

Pacific Northwest Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous 2019

Saturday, June 22nd Panel 3 “Tomorrow’s World — Courage to be Vigilant (dangers or difficulties)”



Good day Friends,

My name is Avalon and I am an alcoholic. Am I in the right place? My home Group is The Primary Purpose Group, Caldwell Idaho. My sobriety date is October 4th, 2009, 10-4. A word of advice...when you volunteer for service at an Alcoholics Anonymous event, you might find yourself on a podium, behind a microphone, being recorded and translated, explaining a topic you’re not sure you understand, to a group of the most tolerant, accepting and humble people you could ever imagine!. Thank you to Joe S. and the PNC Committee, for this opportunity, to walk thru another terrifying growth experience. I love Alcoholics Anonymous and I’m on FIRE for Service so, qualified or not, here I go.

The sum total of all A.A. services is our **Third Legacy**

Services include meeting places, hospital cooperation, and Intergroup offices; they mean pamphlets, books, and good publicity of almost every description. They call for committees, delegates, trustees, and conferences.

The most vital, yet least understood, group of services that A.A. has are those that enable us to function as a whole, (namely: the General Service Office, A.A. World Services, Inc., AA Grapevine, Inc., and our board of trustees, known legally as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous).

Until 1950, The Old-Timers had been the self-appointed trustees for Alcoholics Anonymous. They realized that A.A. had grown up, that our Fellowship was ready and able to take on these responsibilities. Without direct linkage to A.A., future trustees couldn’t possibly function alone.

...our too little understood service headquarters operations would someday be bound to face collapse.

TOPIC: “IS IT TIME TO RESTRUCTURE OUR POLICY OF PUBLICATION FOR OUR LITERATURE TO REMAIN RELEVANT?”

Resources:

VI. LITERATURE **Item: I,** Background Material 2019, A.A.W.S. Service Manual and Impact Collaborative Communication Audit; Review proposed revision to A.A. World Services’ “Policy on Publication of Literature”: Updating Pamphlets and Other A.A. Materials.

As the revised AAWS policy on "Publication of Literature: Updating Pamphlets and Other AA Materials" was being developed, the following letter was revised by the AAWS Board from a past delegate in the West Central region and helped to form the revision.

The Relevancy of Our Pamphlets

When the Conference structure began, Alcoholics Anonymous had a total of 20 primary pieces of literature. Of that 20, 15 were pamphlets. Since that time, we have grown our literature offerings to a total of 118, of which 57 are pamphlets. The discussion below focuses primarily on the pamphlet portion of our literature.

In order to continually review and update these 57 items, the conference literature committee, which must currently recommend approval of any pamphlet items, would need to meet monthly and treat their responsibility as a part time activity.

Our current process is based on the principle that all the literature produced must reflect the experience of the whole of our society. Therefore, every change requires action by a conference committee. While a very principled approach, the practice in gendered by this has become unwieldy and cumbersome. It may be time for a change.

What is that change to be? How can we remain true to the principle that ensures an accurate flexion of a experience, will utilizing the a process that will allow for greater flexibility and timelessness? I believe it is possible to develop such a process.

First and foremost, it will be critical to make several distinctions one print see that the creation of literature, regardless of the type, will continue to flow follow the establish creation process.

The letter continued with a possible framework for addressing pamphlet revisions, a process that could be called The Conference Pamphlet Update Process.

A.A.W.S. Current Policy & Procedure on Publication of Literature – 2012

A new piece of Literature, and any change to any existing piece of Literature other than Editorial Changes and new or changed Formats, will not be published by A.A. World Services, Inc. prior to approval of such literature by the General Service Conference. The content of a piece of literature presented to the Conference will be in final, fully edited condition, with no expectation of further change being made prior to publication other than as may be specified by the Conference in granting its approval.

Unless otherwise specified in the Advisory Action of the Conference approving a new or amended piece of Literature, A.A. World Service, Inc. will have full authority, without need of further Conference action, to (a) select the Format or Formats in which the approved Literature will be produced, (b) make, from time to time, needed Editorial Changes; provided, however, that no Editorial Change will be made to the Big Book's Preface, the Forewords, "The Doctor's Opinion," the first 164 pages (Chapters 1-11), "Dr. Bob's Nightmare," or the Appendices without prior Conference approval of such change, and (c) translate the approved Literature into any language, and in connection therewith to modify or replace illustrations, photos, and other visual art in a manner reasonably designed to conform them to the culture of the expected readership.

PREVIOUS POLICY (2012)

A.A. World Services, Inc. Policy on Publication of Literature

This policy sets forth the standards for determining whether or not a new piece of literature, or changes to an existing piece of literature, needs consideration by the General Service Conference prior to publication by A.A.W.S.

I. Definitions

"Literature" means books and pamphlets published by A.A. World Services, Inc. and intended for public distribution. The term does not include Service Pieces.

"Service Pieces" are printed material produced by A.A. World Services, Inc. for the information of the Fellowship. They describe shared experience and current practice on matters of interest to the Fellowship, and are a convenient method of providing answers to frequently asked questions concerning matters of practical concern or historical interest to members of the Fellowship. Examples include workbooks, guidelines, newsletters, bulletins and flyers.

"Editorial Changes" to an existing piece of Conference approved Literature means (1) correction of typographical errors and errors of grammar or syntax, (2) correction of erroneous statements of fact, (3) updating of historical and statistical information, and (4) correction of cross references to other material necessitated by changes in such other material.

The "Format" of a piece of literature means the manner in which the content of the literature is arranged and presented to the reader. Examples include hard cover, soft cover, large print, standard size, pocket size, Braille, audio, video (including video with ASL interpreter), digital and electronic (suitable for reading on electronic devices such as smart phones, tablets, and computers).

I. Submission of Literature to the General Service Conference

A.A. WORLD SERVICES, INC., PROPOSED POLICY ON PUBLICATION OF LITERATURE: UPDATING PAMPHLETS ANOTHER A.A. MATERIALS.

Recommended to The Trustees Committee on Literature for consideration, in 2018.

No editorial changes beyond routine corrections (corrections of typographical errors, errors in grammar or syntax, erroneous statements of fact, outdated statistical information and correction of an accurate cross references to other A.A. materials). Major revisions of any conference approved pamphlet, book or audiovisual item that significantly changes its message will be brought to the conference for approval prior to any changes being made.

Following Conference approval, no editorial change beyond routine corrections will be made to new pamphlets, books or audiovisual items within one year of their initial publication.

No conference approved books, pamphlets or audio visual items will be discontinued, combined or consolidated without presentation to and approval of The General Service Conference.

This policy will apply only to the updating revision of existing materials. Creation of any new piece of literature, regardless of the type will continue to follow the establish process of general service coverage.

PURPOSE:

Creation of any new piece of literature, regardless of the type will continue to follow the establish process of general service coverage. While we're in the development of any new items of literature it will be requested and approved by general service conference.

“Literature” means conference approved books, pamphlets and I do your visual materials published and distributed by AAWS. The term does not include service pieces.

“Service pieces” are produced by A. A. World services, Inc., Providing shared experience and current practice on matters of interest to the fellowship. Service material is updated routinely by GSO. This policy will apply only to the updating revision of existing materials. Exceptions include guidelines, newsletters, bulletins and flyers.

An independent research firm, Impact Collaborative, was commissioned by The A.A. General Service Board to conduct a communication audit.

Fair warning, if your ears are sensitive to negative comments about A.A. service materials you might want to leave the room.

The Audit Focused on:

A.A. Identity, content and messaging. Standardizing the look and feel of materials. Developing identity, design, and content standards. Rewriting content to retool messaging to be more sensitive, inclusive, and to better reach target audiences.

Audit Insights

SITUATION

A.A. Identity is out dated, out of touch, not distinguished in the recovery community arena. Standards/guidelines that direct communication internally and externally don't exist. Materials convey a lack of skill and professionalism. As a result, A.A.'s relevance and importance is lost, misunderstood, or simply ignored. Content and materials also don't truly articulate inclusion, which disenfranchises minorities.

SUGGESTIONS

Craft more inclusive language. Retool existing content, messaging, and focus on greater sensitivity and inclusion. This will connect more fully with the rich diversity of the fellowship of the general public, and serve you better in extending the hand of A.A. To the still suffering alcoholic.

SITUATION

A.A. welcomes diversity and inclusion but GSO/AAWS content and materials do not support or articulate that messaging. (For example, use of accessibility versus inclusion and diversity) This creates a disenfranchisement of minority groups, and may contribute to a lack of belonging and disinterest in conference structure, participation, and resistance to contribution beyond the local group. There is a significant redundancy in the two corporation's communication materials. GSO/NYC, AAWS and A.A. Grapevine do not maintain a library of material that clearly outlines their unique valued position.

SUGGESTIONS

Eliminate redundancies. Re-write the content to remove A.A. Jargon; and, restructure lengthy, outdated historical references. ...help the reader in contemporary and appealing language. Audiences are not engaged, and the time and resources are wasted. ...the intended effect in meaning of the materials are lost.

...we have seen the Foundation (the board of trustees), the A.A. book, the development of pamphlet literature, the answered mass of pleas for help, the satisfied need of groups for counsel on their problems, the beginning of our wonderful relations with the public, all becoming part of a growing service to the whole world of A.A. At last, our Society really began to function as a whole. — Bill W. in his introduction to The Service Manual

Thank you for your Time and Attention, In Unity, Recovery & Service,

Avalon K. Idaho Area 18

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