select stories from A.A.’s *La Viña* magazine.
 - Select new stories from Spanish-speaking membership.
 - Stories to be designated to three main sections similar to the English Fourth Edition Big Book.

II. Story Solicitation

- A. Within the United States and Canada and internationally to Spanish-speaking countries.

III. Story Selection Process

- A. To be under the direction of the trustees’ Literature subcommittee on the Third Edition Spanish-language Big Book.
- B. Story selection subcommittee:
 - All bilingual – Spanish and English
 - Spanish Editors
 - Spanish-speaking Staff Members
 - Chair to appoint some subcommittee members from the Fellowship

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C. Basic Selection Criteria:

- To use the same criteria as the English Fourth Edition Big Book based on Bill W.'s recommendations.
- Each story must, as Bill W. recommended, reach out to the newcomer who is still looking for the A.A. solution.
- Each story must be a standard A.A. story that tells what it was like, what happened, and what it is like today."

Trustees' Literature Committee July 30, 2004: "The committee reviewed the 2004 Advisory Action pertaining to the Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*. The committee requested that the secretary send a memo soliciting Spanish stories to all Conference members, Spanish-language District DCMs, Spanish Literature Committee chairs, all central offices and intergroups listed in the U.S. and Canada, and Spanish-language country G.S.O.s. The deadline date for submissions is September 1, 2005."

Trustees' Literature Committee October 30, 2004: "The committee secretary reported that mailings have gone to all Conference members, Spanish-language D.C.M.s, Spanish Literature Committee chairs, all Central/Intergroup Offices listed in the U.S. and Canada, and G.S.O.s in Spanish-language countries. *Box 4-5-9*, The A.A. Grapevine, and La Viña continue to include story solicitations."

April 2005 Conference Advisory Action: "It was recommended that: The Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, continue to be developed, keeping in mind the 2004 Conference Advisory Action regarding the trustees' recommendations on contents, process and story solicitation and that a progress report and/or draft copy be brought to the 2006 Conference Literature Committee."

Trustees' Literature Committee July 30, 2005: The committee discussed the 2005 Advisory Action "that the Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos* continue to be developed, keeping in mind the 2004 Conference Advisory Action regarding the trustees' recommendation on contents, process and story solicitation and that a progress report and/or draft copy be brought to the 2006 Conference Literature Committee." The Chair appointed Murray M., Chairperson, and Ray M. to the trustees' Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos* subcommittee.

Trustees' Literature Committee October 29, 2005: The committee reviewed the Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book Subcommittee report and noted that 130 stories have been submitted. The committee agreed that the selection process should not be rushed and requested that the deadline for story submission be extended until June 2006. It would be ideal if the stories represented the experience of a wider-range of Spanish-speaking alcoholics.

Trustees' Literature Committee January 28, 2006: The committee reviewed and agreed to forward the Progress Report from the subcommittee on the Spanish-Language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos* to the 2006 Conference Committee on Literature.

April 2006 Conference Advisory Action: "It was recommended that: the Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, continue to be developed and that a report be brought back to the 2007 Conference Literature Committee, in keeping with a 2004 Conference Advisory Action on contents, story solicitation, and process."

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Trustees' Literature Committee July 29, 2006: The committee reviewed a report from the subcommittee on the Spanish-Language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, and noted that the deadline for story submission was June 30, 2006. A total of 173 stories have been submitted.

The chair appointed Murray M. chairperson to the trustees' Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, subcommittee.

Trustees' Literature Committee October 28, 2006: The committee reviewed the Progress Report from the Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos* subcommittee with appreciation.

Trustees' Literature Committee January 27, 2007

The committee **agreed to forward** the "Final Report on the Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*," to the 2007 Conference Committee on Literature.

April 2007 Conference Advisory Action:

The committee recommended that the Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be produced, keeping in mind the 2004 Conference Advisory Action on contents, story selection, and process.

Activity:

As a result of a request by the 2004 Conference Literature Committee and the 2004 General Service Conference Advisory Action, a subcommittee was formed to develop a draft Spanish-language Third Edition Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, following the trustees' Literature Committee recommendations on contents, process and story solicitation, noted above.

In August 2004, a request for Spanish-language stories was mailed to all Conference members, Spanish-language D.C.M.s, Spanish Literature Committee chairs, all Central/Intergroup Offices listed in the U.S. and Canada, and G.S.O.s in Spanish-language countries with a deadline of September 1, 2005.

In August 2004, a request for resumes for the future story selection subcommittee, which is a subcommittee of the trustees' Literature Committees' Subcommittee on the Third Edition Spanish-language Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, was mailed to all Conference members, Spanish-language D.C.M.s, Spanish Literature Committee chairs, all Central/Intergroup Offices listed in the U.S. and Canada, and G.S.O.s in Spanish-language countries with a deadline of November 1, 2004.

Thirty-one resumes were received. At the request of the trustees' Literature Committee chair, Greg M., general manager, Mike P., trustees' Literature Committee chair, Julio E., Group Services/Spanish Correspondent for the U.S. and Canada and Mary D., secretary, thoroughly reviewed the resumes and interviewed five candidates from the U. S. and Canada.

On January 29, 2005, the chair of the trustees' Literature Committee, Mike P., announced the selection of two bilingual A.A. members; Oscar A., Houston, Texas, and Cesar B. D., Caguas, Puerto Rico, to participate in the story selection subcommittee on the Third Edition Spanish-Language Big Book at this meeting. The story selection subcommittee also included

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the A.A.W.S. Spanish Editors, John D. and Angel C., the editor of La Viña, Hernan M., and Julio E., the bi-lingual GSO staff member responsible for Spanish correspondence (U.S./Canada.)

The subcommittee on the Third Edition Spanish-language Big Book, *Alcohólicos Anónimos*, continued to meet and report to the 2005 trustees' Literature Committee and the 2006 Conference Literature Committee.

The subcommittee on the story selection for the Third Edition of the Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous* in Spanish met for the first time on Sunday April 24, 2005 and developed a work plan. The subcommittee agreed to start with a review of the stories written originally in Spanish in the current edition. The purpose of the revision is to determine which and how many of the stories would be used in the new edition. The subcommittee also agreed to begin the process of reviewing the existing translation and to meet by telephone conference call every two weeks.

The Third Edition Spanish-language Big Book Story Selection subcommittee carefully reviewed the translation and provided suggestions for changes, as well as overall grammatical fine tuning. The changes suggested will provide a greater consistency with the original work in English.

Story Selection Process:

Up to January 2006, 136 stories had been received. The subcommittee expressed their gratitude to the trustees' Literature Committee for the extension of the story submission deadline from September 1, 2005 until June 30th of 2006. The extension provided a greater opportunity for Spanish-speaking A.A. members to share their stories, offering a wider pool of stories from which to select the stories that would be used for the 3rd edition.

On January 12, 2006 the Story Selection Subcommittee met via conference call with Murray M., Chair and Ray M., of the trustees' Subcommittee on the Third Edition Spanish-language Big Book to provide them with an update and an overview of the tentative timeline for the work at hand.

In March 2006 the subcommittee completed the review of the Spanish translation of the first 164 pages and concentrated on the story selection process. The subcommittee agreed to follow the story pre-selection process used for the English Fourth Edition Big Book of establishing three general categories: pre-selected stories, those not selected and stories for possible consideration. This pre-selection would be determined by combining subcommittee member's evaluations in a single form and looking for substantial unanimity to determine the category in which each story would be placed. The committee also agreed to complete the pre-selection process of all stories submitted before revisiting "possible stories" individually.

The subcommittee agreed to look for a minimum of 30 stories, and anticipated completing the pre-selection by July 2006. The selection of stories follows the general criteria observed for the selection of stories for the English Fourth Edition of how it was, what happened and how it is today. Further guidance for the selection of stories was taken from the following comments by Bill W.:

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In a June 14, 1954 letter to Bernard S., Bill wrote:

“The story section of the Big Book is far more important than most of us think. It is our principle means of identifying with the reader outside of A.A.; it is the written equivalent of hearing speakers at an A.A. meeting; it is our show window of results. To increase the power and variety of this display to the utmost should be, therefore, no routine or hurried job. The best will be none too good. The difference between ‘good’ and ‘excellent’ can be the difference between prolonged misery and recovery, between life and death for the reader outside A.A.”

And in a letter to a potential author of a Big Book story, Bill wrote:

“As you are probably aware the stories we need will be of the straight A.A. variety; the kind which would be most effective with the beginner on our program. We are looking for straight personal narratives which describes the drinking history, how the newcomer arrived in Alcoholics Anonymous, how A.A. affected him, and what A.A. has since accomplished for him.”

After July 2006, the subcommittee continued pre-selecting the 173 stories received up to the June 30th deadline. The pre-selection was completed by August 2006. A face-to-face meeting was organized in New York for September 4 and 5, 2006 to begin the final selection of stories. Pre-selected stories were organized based on the number of subcommittee members who pre-selected them, continuing on a descending order according to the number of votes in favor of selecting the story.

From this process, a primary list was developed containing a total of 28 stories. A secondary list, containing 22 other stories that could be selected, was also agreed upon. The primary list of possibilities contains 17 stories written by men and 11 by women. Country of origin and a high or low bottom were noted, looking for a pool of options with the widest possible diversity.

During the September 4 and 5, 2006 meeting in New York, the subcommittee began a more in-depth review of the pre-selected stories. Stories confirmed as good reflections of experience, strength and hope were placed on yet another list, pending final review and possible recommendation for addition to the Third Edition Big Book in Spanish.

On September 28, 2006 the subcommittee on the Story Selection for the Third Edition Big Book in Spanish met via conference call with Murray M., chair of the trustee's Subcommittee on the Third Edition Book. At this meeting, the subcommittee on the Story Selection shared a breakdown of the most recent activities and a tentative schedule for completion of the Third Edition Spanish-language Big Book.

The subcommittee selected 32 stories reflecting the experience of Spanish-speaking A.A.s from the U.S.A., the Caribbean, South America, Central America and Europe and 9 of the original stories were retained.

On April 2007 the General Service Conference recommended the production of the Spanish Third Edition Big Book. Working closely with the Publication department, the subcommittee has strived to create the best translation of Bill W.'s writings, always mindful that translations of A.A. literature do not require Conference-approval. The subcommittee noted that the past

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practices of developing translations of the Big Book into Spanish and French have been as varied as the population for whom the literature was created.

The process of selecting new stories for the Third Edition Spanish-language Big Book was a labor of love and each story is a “standard A.A. story that tells what it was like, what happened, and what it is like today.”

1.6.20 Report on feedback received by Publishing Department related to the Third Edition of the book Alcohólicos Anónimos

**Requests for revision to
the Spanish BB, *Alcoholicos Anonimos*, 3rd Edition (2008)**

The office of the general manager, U.S. / Canada and the publishing director, A.A.W.S., Inc. have received a series of requests that have been submitted to ask for corrections to perceived “errors” in translation and perceived “omissions” in the translated Spanish Big Book.

Among these communications are the following:

A) 2015, 2017

Submitted by Area 03, Hispanic Linguistic District 16

Accompanied by letter from Adolfo S., Translation and Interpretation Committee Secretary:

- 75 pages of review and suggestions to correct “errors” and “omissions,” from the Prefaces through page 164

B) 2018

Submitted by G.S.O. Spain

Via phone and e-mail

- Request to make changes to the Spanish Big Book and other items of literature

Distribution Numbers SB-1 Third Edition of the Big Book in Spanish	
2005	9,176
2006	8,264
2007	8,785
2008	21,987
2009	13,015
2010	10,053
2011	8,628
2012	8,223
2013	8,156
2014	9,991
2015	7,683
2016	7,345
2017	7,607
2018	9,432
2019 - July	5,810
Total Distribution 2005 - 2019	144,155

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2021 Conference Committee on Literature

ITEM E: +Consider requests to revise the book [*Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*](#).

Background: +Agenda item forwarded from the 70th G.S.C.

1. To remove the phrase “opposite sex” from paragraph two on page 117 in the chapter “Step Twelve.”
 - i. 12.1.19 Group letter confirming request to revise page 117
 - ii. 7.15.19 Group letter with background to revise page 117
2. To reconsider use of the phrase “lustful enough to rape” in paragraph one on page 66 in the chapter “Step Six.”
 - i. 12.13.19 Area letter to revise the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*
 - ii. 7.15.19 Group letter to revise the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*
3. General Service Conference actions regarding changing Bill W.’s writings (See *Agenda Item B.3*)
4. General Service Conference action regarding changing Bill W.’s writings in the book, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

Way Out Northeast
Group # 00010-37-15
Area 15, District 1
St. Petersburg, FL

December 1st 2019

General Service Office
c/o Conference Coordinator
475 Riverside Drive at West 120th Street
New York, NY 10115

RE: Topic for Consideration - Literature Change

Dear Patrick,

I wanted to update the conference as to events transpiring since the original letter was sent in July.

The Area 15 Delegate, Shirley P., took notice of the Topic for Consideration, and we had conversations about ways she could help support the group with this issue. She said that she would enjoy bringing it to conference if we could get the Area behind it. Shirley went on to explain the timelines we could meet if we submitted this at district, before bringing it up at the area for support.

With help from our Delegate, the Area 15 Literature Chair, the District 1 Chair and the District 1 Literature Chair, the following motion was presented at the August District 1 Business meeting for GSRs to bring back to their groups.

"That District 1 bring a motion at the Area Quarterly, to ask our Area 15 Delegate to introduce an item for consideration at the 2020 General Service Conference, to make changes to the third paragraph on page 117 in "The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" to remove the phrase "of the opposite sex".

Our GSRs and DCMs went to work. In hindsight, it probably would have been more productive to discuss the motion before sending the reps back to their groups to vote because many came back with their groups vote but they still had questions about what they were exactly voting on. The motion was discussed relatively widely around the district. I personally had many conversation with groups and members throughout the month in my sub-district. I've never had such the pleasure to discuss our Traditions, and I felt that this was many members first real life conversation in how they guide AA unity. The feedback received from members and groups was mixed.

The September District Business did not disappoint in attendance nor energy. After reading the motion, it was opened to discussion for the first time. Strangely, no one wanting to raise their hand to discuss. The voting began, the tally was counted, and we had a TIE. This sent the motion back to open discussion, and this time around most of the room wanted to talk about it. It was a vibrant conversation, as both sides of the conversation had good points to be made.

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Those against the changes seemed to voice comments around:

- If we start changing anything, where would we stop?
- That as written, the 12x12 was good enough to get them sober, so it's good enough for everyone

Those in favor of the changes seemed to voice comments around:

- The removal of the few words would be more inclusive
- It was religious in nature
- Some members were personally offended by the text as written

During the discussion, the current practices committee discovered that the motion, as written, needed a 2/3 majority for district approval. The second voting began, and the motion picked up some additional votes, gaining a simple majority, but lacked the 2/3 threshold for approval to move forward to the area.

I'm very proud of our members on both sides of the motion for their inspiring conversation and hard work. To me, this validates that the conversation was worth having. I spoke with a handful of member after the meeting, and they were very excited to know that this letter to the conference still had a chance to be heard. After returning to my home group to discuss the motion results, the group still wanted our original letter to be considered for the conference.

Thank you to providing my group a means to have the issue heard. It's been a pleasure learning how the AA service works, and seeing things put into action. We truly have a beautiful service structure in AA.

Yours in Love and Service,

Greg A.

Member of the Way Out Northeast Group

Area 15, District 1, DCM of sub-district 6

CONFIDENTIAL: 71st General Service Conference Background

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Way Out Northeast Group # 00010-37-15
Area 15, District 1 St.
Petersburg, FL

July 15th 2019

General Service Office
c/o Conference Coordinator
475 Riverside Drive at West
120th Street New York, NY
10115

RE: Topic for Consideration - Literature

Change Dear Trusted Servant,

There comes a time when it's our turn to take action to pass the torch of A.A. for those who need to hear the true message. Recently I was working through step 12 in the "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" with another alcoholic. When we began to discuss what it meant to us, we were both stuck on a certain paragraph on page 117. In the first part of the third paragraph. It reads:

"Nearly every sound human being experiences, at some time in life, a compelling desire to find a mate of the opposite sex with whom the fullest possible union can be made - spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical. This mighty urge is the root of great human accomplishments, a creative energy that deeply influences our lives. God fashioned us that way. ..."

We were both disturbed, and actually embarrassed. To my spouse, I said my agitation comes from its divergence from our traditions.

- Clearly the paragraph is in conflict with Tradition 10. It states that 'every sound human' desires to find a mate 'of the opposite sex' with whom the fullest union can be made, and it says that 'God fashioned us that way'. This reflects religious ideals. AA has no opinion on outside affiliations, let alone stating gods will towards sexual preferences.
- Tradition 3 tells us that the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop drinking. Telling any alcoholic that their lifestyle preference is not 'sound' or that it goes against God's Will, says to them that they are different, and could have them question if they're accepted in the fellowship.
- Tradition 2 tells us, for our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a LOVING god as He may express himself in our group conscience.

On Tuesday, May 14th 2019, the Way Out Northeast group discussed the language of the paragraph at its business meeting, and unanimously voted to create a group conscience to propose the minor change to remove the words

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"of the opposite sex".

Newly Proposed Paragraph:

"Nearly every sound human being experiences, at some time in life, a compelling desire to find a mate with whom the fullest possible union can be made - spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical. This mighty urge is the root of great human accomplishments, a creative energy that deeply influences our lives. God fashioned us that way. ..." {The rest of the paragraph would remain unchanged}

Many will say that even suggesting a change to the 12 & 12 is blasphemy. My guess is that this is why this has remained in our literature for so long. Fear. But Love is Love, and it's now the law of the land. We need to practice the principals in all of our affairs. Striking 4 little words would allow A.A. to do more than talk the talk, it would allow us to hold our head high as we trudge the road to happy destiny.

Yours in Love & Service,
Greg A.
DCM Area 15, District 1

12.13.19 Area letter to revise the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

Dear Conference Committee,

Our California Northern Interior (CNI) Area 07 Assembly discussed and passed with substantial unanimity a proposed change to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, paragraph 13 of Step Six, be added to the 2020 General Service Conference Agenda. Please see the attached letter from District 15 for additional information.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for your consideration.

Love and Blessings,
Michael K.
Delegate, Panel 68
CNI Area 07

7.15.19 Group letter to revise the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

A request to the General Service Committee:

We are writing to ask that one phrase be reconsidered in future printings of *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* of Alcoholics Anonymous.

In Step Six, paragraph 13, the current version of the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* reads as follows: "No one wants to be angry enough to murder, lustful enough to rape, gluttonous enough to ruin his health" (66).

We make this request for the following reasons:

- a) Lust is not the cause of rape. The cause of rape is complex and multifaceted. In a 2015 literary review on the causes of rape, Beverly A. M. concludes that "rape occurs due to multiple motives rather than [a] single motivation ... The multiple motivations include, but are not limited to, sexual gratification, revenge, recreation, power/control, and attempts to achieve or perform masculinity and a desire for power, among other causes" (8). In stating so plainly that lust leads to rape, these words are hugely misleading. This inaccuracy at best misinforms AA members and at worst triggers AA members-- many of whom are sexual assault survivors.
- b) The causes of sexual assault were not studied, well-known, or understood when Bill W. wrote that sentence. We owe it to all the people in Alcoholics Anonymous who have experienced sexual assault in any way to be accurate and supportive in our mention or discussion of this issue.
- c) Use of the words "rape" or "sexual assault" in one of our main pieces of literature, the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, are unnecessary. Words that have such potential to provoke trauma belong in literature that's more narrowly focused, like pamphlets.

We feel that Alcoholics Anonymous, with its long history of successful recovery, will continue to thrive despite a slight change in the literature. However, we are aware of the declaration the General Service Conference made in 2002: That no changes be made to the text of the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* because "the book has helped so many alcoholics find recovery," and because "Bill's writing [should] be retained as originally published." However, we would argue that one change to four unsound, outdated, and provocative words will not inhibit anyone's recovery. To the contrary, if this change were made, it would be more likely to keep survivors and perpetrators in the fellowship from getting upset enough to consider a drink, or become agitated enough to leave a needed meeting.

Since the current language in the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* regarding sexual assault is incorrect and outdated, we ask that you please reconsider your 2002 recommendation so our literature can better frame an issue that so many of us--victims and perpetrators--are already forced to unpack once we get sober. Thank you.

Sunday Night 12x12 Group, Chico CA
District 15

Sources

- "Sexual Assault is About Power," by Lyn Y.. *Psychology Today*, November 14, 2017. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/psychoanalysis-unplugged/201711/sexual-assault-is-about-power>
- "Feminist Framework Plus: Knitting Feminist Theories of Rape Etiology Into a Comprehensive Model," by Beverly A. M. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 2015. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/bf12/42d31ea3afd2d660d853f701eef27cd4fb48.pdf>
- World Health Organization, "Sexual Violence: Prevalence, Dynamics and Consequences." https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/resources/publications/en/guidelines_chap2.pdf

LITERATURE

Item E

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2002 Conference Advisory Action

“The text in the book, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, written by Bill W., remain as is, recognizing the Fellowship’s feeling that Bill’s writings be retained as originally published.”

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2021 Conference Committee on Literature

ITEM F: +Consider request to add a subtitle to the booklet *Living Sober*.

Background Notes: +Agenda item forwarded from the 70th G.S.C.

Excerpt from February 1, 2020 TLC Meeting Report:

The trustees' Literature Committee reviewed and **agreed to forward** to the 2020 Conference Committee on Literature a request to add a subtitle to the booklet *Living Sober*.

Excerpt from November 2, 2019 TLC Meeting Report:

The committee tabled discussion on the request for adding a subtitle to *Living Sober* until the February 2020 meeting.

Background:

1. June 2019 Email letters from a group proposing change to add a subtitle to the booklet *Living Sober*