

IV.

FINANCE

AGENDA

Conference Committee on Finance

Monday, April 25, 2022, 9 a.m. – Noon

Room: TBD

Chairperson: Sharon S.

Secretary: Zenaida Medina

Conference Committee Members

Panel 71

Connie R.
Susan R.
Sharon S.

Panel 72

Peter B.
Chris D.
Jeff S.
Charles T.
Tandy W.

- ◆ Discussion and acceptance of trustees' committee report.
 - A. Review Self-Support Packet.
 - B. Consider request to add a historical disclaimer to the front of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.
 - C. Consider request that all proposed changes to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* be handled in footnotes.

NOTE: 1989 Conference Advisory Action

Each Conference Committee carefully consider their agenda items and strive to make their recommendations for Advisory Actions to the Conference at the policy level. To be more financially responsible, when a Conference Committee recommendation involves a substantial expenditure of money, an estimate of cost and its impact on the budget be part of that recommendation.

2022 Conference Committee on Finance

ITEM A: Review Self-Support Packet

Background:

1. [2.2.22 Memo from A.A.W.S. Self-Support Committee to 2022 Conference Committee on Finance regarding review of self-support packet.](#)
2. [Self-Support Card](#) F-42
3. [Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix](#) F-3
4. [The A.A. Group Treasurer](#) F-96
5. [A.A Guidelines on Finance](#) MG-15
6. [Your Seventh Tradition Contributions Flyer](#) F-203
7. [AAGV/La Vina Self-Support Flyer A.doc.](#) F-230
8. [Birthday Contribution Envelope](#) FR-5

Secretary's Note: In response to the 2021 Conference Committee on Finance consideration to include text for supporting AA Grapevine, a paragraph was added to the pamphlet "The A.A. Group Treasurer."

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

Please direct all
communications to:

P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Fax: (212) 870-3003

Memorandum

February 2, 2022

To: 2022 Conference Committee on Finance

From: A.A.W.S. Self-Support Subcommittee

cc: Bob W., General Manager, Vera F., chair, A.A.W.S. Self-Support Subcommittee;
Sandra W., Director of Staff Services

Re: Review of Self-Support Package

At the trustees' Finance and Budgetary Committee October 31, 2021 meeting, the A.A.W.S. Self-Support subcommittee activities were noted to include a discussion on the Self-Support Card. The Self-Support Subcommittee noted the inconsistent language regarding making contributions to G.S.O. (General Service Office) when it should be made to G.S.B. (General Service Board).

The trustees' Finance Committee requested that the A.A.W.S. self-support subcommittee draft a communication to the 2022 Conference Committee on Finance suggesting a review for inconsistencies in our literature regarding to whom contributions are sent in the Self-Support Packet.

The A.A.W.S. Self-Support Subcommittee, respectfully requests your consideration and discussion the following topics during the review of the Self-Support Packet at 72nd General Service Conference:

1. To whom contributions are sent, specifically, inconsistent language reflecting that contributions should be made to G.S.O. (General Service Office), as opposed to the G.S.B. (General Service Board).
2. Consider updating images used in Self-Support materials that reflect current contributions from the US and Canadian.

/dyl

SELF-SUPPORT

The Seventh Tradition states that Alcoholics Anonymous is self-supporting through our own contributions. The contributions help to cover the group's expenses. But the Seventh Tradition is more than simply paying for rent and other group expenses. It is both a privilege and a responsibility of individual groups and members to ensure that our organization, at every level, remains forever self-supporting and free of outside influences that might divert us from our primary purpose.

The monetary amount of each contribution is secondary to the spiritual connection that joins us in unity with A.A. groups around the world.

SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Some facts:

- Currently about 43.7% of groups contribute to the General Service Office.
- Costs of Services provided by G.S.O. (as of 2018) are approximately \$7.40 per member per year.
- Gross profit from A.A. literature sales account for over 50% of G.S.O.'s revenue.
- Your contributions help ensure the future of our Fellowship worldwide.

Personal thoughts:

- What is the value of your sobriety?
- Does your group know that contributions may be made online at AA.org?
- Gratitude, expressed through contributions, reaches the still-suffering alcoholic.

SELF-SUPPORT:

A DECLARATION OF UNITY

This we owe to A.A.'s future: To place our common welfare first; to keep our fellowship united. For on A.A. unity depend our lives and the lives of those to come.

Where Money & Spirituality Mix

I am responsible...

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.

And for that: **I am responsible.**



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS® is a fellowship people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

A.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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Updated July 2021.

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Mail address: Box 459, Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

www.aa.org

Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix

The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members.

We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise.

Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

— Tradition Seven (long form)

Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix

“The first time I had to talk about finances at a district meeting when I was my area’s treasurer, a fellow in the back of the room yelled out: ‘Why in the world are you always talking about money when this is a spiritual program?’ The guy threw me and I didn’t know how to answer him.”

From its earliest beginnings, A.A. has always incurred expenses — whether it be the cost of a pot of coffee or the price of a place to meet. In the early days, these costs were often absorbed by individual A.A.s or nonalcoholic friends who offered their parlors and living rooms for A.A.s to meet in. However, as A.A. outgrew the generosity of these early friends and members, the Fellowship’s need for income became more and more apparent.

Bill W., A.A.’s co-founder, and some of the early A.A. members initially felt the only way for the Fellowship to survive was to solicit financial support from philanthropic institutions or individuals outside A.A. These “high rollers” could then supply the funds the Fellowship would need to carry out the vital Twelfth Step work the early A.A.s envisioned — to bankroll the army of paid missionaries, the chain of A.A. hospitals, and the library of books they were certain to write.

One potential A.A. patron, however, when approached by the pioneering members for money, instead helped to lay the groundwork for A.A.’s Tradition of self-support: “I am afraid that money will spoil this thing,” said John D. Rockefeller Jr., while at the same time endorsing the work of the fledgling Fellowship.

This marked a turning point in A.A. history, and, as the reality of Mr. Rockefeller’s statement sank in and A.A. members began to see the truth in the old cliché, “Who pays the piper calls the tune,” the seed of the Seventh Tradition took root.

“We cannot skimp”

With the realization that A.A. must steer clear of outside contributions in order to maintain its autonomy and independence came the understanding that the money necessary for A.A.’s survival would have to come from individual A.A. members and groups. As Bill W. put it in 1957, “Our spiritual way of life is safe for future generations if, as a Society, we resist the temptation to receive money from the outside world. But this leaves us with a responsibility — one that every member ought to understand. We cannot skimp when the treasurer of our group passes the hat. Our groups, our areas, and A.A. as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and their bills are paid.

“When we meet and defeat the temptation to take large gifts, we are only being prudent. But when we are generous with the hat we give a token that we are grateful for our blessings and evidence that we are eager to share what we have found with all those who still suffer.” (*The Language of the Heart*, p. 221)

Where Money and Spirituality Mix

“Self-support begins with me, because I am part of us — the group. We pay our rent and utility bills, buy coffee, snacks and A.A. literature. We support our central office, our area committee, and our General Service Office. If it were not for those entities, many new people would never discover the miracles of A.A.”

Twelfth Step work is the lifeblood of Alcoholics Anonymous — carrying the message to the next suffering alcoholic. Without it, the Fellowship would wither and die. Yet, even at its simplest level this vital contact between one alcoholic and another involves an investment of time and money.

“Let’s begin with my own sponsor, Ebby,” writes Bill W., in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*. “When Ebby heard how serious my drinking was, he resolved to visit me. He was in New York; I was in Brooklyn. His resolve was not enough; he had to take action and he had to spend money.



“He called me on the phone and then got into the subway; total cost, ten cents. At the level of the telephone booth and subway turnstile, spirituality and money began to mix. One without the other would have amounted to nothing at all.

“Right then and there, Ebby established the principle that A.A. in action calls for the sacrifice of much time and a little money.”

Footing the bill

“Now, where do A.A.’s services — worldwide, area, local — fit into our scheme of things?” asked Bill W. in an October 1967 article in the A.A. Grapevine. “Why should we provide these functions with money?”

According to Bill, “The answer is simple enough. Every single A.A. service is designed to make more and better Twelfth Step work possible, whether it be a group meeting place, a central or intergroup office . . . or the world service Headquarters

“Though not costly, these service agencies are absolutely essential to our continued expansion — to our survival as a Fellowship. Their costs are a collective obligation that rests squarely upon all of us. Our support of services actually amounts to a recognition on our part that A.A. must everywhere function in full strength — and that, under our Tradition of self-support, *we are all going to foot the bill.*”

How can groups participate?

To help support A.A.’s essential services, the General Service Conference suggests that individual groups, through an informed group conscience, adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to meet the group’s financial situation.

Once the basic group expenses have been taken care of (for example, rent, refreshments, A.A. literature, Grapevine literature, local meeting lists, G.S.R. travel expenses to attend service functions) and a “prudent reserve” has been set aside to cover any emergency contingencies that might arise, the group may decide to further carry the message by sending money to the following A.A. service entities:

- **The local district**, which communicates directly with the groups, providing the district group conscience for the area assemblies, and serving as a link between the area delegates and the G.S.R.s.
- **The area committee**, which coordinates vital A.A. activities over a broad geographic area; sends a delegate to the annual General Service Conference; holds area assemblies to determine the needs of the Fellowship; and provides information at all levels of service.
- **The local intergroup or central office**, which may provide phone service for Twelfth Step calls and other inquiries; coordinates group activities; and facilitates A.A. literature sales, institutions work, public information, and cooperation with the professional community activities.
- **A.A.’s General Service Office**, which functions as a storehouse of A.A. information, communicating with members and groups around the world; publishes A.A.’s literature; and supplies information and experience to professionals and others interested in A.A.

Please note that not all areas, districts, intergroups and central offices follow these divisions of service for institutions work, cooperation with the professional community, public information, etc. Therefore, prior to making contributions in your area, please find out which entity is providing these services and allocate your contributions accordingly.

Whose Job Is It?

“The paradox of A.A. is that financial independence and the support of our Fellowship by alcoholics and alcoholics alone not only enhances A.A.’s importance to each of us, but stimulates our engagement in our own recovery... A.A. is ‘our thing,’ from our group’s treasury to the balance sheets at the General Service Office.”

Money has never been a requirement for A.A. membership, and to keep it that way all of A.A.’s trusted servants have an ongoing obligation to inform groups and individuals about the value of self-support and the need for voluntary contributions throughout the Fellowship.

Many groups in reaching an informed group conscience look to their general service representatives (G.S.R.s) for specific information about A.A. finances, or to their intergroup representatives or group treasurer. Many find that participation in local, area and regional A.A. service events provides a good source of information about A.A.’s financial needs. And at the General Service Office, A.A.’s financial affairs are an open book, with financial summaries published quarterly and a full accounting printed each year in the *Final Conference Report*.

The Bottom Line

“Now that we are sober in A.A., the word ‘support’ has to do with sharing, people, self-respect, gratitude, and what we are privileged to give — not take — in material terms.”

While the Fellowship has always faced problems of money, property and prestige in one form or another, through the wisdom of the Seventh Tradition we have never been diverted from our primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers — wherever he or she may be. This is the fundamental work of Alcoholics Anonymous, and to ensure that the hand of A.A. will always remain outstretched, money and spirituality must continue to mix. And for that, we are all responsible.

Some Questions and Answers About A.A.’s Finances

Q What is a “prudent reserve”?

A Any suggested prudent reserve for a group should be dependent on local needs. A suggested prudent reserve for central offices, intergroups, and area committees could be one to 12 months’ operating expenses, depending on local needs.

Q Does the General Service Office have a “prudent reserve”?

A In 1954 A.A.’s Board of Trustees established a reserve fund whose principal purpose is to provide the financial resources necessary to continue the essential services of G.S.O. and the Grapevine for up to a year in the event of an unexpected and substantial reduction in the normal revenues of the organization.

Q Is there a limit on how much an individual can contribute to G.S.O.?

A Yes. That limit is \$5,000 a year.

Q Can people leave money to A.A. in their wills?

A Bequests in wills are acceptable only from A.A. members on a one-time basis, and not in perpetuity. The limit is \$10,000.

Q Can a group have too much money?

A As stated in the long form of Tradition Seven, “We view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.”

Q Who manages G.S.O.’s share of your group contributions?

A The General Service Board’s Finance Committee meets quarterly to review and approve G.S.O.’s budget and the audited financial accounts.

The A.A. World Services Board meets monthly and maintains direct control of income and expenditures.

The annual General Service Conference reviews A.A.'s finances through its own Finance Committee.

A.A.'s financial affairs are an "open" book. A summary is published in each *Quarterly Report* and a full accounting is in the *Final Conference Report*. The account books themselves are available at the General Service Office for scrutiny at any time.

Q Who manages the other portions of your group contributions?

A Intergroup or central office funds are generally administered by steering committees composed of representatives of the groups they serve.

Areas and districts generally have volunteer treasurers who administer funds contributed by groups.

Q How can an individual member contribute to G.S.O.?

A On your A.A. birthday: Contribute \$1.00 or more for each year of sobriety — or as much as you wish to give (up to \$5,000). You may request that your group be credited.

Q Can an individual or group make a recurring online contribution?

A Yes, online at aa.org.

Q Are there other kinds of contributions?

A *Special contributions*: funds realized from conventions, conferences, dinners, area get-togethers, etc. (no limitations on these contributions).



Q Do all groups contribute to A.A.'s service entities?

A No. Contributions are strictly voluntary and some groups simply cannot afford additional contributions after covering their basic needs. Additionally, there are groups who, for whatever reasons, choose not to be a part of the self-support network. These groups, nevertheless, will receive basic services from the district, area and intergroup if they wish, and are welcome to list with G.S.O., where they will receive the same basic services as other groups. In 2017 the percentage of all listed groups who contributed to G.S.O. was 43.7%, in 2016 it was 41.5%.

Q What do contributions to G.S.O. cover?

A The 2017 service dollar was spent on the following activities: Group Services 35.6% (which includes various group contact-type costs in addition to *Box 4-5-9*; A.A. Directories; records and files; contributions processing; and French services); the General Service Conference, 12.1%; Loners, Internationalists, and Overseas Services, 8.8%; trustees' and directors' activities, 6.9%; Regional Forums, 7.3%; Archives, 12.2%; C.P.C., 4.4%; Public Information, 5.8%; Correctional Facilities, 4.7%; Treatment and Accessibilities, 2.2%.

Q How much does it cost, per group, for G.S.O. to supply basic services?

A At the end of 2017, the annual cost of services per group was \$153.00, while the average contribution per group was \$126.00. The shortfall between these two figures is made up from income from A.A. publications.

Q My group doesn't have a lot of money. Is it better not to send anything at all until we can afford to make a sizeable contribution?

A In the spirit of participation, no contribution toward carrying the message can be too small. Bill W. spoke about our "collective obligation" to support A.A. services, and if everyone waited until they had a "sizeable" amount, it's more than likely that A.A.'s bills would go unpaid.

Q Does G.S.O. have any specific information for our group or group treasurer about how to handle our group’s finances?

A Yes. There are two excellent publications available from G.S.O., A.A. Guidelines on Finance and the pamphlet “The A.A. Group Treasurer,” which provide specific information to groups regarding practical matters related to their group finances, such as setting up bank accounts, obtaining tax ID numbers, and outlining the responsibilities of a group treasurer.

Q: Some members of our group want to pass a “virtual” basket — to collect Seventh Tradition contributions digitally. How could we do this?

A: A number of groups have utilized digital payment platforms as an adjunct to passing the basket in the conventional sense in order to provide opportunities for cashless contributions. There are different payment platforms to facilitate this service, and it is up to the group to determine which one to use. After experimentation with different methodologies, some groups have found that a smartphone app-based payment platform is the most efficient, seamless and minimally disruptive solution for providing a digital contribution. Experience suggests that the treasurer is a likely choice to handle digital contributions, though some groups add more than one trusted servant to share the responsibilities, or create a new service position to inform the group about digital payment options and assist other group members who are interested in contributing this way.

Q Doesn’t all A.A. money go into one pot? In other words, when our group contributes to central office (intergroup), isn’t our money distributed to the area, district and G.S.O., as well?

A No. Each A.A. entity — group, district, area, central office and G.S.O. — provides a specific service and is autonomous. Each is separate from the other.

Q Can our group make financial contributions to AA Grapevine?

A No. AA Grapevine, Inc. is not set up to take contributions from groups or individuals. Groups

and individual members support the Grapevine by purchasing Grapevine and La Viña magazine subscriptions and other Grapevine publications and using them in their Twelfth Step work.

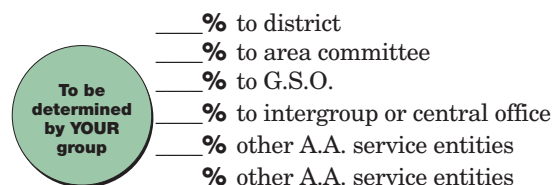
Q After group expenses for rent, prudent reserve, etc., what is your informed group conscience for distribution of excess funds?

A Sample distribution plans follow:

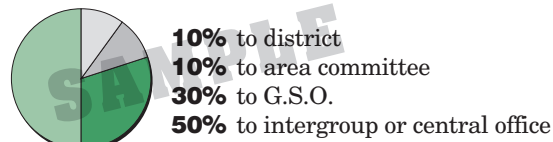
Samples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities

Distribution Plan of _____
(YOUR GROUP NAME)

Your Group Service # _____
(Be sure to write group name and service # on all contributions.)

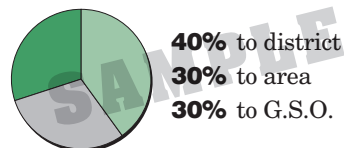


OR



OR

If you have no intergroup/central office:



Duties of the entities notated above are described on page 7 of this pamphlet. Performance of these service duties vary from area to area. Please be sure to inquire which services these entities provide in YOUR area and contribute accordingly.

Q Where should I send contributions?

A For contributions to G.S.O., make checks payable to “General Service Board” and send to:

General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163

or visit Contributions online at aa.org

For contributions to other A.A. service entities, contact your district committee, area committee, and local intergroup/central office for addresses. You can enter the addresses in the spaces provided on the next page to save for easy reference. And remember that these addresses may change when a treasurer rotates.

DISTRICT

AREA

INTERGROUP

OTHER

A.A. PUBLICATIONS Below is a partial listing of A.A. publications. Complete order forms are available from the General Service Office of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. Telephone: (212) 870-3400. Website: aa.org

BOOKS

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS
DAILY REFLECTIONS
AS BILL SEES IT
OUR GREAT RESPONSIBILITY
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS COMES OF AGE
DR. BOB AND THE GOOD OLDTIMERS
'PASS IT ON'

BOOKLETS

LIVING SOBER
CAME TO BELIEVE
A.A. IN PRISON: INMATE TO INMATE

PAMPHLETS

Experience, Strength and Hope:

WOMEN IN A.A.
A.A. FOR THE BLACK AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN ALCOHOLIC
A.A. FOR THE NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN
YOUNG PEOPLE AND A.A.
A.A. FOR THE OLDER ALCOHOLIC — NEVER TOO LATE
LGBTQ ALCOHOLICS IN A.A.
THE “GOD” WORD: AGNOSTIC AND ATHEIST MEMBERS IN A.A.
A.A. FOR ALCOHOLICS WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES —
AND THEIR SPONSORS
ACCESS TO A.A.: MEMBERS SHARE ON OVERCOMING BARRIERS
A.A. AND THE ARMED SERVICES
DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DIFFERENT?
MANY PATHS TO SPIRITUALITY
HISPANIC WOMEN IN A.A.
MEMO TO AN INMATE
IT SURE BEATS SITTING IN A CELL
(An illustrated pamphlet for inmates)

About A.A.:

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT A.A.
IS A.A. FOR ME?
IS A.A. FOR YOU?
A NEWCOMER ASKS
IS THERE AN ALCOHOLIC IN YOUR LIFE?
THIS IS A.A.
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON SPONSORSHIP
THE A.A. GROUP
PROBLEMS OTHER THAN ALCOHOL
THE A.A. MEMBER—MEDICATIONS AND OTHER DRUGS
SELF-SUPPORT: WHERE MONEY AND SPIRITUALITY MIX
EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT US:
AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR TWELVE TRADITIONS
THE TWELVE STEPS ILLUSTRATED
THE TWELVE CONCEPTS ILLUSTRATED
THE TWELVE TRADITIONS ILLUSTRATED
HOW A.A. MEMBERS COOPERATE WITH PROFESSIONALS
A.A. IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES
A.A. IN TREATMENT SETTINGS
BRIDGING THE GAP
A.A. TRADITION—HOW IT DEVELOPED
LET'S BE FRIENDLY WITH OUR FRIENDS
UNDERSTANDING ANONYMITY

For Professionals:

A.A. IN YOUR COMMUNITY
A BRIEF GUIDE TO A.A.
IF YOU ARE A PROFESSIONAL
ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS AS A RESOURCE
FOR THE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL
A MESSAGE TO CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS
IS THERE A PROBLEM DRINKER IN THE WORKPLACE?
FAITH LEADERS ASK ABOUT A.A.
A.A. MEMBERSHIP SURVEY
A MEMBER'S-EYE VIEW OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

VIDEOS (available on aa.org)

A.A. VIDEOS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
HOPE: ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
A NEW FREEDOM
CARRYING THE MESSAGE BEHIND THESE WALLS

For Professionals:

A.A. VIDEO FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS
A.A. VIDEO FOR LEGAL AND CORRECTIONS PROFESSIONALS
A.A. VIDEO FOR EMPLOYMENT/HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS

PERIODICALS

AA GRAPEVINE (monthly)
LA VIÑA (bimonthly, in Spanish)

**For contributions to A.A. service entities,
contact your district committee, area
committee, and local intergroup/central office.**

DISTRICT

AREA

INTERGROUP/CENTRAL OFFICE

OTHER

G.S.O.

- Contribution payments may be made by check or credit card, using the contribution envelope. Make checks payable to the General Service Board and send to:

General Service Office
 P.O. Box 2407
 James A Farley Station
 New York, NY 10116-2407

(Please write your group number on the check)

- Online contributions may be made by credit card or E-Check. Click on the AA Member Contributions Online icon on www.aa.org.

This is service material prepared by the General Service Office.

Updated December 2021.

The **A.A.** Group Treasurer



- Choosing a Treasurer
- Passing the Basket
- Safeguarding the Group's Money
- Disbursement of a Group's Funds
- Treasurer Reports
- Prudent Reserve
- Opening a Bank Account
- Tax ID/Tax-Exempt
- Insurance

General Service Office

P.O. Box 459
 Grand Central Station
 New York, NY 10163
www.aa.org

20M – 1/22 (GP)

F-96

Spirituality and Money

While the work of the group treasurer often involves many details, it is important to remember that the money the treasurer oversees serves a spiritual purpose: it enables each group to fulfill its primary purpose of carrying the A.A. message to the alcoholic who still suffers. This is the fundamental work of A.A., and to continue it the group must keep its doors open. The group treasurer is an important part of this Twelfth Step work.

Choosing a Treasurer

The position of group treasurer is one of the most responsible positions in any A.A. group. While there is no standard length of sobriety necessary for a member to take on the position of group treasurer, many groups suggest that the treasurer should have a reasonable period of sobriety (at least six months to a year or more). It is also suggested that group treasurers be well grounded in the Twelve Traditions and be familiar with the principles and practices of the group itself.

Passing the Basket

The traditional means of assuring that the group is self-supporting is to pass the basket for group members to make voluntary contributions to help cover the group's expenses and to support local services, and the services of your General Service Office. Typically, after the basket is passed, the group treasurer takes charge of the money collected.

A number of groups have utilized digital payment platforms to provide opportunities for members to make cashless contributions. There are different payment platforms to facilitate this service and it is up to the group to determine which one to use. Experience suggests that the treasurer is a likely choice to handle digital contributions, though some groups add more than one trusted servant to share the responsibilities or create a new service position to inform the group about digital payment options and assist other group members who are interested in contributing this way.

Safeguarding the Group's Money

The group treasurer takes reasonable precautions to safeguard the group's funds. Many groups keep the group's treasury in a bank checking account in the group's name, often requiring at least two signatures on all checks. This provides security against acciden-

tal loss; it also provides ease of disbursement and a continuing record of income and expenses. Monthly bank statements are normally sent directly to the group treasurer, who can bring them to the group's business meeting.

Disbursement of a Group's Funds

The group treasurer is usually the person responsible for paying the group's routine bills and for keeping accurate records of the group's funds. The treasurer needs to be well informed about how the group's money is spent and should have addresses and mailing information for all A.A. service entities that the group contributes to.

After the group's basic needs are met, such as providing for rent, literature, refreshments, and insurance, the group can participate in the financial support of the Fellowship as a whole by sending money to various A.A. service entities: 1) their local intergroup or central office; 2) their area and district; and 3) the General Service Office. Many groups provide financial support for their G.S.R.s attending service functions.

Groups and individual members also support the Grapevine by purchasing Grapevine and La Viña magazine subscriptions and other Grapevine publications and using them in their Twelfth Step work. Grapevine and La Viña magazine subscriptions can be purchased at <https://store.aagrapevine.org/subscriptions>.

Online and recurring contributions: Contributions to the General Service Office can be made online, either by credit card or E-Check. Additionally, members or groups can set up recurring contributions that will automatically charge their credit card either monthly, quarterly or annually.

Treasurer Reports

Most groups request a treasurer's report and all relevant documentation at monthly or regularly scheduled business meetings. This way, all group members can stay informed about the financial health of the group and make group conscience decisions about how the funds should be spent.

Prudent Reserve

Most groups try to hold a certain amount of money in reserve. There is no predetermined amount for such

a reserve, but most groups try to put aside enough money to cover at least one to three months' operating expenses. The group itself usually determines the actual size and scope of the prudent reserve. Our experience shows that an accumulation of A.A. funds for unspecified purposes beyond a prudent level may divert a group's attention from carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. Groups with excess funds are encouraged to support other service entities.

Opening a Bank Account/Tax ID

Some groups keep their funds in a bank account, for which a tax ID number is required — even for non-interest-bearing accounts. The first step in obtaining a Federal ID Number is by filing form SS-4, which can be obtained at any Internal Revenue Service office or at the IRS website at www.irs.gov. Each A.A. group must get its own individual number; there is no one number that applies to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. Depending on how much your group will keep on deposit at a bank and what its fees are, you may want to file for tax-exempt status. For information, see IRS publication 557, "Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization." It may be worthwhile to consult an accountant to learn more about these subjects. (Applies to U.S. only.)

Insurance

Landlords may sometimes ask that A.A. groups carry insurance coverage. Some groups cooperate with the facility where they meet by purchasing a rider in the facility's liability insurance policy. For information, you may wish to consult a local insurance agency.

Additional Resources for Group Treasurers

For more information consult the pamphlet, "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix," or the A.A. Guidelines on Finance. "The A.A. Group" pamphlet discusses the role and qualifications of treasurers and how they fit into the A.A. service structure. These items may be obtained by contacting the General Service Office in New York or going on the G.S.O. website at www.aa.org.

A.A.® Guidelines

Finance

from G.S.O., Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

A.A. Guidelines are compiled from the shared experience of A.A. members in the various areas. They also reflect guidance given through the Twelve Traditions and the General Service Conference (U.S. and Canada). In keeping with our Tradition of Autonomy, except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole, most decisions are made by the group conscience of the members involved. The purpose of these Guidelines is to assist in reaching an *informed* group conscience.

“A.A.’s far-flung Twelfth Step activities, carrying the message to the next sufferer, are the very lifeblood of our A.A. adventure. Without this vital activity, we would soon become anemic; we would literally wither and die.

“Now where do A.A.’s services — worldwide, area, local — fit into our scheme of things? Why should we provide these functions with money? The answer is simple enough. Every single A.A. service is designed to make more and better Twelfth Step work possible, whether it be a group meeting place, a central or intergroup office to arrange hospitalization and sponsorship, or the world service Headquarters [now the General Service Office] to maintain unity and effectiveness all over the globe.

“Though not costly, these service agencies are absolutely essential to our continued expansion — to our survival as a Fellowship. Their costs are a collective obligation that rests squarely upon all of us. Our support of services actually amounts to recognition on our part that A.A. must everywhere function in full strength — and that, under our Tradition of self-support, *we are all going to foot the bill.*”

Bill W., October 1967 Grapevine

One of G.S.O.’s responsibilities is to share A.A. experiences with groups and members who request it. In these Guidelines, we are glad to provide sharing from a variety of sources, though we are aware that actual A.A. practices often vary. So, if your group has found solutions other than those cited in this Guideline, please let us know, so that we may share your experiences with others.

Often-asked questions about finances directed at G.S.O. cover such topics as group rent, bank accounts and insurance; reimbursement for service workers’ expenses; I.R.S. deductions and tax I.D. numbers, and the role of the General Service Board.

WHERE MONEY AND SPIRITUALITY MIX

Members celebrate sobriety by giving time, energy and money in support of our Twelfth Step —carrying the message— the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship offers. Members assure that group expenses are paid by putting money into the basket passed at each meeting. It is each member’s responsibility to support the services that have been requested by the A.A. Fellowship, to help facilitate A.A.’s vital Twelfth Step. Contributions are made in a spirit of sacrifice, and they honor A.A.’s code of “love and service.” Contributions also underscore the spiritual nature of our Fellowship and our mutual love and trust. We have found that these contributions are as important to each member as they are to the service centers supported.

SUPPORTING A.A.’s STRUCTURE

Question: Why do A.A. groups support A.A.’s essential services?

Answer: Because the services benefit all A.A. groups. Our Seventh Tradition states that “Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

A.A.s want our Fellowship to endure, and to be readily available for the still-suffering alcoholic to come. An A.A. group makes this pos-

sible by taking care of its basic group expenses: rent, refreshments, A.A. literature, etc. After meeting these basic group expenses and providing a meeting place, many groups participate by supporting the central or intergroup office in their locale, the area and district general service committees, and the General Service Office (G.S.O.).

Question: How can groups participate?

Answer: To help support A.A.’s essential services, the General Service Conference suggests that individual groups, through an informed group conscience, adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to meet the group’s financial situation. Once the basic group expenses have been taken care of (rent, refreshments, A.A. literature, local meetings lists), and a “prudent reserve” has been set aside to cover unexpected expenses, the group may decide to further carry the message by sending money to the following A.A. service entities:

- The local district, which communicates directly with the groups, providing the district group conscience for the area assemblies, and serving as a link between the area delegates and the G.S.R.s.
- The area committee, which coordinates vital A.A. activities over a broad geographic area; sends a delegate to the annual

General Service Conference; holds area assemblies to determine the needs of the Fellowship; and provides information at all levels of service.

- The local intergroup or central office, which may provide phone service for the Twelfth Step calls and other inquiries; coordination of group activities; A.A. literature sales; institutions work; public information and cooperation with the professional community activities.
- A.A.'s General Service Office, which functions as a storehouse of A.A. information, communicating with members and groups in the U.S. and Canada, and sometimes around the world; publishes A.A.'s literature; and supplies information and experience to professionals and others interested in A.A.

Samples of Group Contributions to A.A. Service Entities*

Distribution Plan of _____
(YOUR GROUP NAME)

Your Group Service # _____
(Be sure to write group name and service # on all contributions.)

To be determined by YOUR group

___% to district

___% to area committee

___% to G.S.O.

___% to intergroup or central office

___% other A.A. service entities

___% other A.A. service entities

OR

10% to district

10% to area committee

30% to G.S.O.

50% to intergroup or central office

OR

If you have no intergroup/central office.

40% to district

30% to area

30% to G.S.O.

*From "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix."

Question: Doesn't all A.A. money go into one pot? In other words, when our group contributes to central office (intergroup), isn't our money distributed to the area, district and General Service Board (for G.S.O. operations)?

Answer: Each A.A. entity — group, district, area, central or intergroup office, and G.S.O. — provides a specific service and is autonomous. Separate contributions need to be sent to each entity. (Note: Some local A.A. entities do pass along a portion of the contributions they receive to G.S.O.)

Question: How do groups divide their excess funds, then?

Answer: Outlines for contribution plans are described in the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix." Individual groups decide based on their group conscience. For suggested contribution plans see page 5 of this Guideline.

Question: After covering our group's expenses, we have very little money left. Isn't it embarrassing to send what seem to be just nickels and dimes?

Answer: The General Service Conference has emphasized that it is not concerned about the amount each group contributes, but that each group contribute something. At a service assembly, one G.S.R. said, "It is a spiritual obligation to participate by contributing."

Question: How do we know that G.S.O. has received our contribution and credited our group?

Answer: All group contributions are acknowledged by a computerized receipt, sent to the person indicated on your contribution envelope or online contribution form, or to the G.S.R. if a name and address is not indicated.

Quarterly contribution statements are sent to each group's G.S.R. These statements reflect year-to-date information, whether or not the group contributed.

Question: Our group would be glad to contribute to these various service entities, but we do not know where to send our check. Where do I find mailing addresses?

Answer: If there is a central office or intergroup in your community, it will be listed on www.aa.org in the "A.A. Near You" section. (If your group does not already have an intergroup representative, think about electing one.)

Your group's general service representative (G.S.R.) probably has addresses for the area and district committees. If not, call G.S.O. for information: (212) 870-3400.

Other sources: The names and addresses of your general service delegate and area chairperson are listed in your regional A.A. Directory.

Contributions to the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous can be sent to:

General Service Office
P.O. Box 2407
James A Farley Station
New York, NY 10116-2407

Please make checks payable to the "General Service Board" and write your group number on the check. Preaddressed group contribution envelopes are available from G.S.O. (See catalog/order form.)

Question: Is it possible to make contributions online?

Answer: A.A. members can also make contributions online at G.S.O.'s A.A. website www.aa.org These online contributions may be made by credit card, debit card, PayPal or "E-Check" from U.S. banks. Users are asked create a confidential user profile, which includes a user ID and a password.

While the Contributions Online site is protected by state-of-the-art encryption technology, G.S.O. suggests that members use the online contributions system from a personal computer that they own or completely control, as entering confidential personal and/or financial information on a public or shared computer can pose security risks. It is suggested, therefore, that members using computers in libraries, hotel business centers, Internet cafes and even workplace computers and computers owned by friends or acquaintances continue to make their contributions through the traditional telephone or postal methods.

Question: Some members of our group want to pass a “virtual” basket — to collect Seventh Tradition contributions digitally. How could we do this?

Answer: A number of groups have utilized digital payment platforms as an adjunct to passing the basket in the conventional sense in order to provide opportunities for cashless contributions. There are different payment platforms (such as Venmo, Paypal and others) to facilitate this service, and it is up to the group to determine which one to use. After experimentation with different methodologies, some groups have found that a smartphone app-based payment platform is the most efficient, seamless and minimally disruptive solution for providing a digital contribution. Experience suggests that the treasurer is a likely choice to handle digital contributions, though some groups add more than one trusted servant to share the responsibilities, or create a new service position to inform the group about digital payment options and assist other group members who are interested in contributing this way.

Question: Is there a limit to how much an A.A. member can contribute to G.S.O.?

Answer: Yes. That limit is \$5,000 a year.

Question: Can people leave money to G.S.O. in their wills?

Answer: Bequests in wills are acceptable only from A.A. members, with a maximum of \$10,000 from any one person, and only on a one-time basis — not in perpetuity.

Question: Can a non-A.A. member make a memorial contribution to G.S.O. in honor of an A.A. member who has passed away?

Answer: Though G.S.O. deeply appreciates these offers, we return checks — whether they are in memoriam or otherwise — to all non-A.A.s. A.A. does not accept contributions from non-members. When we receive a memorial contribution at G.S.O., we return the check with a letter letting the individual know of our tradition of self-support. G.S.O. explains to non-members what can be one of the most baffling aspects of our Fellowship.

Question: Are there limits on the amount of money an A.A. group or an A.A. event can contribute to G.S.O.?

Answer: No.

Question: Does G.S.O. accept contributions by credit card?

Answer: Yes. You may also visit Contributions online at www.aa.org.

Question: Does G.S.O. have a recurring contributions system?

Answer: Yes, you may make a recurring contribution by creating an account on the contributions page at www.aa.org.

Question: I keep hearing about the Birthday Plan. What is it?

Answer: The 1955 General Service Conference approved the Birthday Plan, under which some members of the Fellowship send \$1.00 or \$2.00 or more a year for each year of sobriety they have in A.A. Others use a figure of \$3.65, a penny a day, for each year. Some give more, but the amount cannot exceed \$5,000 for any year.

Question: What is Gratitude Month all about?

Answer: Many groups have designated November as a particular time to give thanks to the A.A. program. In 1970, as an extension of the Birthday Plan, the General Service Conference recommended that “area and state committees supplement regular group contributions by sponsoring a Gratitude Month.”

Question: What is the Contributions Challenge?

Answer: During the past several years, several areas engaged in a local grassroots effort to excite local members to get involved in supporting the G.S.B. by sending contributions to G.S.O. These areas challenged each member to contribute an amount equal to the cost of services per capita (typically \$7-8), as provided in the Finance Report presented at the General Service Conference.

Question: May an A.A. member make a contribution from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA)?

Answer: Yes. However, when G.S.O. receives a check from an IRA, we must verify the money is coming from an A.A. member.

Question: Can an A.A. member make a contribution from a foundation or charitable trust?

Answer: We only accept contributions from those we can verify are A.A. members.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: Our group is planning a party to celebrate its anniversary. Can we use Seventh Tradition funds to pay for the decorations and food?

Answer: Most A.A. members understand that their Seventh Tradition contributions will be used to pay group expenses and Twelfth Step work. Group anniversary parties, while considered traditional and helpful by many A.A.s, are not generally regarded as Twelfth Step work. Some groups ask their members to dig deeper into their pockets to cover a celebration. Others choose to pass a second basket. It is a matter for each group to decide, and either course would not seem to conflict with the Seventh Tradition of self-support.

Question: Can our group accept contributions from local businesses or other non-A.A. individuals or organizations? Can our group make a donation to a local homeless shelter, treatment facility, etc.?

Answer: Alcoholics Anonymous accepts no outside contributions. In accordance with the Sixth Tradition, A.A. makes no contributions to any outside organization or cause, no matter how worthy.

Question: If the facility in which an A.A. group meets cannot accept rent (such as a federal or state building), what can be done in accordance with our tradition of self-support?

Answer: A group can usually contribute in some other way. For example, the group might provide equipment or furnishings for the facility, or help with upkeep.

Question: Is it our group's responsibility to reimburse service workers for their expenses?

Answer: Each group, district, area or service committee is autonomous, and each has different needs and resources. While it is certainly up to the group conscience, many A.A. members seem to agree that no one should be excluded from service because of finances. Some service workers' expenses come out of their own pockets, while others are reimbursed.

In areas holding two- and three-day assemblies, expenses of participants (G.S.R.s, D.C.M.s, etc.) are sometimes met by asking groups to contribute. Expenses for area officers are usually covered by the area treasury. *The A.A. Service Manual* includes information on the subject.

Question: Can our group make financial contributions to AA Grapevine and La Vina?

Answer: No. AA Grapevine, Inc. is not set up to take contributions from groups or members. In the spirit of Tradition Seven and the Fellowship's principle of self-support, groups and individual members support the AA Grapevine by purchasing Grapevine and La Viña magazine subscriptions and other Grapevine publications. In keeping with A.A.'s primary purpose, when groups and members purchase Grapevine and La Vina publications, they also use them in their Twelfth Step work.

Question: Our treasurer just ran off with the money. What should we do?

Answer: Unfortunately, this sort of thing, though rare, does occur. Though legal action is always an option, most groups avoid it. In some cases, the person who stole the money will resurface and return it.

Whether or not that happens, some groups have found it helpful to hold a group conscience meeting to review the way the group's finances are being handled. Some sample questions for such a group conscience meeting might include the following: Does the group choose well in their selection of a responsible member to be the treasurer? Is the treasurer helped to an understanding of his or her responsibility as suggested in the pamphlets "The A.A. Group," "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix," and the service piece "The A.A. Group Treasurer?" Are they holding the treasurer accountable by receiving regular financial reports and are the treasurer's records available for review at business meetings? Are excessive funds being accumulated by the group?

BANK ACCOUNTS & TAX ID NUMBERS

Question: Our group needs to open a bank account and we were asked for an "I.D. number." Can we use G.S.O.'s?

Answer: No. More and more frequently, A.A. groups in the U.S. are being asked to supply an I.D. number to a bank when opening a checking or savings account, whether or not it is interest bearing. For

**This information applies to the U.S. only.*

spiritual as well as legal reasons, no local A.A. organization may use the tax-exempt status or identification number of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., since each entity is autonomous in financial matters. A tax I.D. is separate from the service number given to A.A. groups by G.S.O.

Question: How do we obtain an I.D. number for our group checking account?*

Answer: Local U.S. entities can obtain an "employer identification number" (EIN) from the I.R.S. To get this I.D. number, fill out I.R.S. Form SS-4, "Application for Employer Identification Number," or apply online at www.irs.gov. This number applies even though the group is not an employer. Look for the section about obtaining an EIN for banking purposes only. The form asks if there is one group exemption number that applies to all, and there is not.

TAXES, GROUP EXEMPTIONS, ETC.

G.S.O. is in no way attempting to give tax advice for single A.A. groups or other entities. This information relates to the United States only, and does not apply to Canada.

Achieving tax-exempt status is different from getting an I.D. number for banking purposes. Becoming a non-profit organization recognized by the state and federal government is a process that very few groups undertake. You may want to read I.R.S. Publication 557, "Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organizations." As rigorous reporting may be required, an accountant or tax lawyer can be helpful in the process.

Question: What about local/state/province taxes? Do I have to register my group with the secretary of state?

Answer: We suggest that you talk to a local professional or CPA.

Some questions we have recently received are:

- I have heard that the laws have changed and our group is automatically exempt from taxes.
- I have heard that our group should have been filing a postcard instead of a tax return.
- I have heard that because we have not filed the postcard and three years have passed we are automatically not tax exempt.
- I have heard that contributions to my group are (are not) tax deductible because we did (did not) file the postcards.
- My group does not want to take the time and expense to comply with the new rules.
- My group does not take in enough money to bother with the rules.

Question: Can I deduct the contributions to my group?

Answer: Unless your group is formally exempt—which means having gone through the full process of becoming exempt, filing the appropriate forms and paying the appropriate fees—contributions to your group are not deductible on your personal tax return.

If exemption application were not filed, donors cannot deduct any charitable contributions to an organization that is required to apply for

recognition of exemption, but has not done so. (Page 20 Chapter 3 section 501(c)3 Organizations)

If your group's annual receipts are under \$5,000 you do not have to apply for exemption. However, if the I.R.S. has no record of the group (i.e., they did not register voluntarily for the 990-N program) then it does not seem logical that contributions can be deducted.

Question: Are contributions to G.S.O. (The General Service Board in New York) tax deductible?

Answer: Yes. The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous in New York is on the list of approved tax-exempt organization that are able to accept contributions under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. All the proper applications were filed and the G.S.B. was approved by the I.R.S. as a tax-exempt organization able to accept contributions. The organization employs accountants and has an annual audit by outside certified public accountants and files appropriate annual tax returns with the I.R.S., which are available for public inspection.

Question: Are contributions to my local Intergroup or Area structure deductible?

Answer: You cannot make a generalization about local entities; you must ask them if they have received a letter from the I.R.S. stating that they are tax exempt.

Question: What do groups use for articles of incorporation or bylaws? Our group is not incorporated or formally organized and it looks like the I.R.S. instructions, or banks, require such information, what shall we do?

Answer: The information required by the I.R.S. calls for organizing documents. We understand that on occasion some A.A. groups or other entities have used the short form of the Traditions as their governing documents.

Question: What should I do if my group takes in more than \$5,000 but does not think it is important to file the appropriate paper work?

Answer: Try to have a discussion at a business meeting that explains that as good members of society the group should be mature enough to comply with appropriate laws.

Question: Why have these rules changed and why must we do this?

Answer: Tax rules are always evolving and will probably always continue to do so. Not-for-profit organizations (mostly charities) have received a lot of attention in the past few years, in part because some organizations abused the rules and were operating for the personal benefit of certain individuals who controlled the organizations. In addition, the tax benefit of deducting charitable donations means that the Federal government has an important interest in insuring that charities are formed, operated and dissolved in an appropriate and legal manner.

Excerpted from U.S. I.R.S. publication 557, page 24 (Rev. Feb. 2021)

Organizations Not Required to file form 1023 (application for exemption)

Some organizations are not required to file form 1023 (application for exemption).

- "any organization (other than a private foundation) normally having annual gross receipts of not more than \$5,000."

These organizations are exempt automatically if they meet the requirements of section 501(c)3.

Basically, section 501(c)3 covers charitable, educational, religious and scientific organizations.

Required annual filings:

Question: Is an organization required to file an e-Postcard (annual return) if it was not required to file an application for tax exemption?

Answer: Yes, certain organizations do not have to apply for tax exemption but still have an e-Postcard filing requirement. If your organization did not file an application for tax exemption because it is a section 501(c)3 organization whose gross receipts in each taxable year are normally not more than \$5,000, or because it is exempt under another code section, such as 501(c)4, an officer of the organization should call Customer Account Services at 1-877-829-5500 (toll-free number) and ask that the organization be set up to allow filing of the e-Postcard.

An e-Postcard contains the following information: taxpayer identification number; tax period; legal name and mailing address; any other names the organization uses; name and address of principal officer; website address if organization has one; confirmation that the organization's annual gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less; if applicable, a statement that the organization has terminated or is terminating (going out of business).

Organizations with gross receipts normally in excess of \$5,000 wishing to be considered tax exempt should file the appropriate paper work.

Organizations having done so with gross receipts up to \$50,000 may still file the e-Post card Annual Return discussed above.

Organizations having gross receipts from \$50,000 to \$200,000 may file form 990 EZ, and those with gross receipts over \$200,000 or assets more than \$500,000 are required to file form 990.

INSURANCE

Question: Our landlord has asked us to provide our own liability insurance. Can G.S.O. help?

Answer: No. G.S.O.'s liability insurance cannot be extended to cover local groups. A.A. groups are autonomous, and are not subsidiaries of G.S.O. We encourage you to seek assistance from a local insurance broker.

G.S.O.'s FINANCES

Question: Who manages contributions made to the General Service Board?

Answer: The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc. is the custodian of all contributed funds. The board's Finance and Budgetary Committee meets quarterly to review and approve G.S.O.'s budget and financial statements.

The budgeting process of G.S.O. is under the direction of the chief

financial officer, who oversees the annual budget for G.S.O., which is reviewed by the general manager before presentation to the Finance and Budgetary Committee of the A.A. World Services Board. A.A.W.S. then forwards the budget to the trustees' Finance & Budgetary Committee, which recommends the budget to the General Service Board.

Question: What is the General Fund?

Answer: Contributions to G.S.O. by A.A. groups and members make up the General Fund, which is administered by the General Service Board. G.S.O. does not accept contributions earmarked for a specific project or service.

Question: What is the Reserve Fund?

Answer: The Reserve Fund is G.S.O.'s prudent reserve. Its principal purpose is to provide the financial resources to continue the essential services of G.S.O. and the A.A. Grapevine for up to a year in the event of an unexpected and substantial reduction in the normal revenues of the organization.

Question: How are G.S.O.'s services funded?

Answer: Approximately 80% of G.S.O. services' funding comes from group contributions, the Birthday Plan, central office/district/area contributions, and excess funds of A.A. events or conferences. The balance is made up of profits from the sale of A.A. literature.

For more information on finance:

"The A.A. Group Treasurer"

Final Conference Report (Financial Statements section)

The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service

Pamphlets:

"Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix"

"The A.A. Group"

"Twelve Traditions Illustrated"

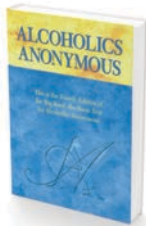
"A.A. Tradition—How It Developed"

YOUR SEVENTH TRADITION CONTRIBUTIONS

Carrying Our Message Beyond Your Home Group

When you or your home group contributes to the General Service Office (G.S.O.) your contribution helps an alcoholic around the corner — or around the world.

Here are some of the ways that happens:

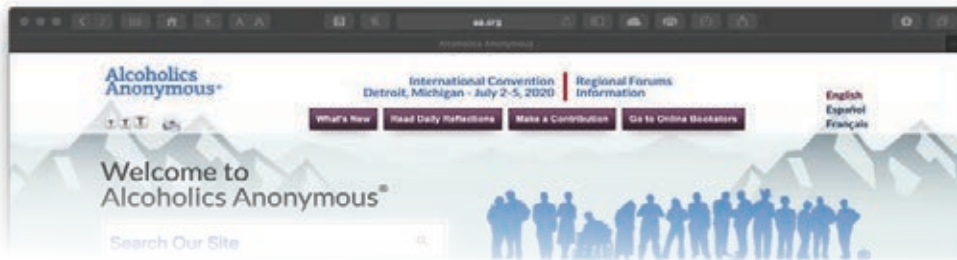


1 The G.S.O. Publishing Department has coordinated translations of the Big Book in 70 languages and translations of other A.A. literature in more than 91 languages. Further translations are constantly in process.

2 Each year G.S.O. staff responds to over 90,000 emails, letters, and phone calls from A.A. members, suffering alcoholics, professionals, students, the press and others interested in A.A. Thus accurate and consistent information about A.A. is provided.

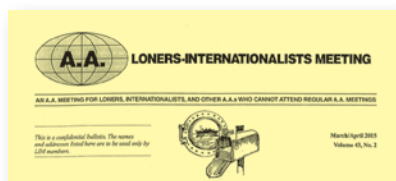


3 Staff communications often help someone find local A.A. meetings, link members in service, and support the start of A.A. in countries where there are no A.A. meetings.



4 G.S.O. maintains and updates the aa.org website that averages over 40,000 visits per day. The website provides information about A.A., including how to find A.A. in their community, and provides help to members and those seeking help with their drinking problem, as well as to families and friends of problem drinkers, and professionals.

5 G.S.O.'s Publishing Department publishes and distributes all A.A. Conference-approved literature. Approximately 8 million books, pamphlets, video and audio products are distributed annually. Some of this literature is specifically designed for sight- or hearing-impaired members. *Box 4-5-9*, news and notes from G.S.O., is published four times a year in English, French and Spanish.



6 G.S.O. coordinates the *Loners-Internationalists Meeting Correspondence Service (LIM)*, which is often the only link to A.A. for many A.A. members in remote areas, homebound, or deployed in active military service.

7 The Corrections coordinator at G.S.O. responds to over 6,500 letters a year, primarily from incarcerated alcoholics. Letters often request literature and many express gratitude for a Big Book supplied or a link to an outside member who can take a soon-to-be released alcoholic to his or her first meeting on the outside.



8 G.S.O.'s Corrections staff member also coordinates a Corrections Correspondence Service (CCS), which each year connects over 1,500 alcoholics behind the walls with outside members in order to share A.A. recovery by mail. *Sharing From Behind the Walls*, containing excerpts from inmate letters to G.S.O., is printed four times a year.



9 The G.S.O. Treatment and Accessibilities desk responds to letters and communications from residents or patients in treatment centers and connects them with local committees. The staff member on this assignment supports groups and members in making the A.A. message accessible to all alcoholics.

10 Professionals are frequently the first contact for an alcoholic seeking help. The Cooperation with the Professional Community (C.P.C.) staff member at G.S.O. provides information about A.A. to hundreds of professionals each year, often sending them basic literature. This assignment also coordinates A.A. exhibits at over 25 national conferences of professionals in various fields each year and publishes the newsletter *About A.A.* for professionals.



11 The Public Information desk coordinates the production and broadcast of audio and video Public Service Announcements (PSAs) to help reach the still-suffering alcoholics. Each year PSAs produced by Public Information are broadcast on television and radio. The most recent PSA, *Doors*, was aired approximately 75,000 times the first year of its release. The Public Information staff member also responds to approximately 500 emails per month from the press and other media, A.A. members and the general public.



12 G.S.O.'s Archives documents the activities of Alcoholics Anonymous for the future and makes the history of the Fellowship accessible to A.A. members and other researchers. Each year the Archives staff responds to over 1,500 requests for information and research.

General Service Office, P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163 • www.aa.org

AA GRAPEVINE

Supported Solely By Your Participation

WE'RE SELF-SUPPORTING

The AA Grapevine strives to be self-supporting through the sale of the magazine and related items. An important part of self-support at all levels (individual, group, district, area) is to subscribe and purchase other materials to assure the Grapevine and La Viña continue to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous.

As stated in the AA Service Manual

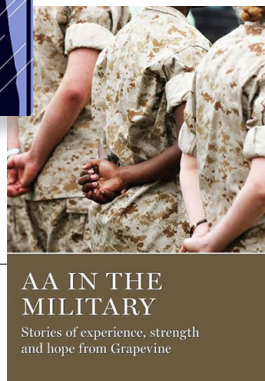
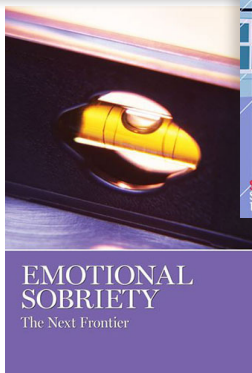
'AA Grapevine Inc.'s goal is to be supported by revenues from the purchase of subscriptions and other content related items. In contrast to G.S.O., where group contributions are applied to support group services, AA Grapevine, Inc., does not accept contributions from individuals or groups. Nor does it accept revenue from ads or membership fees. AA Grapevine, Inc. relies on A.A. groups, committees, and individual members who value Grapevine and La Viña in their recovery and in their Twelfth Step work to purchase subscriptions. 'After all,' as Bill W. once wrote, 'the Grapevine is to be their Voice — their newspaper. I am quite sure they will support it.'

WE'RE CONFERENCE APPROVED

As Bill W. expressed in his letter to Royal Shepherd in June 1946, "The Grapevine will be the voice of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement." In 1986, the General Service Conference officially recognized Grapevine as the International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous.

EACH ISSUE of Grapevine is filled with stories of recovery and hope written by members of AA and, on occasion, by friends of AA. The stories are direct and personal, and as varied as the fellowship itself. Grapevine writers come from all walks of life and every generation and geographic area. Each month we offer a current, ongoing view of our beloved fellowship!

Visit us at www.aagrapevine.org



Congratulations!

We celebrate your sobriety and are grateful for contributions such as yours that help support the services G.S.O. provides to members and groups throughout the U.S. and Canada. Your contribution helps ensure that the A.A. message is available anytime, anywhere — to those who reach out for help. Some members contribute \$1, \$2 or even \$5 a year for each year of sobriety. Whatever the amount you may choose, we thank you for your participation in A.A.'s Seventh Tradition of self-support!

(Please note that per A.A.'s 2018 General Service Conference, individual contributions may not exceed \$5,000 per year.)

MEMBERS CAN ALSO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION ONLINE AT WWW.AA.ORG

FOLD HERE

In keeping with A.A.'s Seventh Tradition of self-support, we accept contributions only from A.A. members.

I am a member of A.A.

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2022 Conference Committee on Literature

ITEM B: PAI #76 - Consider request to add a disclaimer to the front of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

Note: As a result of the EDW plan, this item is on the agenda of the Conference Finance Committee

Background Notes:

Excerpt from October 30, 2021 TLC Meeting Report:

The committee **agreed to forward** to the 2022 General Service Conference a request to add a disclaimer to the front of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

The committee forwarded the proposed agenda item, its background, and the Scoring Tool to the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference for review by its Subcommittee on Equitable Distribution of Workload.

Background:

1. Submission Form- PAI #76_12x12 Disclaimer
2. Summary_Background _Conf_12x12

[Back to Main Agenda](#)

(1) Submit a clear and concisely worded motion.

Motion that a Disclaimer be added to the front of the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, as follows:

"While the language in this text may seem dated, please remember that Bill W. wrote in the language and custom of his times. Bill was very tolerant of different individuals and members. All alcoholics, were and are now welcomed cordially into AA. Were Bill to write this book today, it may be worded differently in some places. Society may change, but the basic spiritual principles of Alcoholics Anonymous are classic and eternal. We hope that this book continues to broaden and deepen the understanding of the Twelve Steps as written in the book Alcoholics Anonymous"

(2) What problem does this proposed item address?

The problem is a succession of small changes to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions can change the meaning of the text as originally written. Factions within AA are pushing their agenda to alter Bill's writings. This book is a classic, by any measure, and classic books are not changed to fit the times. Great Books Programs at universities don't change the readings to fit the current students. No one would attempt to rewrite authors like Emerson, Thoreau or Twain. Were the classics written today, they may be different. Once we change the original AA program, we no longer have the AA program. Something similar, but not AA. One cannot change the past. Dr Bob and the first members read the Bible and other literature that would be considered controversial today!! That is a historical fact regardless of how people feel about it today. Bill W., the Alcoholic Foundation and the G.S.O. used words not appropriate today, but it still happened. Newcomers are not entitled to anything in AA, especially to change AA to fit their whims. It is a privilege to sit in an AA meeting, not a right. Once we change Bill's writings, the camel has his head in the tent and the body is soon to follow. Also, for those of us who won't change, a plethora of publishers print original books. AAWS is no longer the only supplier of AA books.

(3) What level of group conscience, if any, discussed the proposed agenda item? Make it clear who is submitting:1 the item (an individual, group, district, area, etc.).

Note: While all items are received equally, experience has shown that ideas greatly benefit from the value of a broader group conscience. Consider if and with whom you would like to have a group conscience discussion on the proposed agenda item prior to submitting.

I have discussed this with the groups and districts. This is being floated around the Area, as well as members at the Area assembly.

The following groups and district have submitted letters from Area: District, , District, District and, District. District, Area has also submitted a letter.

Because of the unprecedented submission date being moved forward, many groups, districts and the area we will be submitting letters of support after the September 15, 2021 deadline.

I and others have encouraged members and groups to write letters and discuss how best we can have our voices heard.

(4) Provide background information that describes and supports the reasoning for the proposal. List background material(s) included with the proposal:

The 2002 general Service conference discussed the issue and it was unanimously recommended that: The text in the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, written by Bill W., remain as is, recognizing the Fellowship's feelings that Bill's writing be retained as originally published. We hope that the collective spiritual experience of the A.A. pioneers captured in these pages continues to help alcoholics and friends of A.A. understand the principles of our program.

We need to stop trying to change the past to please a vocal minority in AA.

The preservation of the integrity of our program is to preserve the Unity of Alcoholics Anonymous.

(5) What are the intended/expected outcomes if this proposed item is approved?

To maintain the program of Alcoholics Anonymous as it was originally written and to give future fellows AA the same chance we were given.

To stop being creative and politically correct to meet the needs of the newcomer. We need to keep the people who are in AA, and the newcomers will come. We need to stop keeping our focus on how much money we have and the growth of the Fellowship (number of members).

(6) Provide a primary contact for the submission.

K.C. H.
Sober 02/11/1989

(7) Final comments:

As Bill W. said "viewing with alarm for the good of the movement", I think after the 2021 GSC, that we are on the verge of an unnecessary split in AA.

The vocal minority has awoken the silent majority.

September 11, 2021

**To: Steve S.
General Service Conference Coordinator
General Service Office
A.A. World Services, Inc.
475 Riverside Drive at West 120th St
New York, NY 10115**

Copy to: Michael P., Area Delegate and Jimmy D., Regional Trustee.

Re: GSC Agenda Proposals for the following: Creation of disclaimer for the book Alcoholics Anonymous, disclaimer for the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and a Title restriction for plain language Big Book, workbook, or study guide.

Dear Mr. S.

The Lucky Ones Group of Alcoholic Anonymous in Corpus Christi Texas has unanimously voted to support the proposals put forth by Willard M. and KC. H. which create disclaimers for the books Alcoholics Anonymous and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Also unanimously supported, is the proposal that we refrain from the use of the words Alcoholics Anonymous and Big Book in the title or cover page of any planned plain language book, workbook or study guide that is created.

We believe, as many other members do, that to change the original writings of the book of Alcoholics Anonymous and the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions threatens the message that was initially presented. As a group of Alcoholics Anonymous we take seriously the responsibility to protect its future. We believe it is imperative that the aforementioned books of Alcoholics Anonymous be guarded and maintained in the context, essence and meaning in which they were originally written. We also believe that continued attempts to improve inclusivity by changing of original wording has the potential to divert us from our primary purpose.

We support these proposals in an effort to continue to place A.A. as a whole before our own

Conrado C. Jr

September 9, 2021

To: Steve S.

General Service Conference Coordinator

General Service Office

A.A. World Services, Inc.

475 Riverside Drive at West 120th St.

New York, NY 10115

Copy to: Michael P., Area 68 Delegate and Jimmy D. Southwest Regional Trustee.

Re: GSC Agenda Proposals for the following: Creation of disclaimer for the book Alcoholics Anonymous, disclaimer for the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and a Title restriction for plain language Big Book, workbook, or study guide.

Dear Mr. S.,

The Group of Alcoholics Anonymous in Corpus Christi Texas has agreed unanimously to support the proposals by Willard M. and K.C. H. creating statements that deny for the books Alcoholics Anonymous and The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions as well as limiting the use of the words Alcoholics Anonymous and The Big Book in any planned plain or simple language Big Book, workbook, or study guide. We want for those newly written books to stand alone in title and substance.

We are part of the silent majority in Alcoholics Anonymous that will not remain hushed, noiseless or soundless anymore. We treasure the Big Book as it stands. It is essential to our recovery and the recovery of future members of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is a life-or-death situation for us. The continuous need to make changes to our two most important pieces of literature is disturbing and unacceptable. We will not stand for it. We will defend and protect the books of Alcoholics Anonymous and The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

Very respectfully yours,

Jennifer N.

Alternate GSR

September 10, 2021

Dear KC H.,

Bookmarks Group of Area 68, District 8D endorses the three proposals by Willard M. and KC. H. (see attached.) We feel it is necessary to preserve our literature as written by our co-founder. The literature has stood the test of time and has helped and will continue to help so many alcoholics find sobriety through generations, past and future.

Sincerely,

Karen S.

GSR

September 13, 2021

Attn: Steve S.
General Service Office
A.A. World Services, Inc.
475 Riverside Dr. At West 120th St. New York, NY 10115

Also to Address: Michael P., Area 68 Delegate and Jimmy D., Southwest Regional Trustee.

Re: GSC Agenda Proposals for the following; Creation of disclaimer for the book Alcoholics Anonymous, disclaimer for the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and a Title restriction for plain language Big Book, workbook, or study guide.

Mr. S.,
District, a district located in Area of Alcoholics Anonymous in Corpus Christi TX has reviewed the proposals by Willard M. and K.C. H. Our groups have had the opportunity to discuss with their members and provide feedback to the district. It is our position to unanimously, and enthusiastically support the proposals creating disclaimers for the books Alcoholics Anonymous and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions as well as limiting the use of the words Alcoholics Anonymous and Big Book in any planned plain language Big Book, workbook, or study guide.

The consensus of our groups reflects what we believe is the conscious of the majority of Members in Alcoholics Anonymous, and certainly our District, that have been silent as we watched what we perceived to be *outside issues* become a corroding force to the foundations of our program. The 5th Tradition states that, "Our primary purpose - to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers." We do not see how the corruption of our founding texts, stemming from our direct involvement in issues of public controversy, could possibly result in our effectiveness to share hope and solution with the desperate alcoholic.

As a fellowship we need to defend and protect the books of Alcoholics Anonymous and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Ensuring that they remain as true to the earliest writings in word, message and meaning as we can.

Bob H., former General Manager of G.S.O., said at the close of his talk at the 1977 General Service Conference, "...all of us are a part of the continuum of A.A. history. To some small degree, then, each of us is responsible for A.A.'s future." "...it will be because we think too much about our 'rights', and too little about our obligations and responsibilities."

Respectfully yours,

Kim T. DCM

Area , District

PAI 76 & 80

Discuss changes to the text of the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions directed by the 71st General Service Conference.

The changes to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions that were passed by substantial unanimity at the 71st GSC were:

Advisory Action 18

A revision be made to page 117 in the book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, replacing the phrase "opposite sex" with the word "partner" as follows, and that a footnote be added to provide context to the change as it relates to inclusivity:

The text on page 117 which currently 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...."

Be revised to read: "Nearly every sound human being, experiences at some time in life, a compelling desire to find a partner 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...."

Advisory Action 19

The sentence which includes the phrase "lustful enough to rape" in paragraph one on page 66 in the chapter "Step Six" of the book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, be revised to refer to the Seven Deadly Sins without specific mention of examples that are severe in nature as follows, and that a footnote be added to provide context as to the basis for the change:

The text on page 66 which currently reads: "No one wants to be angry enough to murder, lustful enough to rape, gluttonous enough to ruin his health."

Be revised to read: "No one wants to commit the deadly sins of anger, lust or gluttony."

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Advisory Action 23

The Long Form of each Tradition be included at the end of each essay for that Tradition in the book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, and that the complete set of Traditions at the back of the book be retained as is.

Proposed Agenda Items (PAIs) for the 72nd General Service Conference

The General Service Office received 40 requests to reverse or rescind one or more of these advisory actions, and/or to preserve, unaltered, the text of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, as originally published. Some PAIs were similar, with some having content that were verbatim duplications. This perhaps reflects some coordination that was taking place in the absence of districts or areas convening prior to the submission deadline, which had moved up due to the piloting of the Equitable Distribution of Workload program. This was stated in at least one of the submissions.

It should be noted that some proposed agenda items also included commentary on other items and requests to undo other actions from the 71st GSC. Here we summarize only the sentiments related to the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions advisory actions.

The proposed agenda items, excerpts sampled below, fell broadly into four categories referencing:

1. the 1995 advisory action that no changes happen to the Big Book,
2. the “slippery slope” concern, that these changes could lead to endless future changes,
3. that the COVID pandemic, or other issues, didn’t allow for a fully informed group conscience,
4. that the changes are the result of outside issues and therefore not in keeping with Tradition 10.

Below is a summary of the submitted items, illustrated by a range of PAI examples .

1 - The 1995 Advisory Action: *The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewards, “The Doctor’s Opinion,” “Doctor Bob’s Nightmare,” and the Appendices remain as is.* These proposed agenda items ranged from suggesting additional/new disclaimer text contextualizing the text of the book, handling changes in footnotes, and denying any proposed change to any of Bill’s writings based on the 1995 Advisory Action and the strong sentiment that Bill Wilson’s writings remain unchanged.

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PAI-76: That a disclaimer be added to the front of the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, as follows: "While the language in this text may seem dated, please remember that Bill W. wrote in the language and custom of his times. Bill was very tolerant of different individuals and members. All alcoholics were and are now welcomed cordially into AA. Were Bill to write this book today, it may be worded differently in some places. Society may change, but the basic spiritual principles of Alcoholics Anonymous are classic and eternal. We hope that this book continues to broaden and deepen the understanding of the Twelve Steps as written in the book Alcoholics Anonymous."

PAI-80: To maintain the integrity and historical accuracy of the publication Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, that all proposed changes be handled in footnotes rather than in a revision of the actual text.

PAI-94: That all consideration of amendments to the portions of the Big Book covered by the 1995 Advisory, all sections of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and other language passed in the past 71st General Service Conference be suspended until the General Service Conference deems that business meetings of AA groups and the interaction between AA groups and their GSRs have returned to normal after the Covid 19 pandemic.

PAI-143: This proposal is being made regarding two recommended revisions made by the Literature Committee during the 71st General Services Conference that changes the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions: (1) A revision be made to page 117 in the book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, replacing the phrase "opposite sex" with the word "partner" as follows, and that a footnote be added to provide context to the change as it relates to inclusivity and (2) regarding the sentence which includes the phrase "lustful enough to rape" in paragraph one on page 66 in the chapter "Step Six" of the book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, be revised to refer to the Seven Deadly Sins without specific mention of examples that are severe in nature as follows, and that a footnote be added to provide context as to the basis for the change. That the changes to Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions enacted by the 71st General Service Conference NOT be implemented and that Twelves Steps and Twelve Traditions remain as published prior to the 71st General Service Conference. Further, that no changes to the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, as described in the 1995 Conference Action and others, or Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, as described in the 2002 Conference Action be implemented due to the strong sentiment that Bill Wilson's writings remain untouched.

PAI-140: We are writing to express our concerns regarding the changes made to AA Literature at

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the 2021 General Service Conference, as well as the potential changes in 2022. We believe that many alcoholics across the nation have concerns regarding the amendments to the Preamble and the 12 & 12. Alcoholics Anonymous is a proud and diverse group of people who hold our literature and traditions in the highest esteem. Our lives have been saved by this program, and we deeply value our books and the words of Bill Wilson in their original and true form. We believe that tampering with the original wording and format of the Big Book and/or 12 & 12 is a disservice to the groups and Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. We should honor our traditions and the words of our founder by continuing to use the literature in its original format.

We all know that changes will come to the first 164 pages of the book, likely at the next GSC. However, the 1995 advisory action states “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.” We believe that entertaining the idea of a plain language big book is in direct opposition to this statement, as well as what our program has taught us. We are deeply concerned about the unity of Alcoholics Anonymous. This program has saved many lives, and we know that some groups will be resistant to the changes that are being proposed. It is possible that groups that are adamant about maintaining the original wording of AA literature will refuse to read the new Preamble and neglect to study the new 12 and 12. Many alcoholics will turn up their noses at the idea of a “simple language” big book. Continuity is important to us as a group, and it is our strong belief that these changes will be to the detriment of the program, as well as numerous AA groups around the world. It is our sincere hope that no changes will be made to the Big Book, no further changes will be made to the 12 & 12, and that the original wording of the Big Book not be tampered with in order to preserve the deep pride and sense of history that Alcoholics Anonymous members hold so dear.

2 - “Slippery Slope” - the concern that these changes could lead to endless future changes.

While no conference advisory action is binding on future advisory actions, several agenda items referred to the 1995 advisory action related to not changing certain portions of the text *Alcoholics Anonymous* or thought that related prior actions should be reversed prior to making any changes. Concern was raised that translations of the 12x12 throughout the world would not align with the revised book.

Some asserted that the changes were politically motivated, based on semantics or sensitivities, and that making these changes will open the door to all the literature requiring revision or the need to revise literature over time to be relatable.

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PAI-138: Whether it was from a lack of institutional knowledge, or perhaps the huge agenda load that the Conference Literature Committee had to navigate; for the first time in the Conference's seven decades of history, conflicting advisory actions were created without amending or revoking prior advisory actions. Additionally, what appears to be a massive cost to change a grand total of ten words, there is a significant concern that there are dozens of translations of the 12 & 12 worldwide. Noting such, the 71st advisory action makes each one of those foreign translations no longer in compliance with the rewritten book.

PAI-139: Alcoholics Anonymous is a proud and diverse group of people who hold our literature and traditions in the highest esteem. Our lives have been saved by this program, and we deeply value our books and the words of Bill W. in their original and true form. We believe that tampering with the 12 & 12 is a disservice to the groups and Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. We should honor our traditions and the words of our founder by continuing to use the literature in its original format.

PAI-142: Motion to rescind the revisions to the book the Twelve and Twelve. Specifically, to rescind the removal of the phrase "opposite sex" from paragraph two on page 117 in the chapter "Step Twelve" and change to "partner." Also, to rescind the removal of the phrase "lustful enough to rape" in paragraph one on page 66 in the chapter "Step Six" and change it to "No one wants to commit the deadly sins of anger, lust, or gluttony."

To rescind these changes will assist AA in not adding to the confusion and contradiction of semantics in types of wording in all of our literature.

Our reasoning is that opening the door to these types of changes caused by semantic arguments would only increase the workload on our trusted servants at every level by possibly creating a myriad of changes due to confused or hurt feelings. Once we change one piece of literature, we then open the door to take aim at ALL literature. All of our literature has gotten and kept millions of alcoholics sober over the decades; even though there are words that could cause confusion and/or hurt for some, millions of us have accepted and recovered with them in the literature...

Also, the same with referring to "partner." Semantics again - there are a myriad of definitions for partners that could keep us busy for years trying to fix something that may not be a problem for the majority of alcoholics.

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PAI-149: If this systematic poisoning of our AA literature is not stopped now, Alcoholics Anonymous will cease to exist, just as the Washingtonians did. The Washingtonian Movement did not keep outside political issues out of their organization and they ceased to exist. They became involved in all manners of controversial social reforms. They took on a noble cause of their time, slavery, and prohibition and as a result, their group fragmented and perished completely within a few years. Alcoholics Anonymous cannot afford to stray from its primary purpose...

Changing pronouns is only the beginning. It will start with that, then the removal of language that is "too harsh" or "offensive". It will end with the removal of the word "God" from our literature...

Risking our lives and the lives of future alcoholics by allowing the outside issue of ANY politics to influence and actually change our literature is suicidal and NOT right!

Those who engaged in this deadly politically motivated altering of our literature need to STOP! These decisions and the people who made them do NOT represent the whole of Alcoholics Anonymous.

These men and women on whatever committee that changed our literature NEED to actually represent Alcoholics Anonymous NOT any outside issues, especially politics.

PAI-150: Our co-founder Bill wrote our book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in the 1950s. He used idioms and set expressions from that time, but today these often sound outdated, biased and exclusive. Fifty years from now our present manner of speech and manner of living will certainly sound old-fashioned, even ridiculous, to those future generations. Every language changes and adapts as its society and culture evolve. Yet the AA message of recovery from alcoholism probably will not change.

Advisory Actions #18 and #19 may open up a flood of proposals for agenda items to change our literature to match ever-evolving societal mores. This could lead to requests for immediate edits, rewording and deletions of all our literature, including our co-founder's original works. It is not possible to constantly satisfy everyone's sensitivities.

3 - Limited discussion and/or lack of fully informed group conscience. Some proposed agenda items raised significant concern that a thorough group conscience was not obtained about the agenda items at the 71st GSC due to the pandemic. Some suggested that amendments should be suspended until business meetings have returned to normal after the Covid19 pandemic. There

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was concern for the need for a broader group conscience, especially given the gravity of these changes, to ensure that all the voice of AA is heard.

PAI-94: That all consideration of amendments to the portions of the Big Book covered by the 1995 Advisory, all sections of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and other language passed in the past 71st General Service Conference be suspended until the General Service Conference deems that business meetings of AA groups and the interaction between AA groups and their GSRs have returned to normal after the Covid 19 pandemic.

PAI-148: The problem is that there is a disconnect from GSR's/Districts Members/Area Reps to the groups & not enough ears heard the motion to change the language of the TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS The problem this proposed item addresses is intervening with Bill's writings The TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS was written by Bill & by guidance of his spiritual sponsor. It took Divine Time & Patience to wait on letters that hi: spiritual sponsor received guidance from the elders. But the final say was Bill's writings as it was his intuition and ACTION to help alcoholics gain emotional sobriety and recover.

PAI-150: The pandemic has had a profound effect throughout our fellowship worldwide. Some members lacking Internet access or computer skills have not been able to transition to online formats. Regular meeting places and well-established home groups were shuttered or separated. Members found they could not contact others when groups changed online meeting access codes, or reopened, sometimes in new locations.

Greater thought and full debate is needed before changing the wording to one of our basic texts. The Fellowship should have the opportunity to 1) discuss the effect of such changes on the context and meaning, and 2) understand the consequences of future demands to edit our co-founder's own words, and that of all our literature.

PAI-163: My group recognizes the unprecedented impact that COVID-19 has had on our fellowship in the last 12 months. Never in AA history have in-person meetings been interrupted for such a long period of time. Though online meetings have been available, communication has been inconsistent at best during this period with many members with many years of sobriety not attending online meetings.

We feel this action has been taken without an accurate representation of the group conscious of AA as a whole. Such a change requires exhaustive communication and thorough group conscience input for GSRs and Delegates to vote for the full fellowship. An online forum for a

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GSC meeting is a temporary work-around and should not be the way such an impactful decision is made.

4 - Addresses outside issues and therefore not in keeping with Tradition 10. Several proposed agenda items felt that these changes represent explicit endorsements of outside issues and thus violate Tradition 10. A number of other traditions were also raised. Concern was raised that these changes will fuel infighting and division within AA, which is a distraction from our primary purpose.

PAI-146: Remove the phrase partner and replace it with the phrase opposite sex. This is an outside issue. It is also changing a historical document. STEP TWELVE same paragraph "WE AA's CANNOT PRETEND TO OFFER FULL ANSWERS TO AGE OLD PERPLEXITIES BUT OUR OWN EXPERIENCE DOES PROVIDE CERTAIN ANSWERS THAT WORK FOR US." To change their experience because someone has a different lifestyle is wrong. There are many ways to get that message across without changing history. Historical document. This book also goes to a lot of other countries where some of these changes can be construed as illegal.

PAI-153: Consider requests to change back to previous versions of text and format for the book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. These requests would rescind Advisory Actions from the 2021 General Service Conference which changed text on pages 66 and 117 and moved the long form of the traditions.

Changes were a violation of Tradition 10.

PAI-178: Motion to visit the legitimacy of the changes to the preamble and the revisions to the language used in Step Six of the Twelve and Twelve, given that they aren't explicit endorsement of outside issues/causes. If outside issues are found to have been endorsed then a revocation of the changes is hereby proposed.

Infighting division within AA, distraction from our primary purpose as an organization and splitting groups up. The revisions to the preamble and Twelve and Twelve language puts AA in the position of endorsing causes and outside issues and conflicts with the preamble itself (i.e., neither endorses nor opposes any outside issues). The change is also inconsistent with the First and Twelfth Traditions regarding Unity and Anonymity.

In essence, the changes addressed an "issue" that was not the result of overt actions on the part of AA, and sets a dangerous precedent for any and all other outside issues to be

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incorporated. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help the other alcoholic achieve sobriety (regardless of any outside issue or cause).

Lastly, there were some submissions that did not fit into the four categories and were more general in nature, see examples below

PAI-152, PAI-155, PAI-159, and PAI-160

In my humble opinion, the Big Book Of Alcoholics Anonymous and the 12 STEPS AND 12 TRADITIONS were inspired by the hand of God, the authors were merely the instrument of the hand of God. These two books might be the only AA some people get to see. They have saved my life and given me a life worth living. Changes to this literature are not minor issues and the voice of all of AA should be heard.

PAI-151

We have included our letter written to the GSC members in preparation of this and other agenda items. We also ask, have we become so righteous that our ears cannot hear anything that might offend or disturb us? Does anyone in the GSC believe the intent of this language was to offend or diminish anyone or anything? Do you really think it is language changes like this that will help people get and stay sober?

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2022 Conference Committee on Literature

ITEM C: PAI #80 - Consider request that all proposed changes to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* be handled in footnotes.

Note: As a result of the EDW plan, this item is on the agenda of the Conference Finance Committee

Background Notes:

Excerpt from October 30, 2021 TLC Meeting Report:

The committee agreed to forward to the 2022 General Service Conference a request that all proposed changes to the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* be handled in footnotes.

The committee forwarded the proposed agenda item, its background, and the Scoring Tool to the trustees' Committee on the General Service Conference for review by its Subcommittee on Equitable Distribution of Workload.

Background:

1. Submission Form-PAI #80 _All_Chgs to 12x12_As Footnote.
2. See background for PAI#76 (Agenda Item B.2).

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PAI#80 Submission Form

(1) Submit a clear and concisely worded motion.
To maintain the integrity and historical accuracy of the publication Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, we move that all proposed changes be handled in footnotes rather than in a revision of the actual text.
(2) What problem does this proposed item address?
This proposed item addresses the issue of keeping our text historically accurate and faithful to the original writer's intention.
(3) What level of group conscience, if any, discussed the proposed agenda item? Make it clear who is submitting the item (an individual, group, district, area, etc.).
<i>Note: While all items are received equally, experience has shown that ideas greatly benefit from the value of a broader group conscience. Consider if and with whom you would like to have a group conscience discussion on the proposed agenda item prior to submitting.</i>
District has discussed this proposal, and it is our group conscience that it be submitted for consideration.
(4) Provide background information that describes and supports the reasoning for the proposal. List background material(s) included with the proposal:
Many of us were disturbed at the prospect of revisions to our literature, as it has been effective for years at saving the lives of countless alcoholics. The revisions to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions approved at the General Service Conference set a dangerous precedent for changes to what we consider sacred texts in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. If the proposed changes are handled in footnotes which include the rationale for the change and any supporting evidence, the historically significant text will remain intact. This text is a part of our history, our collective memory. Suppressing its outdated expressions that have only come to be known as such negates the growth that has taken place in us as a fellowship.
(5) What are the intended/expected outcomes if this proposed item is approved?
That future publications of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions will include changes only as footnotes.
(6) Provide a primary contact for the submission.
Joy C., DCM District
Charly M., GSR, Group.
(7) Final comments:
We respectfully submit this proposal for consideration.