

Committee B

Consider a request to produce an animated video based on the pamphlet “The Twelve Steps Illustrated.” (Trustees – 11g)

Consider a request to update the pamphlet “The A.A. Member – Medications and Other Drugs.” (Corrections – 3c)

Discuss workshop topic ideas for the 2027 General Service Conference. (Agenda – 1c)

Discuss the suggestion to discontinue the annual review of service kits and workbooks by Conference committees. (Policy and Admissions – 7ci)

***Note this item will not be talked about during committee discussion, but all together on Panel 4 ***

Review draft of the Fifth Edition of the book Alcoholics Anonymous. (Literature – 6d)

2026 Conference Committee on Trustees

ITEM G: Consider a request to produce an animated video based on the pamphlet *The Twelve Steps Illustrated*

Background note:

Excerpt from the December 10, 2025, interim meeting of the trustees' Literature Committee meeting report:

The committee reviewed the proposed agenda item (PAI-103), "On 9/25/2025 Area 73 approved a Proposed Agenda Item to be submitted to the 2026 General Service Conference to produce an animated video of the pamphlet 'The 12 Steps Illustrated' (P-55)." The committee **agreed to forward** PAI-103 to the 76th General Service Conference.

Background:

1. PAI-103
2. ["Twelve Steps Illustrated" \(Item P-55\)](#)

<p>(1) Submit a clear and concisely worded motion.</p> <p>On 9/25/2025 Area 73 approved a Proposed Agenda Item to be submitted to the 2026 General Service Conference to produce an animated video of the pamphlet "The 12 Steps" (P-55).</p>
<p>(2) What problem does this proposed item address?</p> <p>In keeping with today's trend of people engaging with short videos it may help connect with some people who either cannot read or simply prefer videos. In addition, The 72nd General Service Conference Advisory Action passed to create a comparable video animation of the 12 Concepts so doing a similar thing with the 12 Steps seems appropriate.</p>
<p>(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.).</p> <p><u>Note:</u> 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.</p> <p>This item was voted on and approved by the Area 73 voting body at their 2025 Fall Assembly Business meeting on 9/25/2025.</p>
<p>(4) Provide background information that describes and supports the reasoning for the proposal. List background material(s) included with the proposal:</p> <p>As listed above the 72nd General Service Conference approved a similar item with the 12 Concepts.</p>
<p>(5) What are the intended/expected outcomes if this proposed item is approved?</p> <p>It is hoped that this video will be used/seen by people who really have no idea what the Program of Alcoholics Anonymous is all about. In addition, it could be used by sponsors when working with a new person or at First Step Meetings as a jumping off point.</p>
<p>(6) Provide a primary contact for the submission.</p>

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William A., Area 73 Delegate Panel 75

(7) Final comments:

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2026 Conference Committee on Corrections

ITEM C: Consider a request to update the pamphlet “The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs.”

Background note:

Excerpts from the trustees’ Literature Committee November 2, 2025, meeting report:

The committee reviewed the proposed agenda item (PAI-50), “General review supporting modifications to the story section of the P-11 ‘The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs’ pamphlet” and **agreed to forward** to the 76th General Service Conference.

The committee reviewed the proposed agenda item (PAI-56), “It is recommended that the pamphlet ‘The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs’ (P-11) be revised and expanded” and **agreed to forward** to the 76th General Service Conference.

Background:

1. PAI-50
2. PAI-56
3. [“The A.A. Member — Medications and Other Drugs” \(Item P-11\)](#)

General Service Conference (GSC) Proposed Agenda Item Submission Form

Annual deadline for submissions for a General Service Conference is September 15.

What types of proposals, suggestions or ideas rise to the level of needing a General Service Conference “action” or “decision”?

Proposals that are important to the future of Alcoholics Anonymous, policy decisions or request for changes to Conference-approved literature and items that might require the collective conscience of the Fellowship. The trustees, corporate directors and staff bring together years of experience in A.A. service in making decisions about the appropriate process or disposition of proposed Conference agenda items. Warranty Six reminds us “that though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government...” *The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service* (page VI).

The A.A. Service Manual/Twelve Concepts for World Service states on page 42 that:

The Conference considers matters of policy for A.A. as a whole, and there are tried-and-true procedures for placing an item on the agenda in the most effective way possible. For suggestions that do not concern overall policy, there are procedures to ensure they are routed to the most appropriate part of the service structure.

The final agenda for any Conference consists of items suggested by:

- Individual A.A. members
- Groups
- Delegates
- Trustees
- Area assemblies
- Area committee members
- Directors and staff members of AAWS and the Grapevine

GSRs may have ideas for an agenda item, including some brought to them by group members. Experience suggests that they may want to discuss them first with their groups, then at district or area meetings. A district or an area can then forward it to the staff member at G.S.O. who is currently serving as Conference coordinator.

The following is from a process overview document “FAQs on Group Conscience Consideration for Proposed Conference Agenda Items.”

Q. What happens when a proposed Conference agenda item arrives at the conference coordinator’s desk?

A. The conference coordinator acknowledges receipt of the proposed agenda item and lets the sender know which of the following options is most appropriate and, if necessary, an

explanation of why and how the proposed agenda item is being directed. Some of the possible routes are:

1. Forwarding to a trustees' committee via a GSO Staff member or Department Head.
2. Forwarding to GSO's Publishing Director or Group Services Staff person.
3. Forwarding to A.A. World Services, Inc.
4. Forwarding to chair of the General Service Board.
5. Forwarding to the AA Grapevine Corporate Board/AA Grapevine Publisher.

Q. What happens when it is unclear what committee should address a proposed item or where an item should be routed?

A. When it is unclear where a proposed item belongs, it is most frequently forwarded to the trustees' Committee on the Conference for direction.

If a proposed agenda item does not rise to the level of a Conference action, the topic could be programmed during the Conference in a different way like a presentation/discussion or workshop.

This overview is general and includes many but not necessarily all the possible routes a proposed agenda item follows in the trustee, GSO and Grapevine review process. There is no "one size fits all" procedure and, on a case-by-case basis over time, there may occasionally be inconsistencies.

(1) Submit a clear and concisely worded motion.

General review supporting modifications to the story section of the P-11 "The A.A. Member- Medications & Other Drugs" pamphlet.

[The A.A. Member—Medications and Other Drugs](#)

(2) What problem does this proposed item address?

This agenda item proposal addresses the problem of outdated and unrelatable stories consistent with the majority of medication literature that is updated frequently. In 2011, three new stories were added as a result of an ongoing Advisory Action from the 57th General Service Conference in 2007. This pamphlet received a new cover in 2018.

(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.).

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.

This proposal is respectfully submitted, after careful consideration, by District 32, Area 10. This proposal has been revised since the Area 10 Summer Assembly discussion with attention to Tradition Three and Ten.

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

Tradition Three

“The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.”

“Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.”

Tradition Ten

“Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”

“No A.A. group or member should ever, in such a way as to implicate A.A., express any opinion on outside controversial issues—particularly those of politics, alcohol reform, or sectarian religion. The Alcoholics Anonymous groups oppose no one. Concerning such matters they can express no views whatever.”

AA Comes of Age: *additional pages included

III, Four O'clock Sunday Afternoon (Page 232, 1st paragraph)

IV, Medicine Looks At Alcoholics Anonymous (Page 236 2 paragraph- 1st paragraph page 237)

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

The targeted outcome, if approved, is to address the need for relatable stories that demonstrate current language and terminology that are consistent with today's modalities while still honoring our primary purpose.

(6) Provide a primary contact for the submission.

Gidget H.
District 32, Area 10

(7) Final comments:

"It has to do with our relations to the men of medicine. A.A. can be likened to a temple supported by three pillars: one is religion, another is medicine, and the third is our own experience as people who have suffered from alcoholism. Medicine in its broad aspects includes the science of the mind and its effect upon the body, as well as the effect of a physical malady upon the mind."-Bill W

"So let us modestly fill our role; let us make our link, the once-missing one, strong."- Bill W

Cooperation with the professional community has been an objective of Alcoholics Anonymous since its beginnings.

Submit completed forms to the GSO Staff Member on the Conference Desk: EMAIL:

Conference@aa.org

POSTAL MAIL: Attn: Conference Desk
General Service Office
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163

Updated 7/22

PAI Item 4. Reference:

AA Comes of Age

III, Four O'clock Sunday Afternoon,

(Page 232, 1st paragraph)

"Then, too, it would be a product of false pride to believe that Alcoholics Anonymous is a cure-all, even for alcoholism. Here we must remember our debt to the men of medicine. Here we must be friendly and, above all, open-minded toward every new development in the medical or psychiatric art that promises to be helpful to sick people. We should always be friendly to those in the fields of alcoholic research, rehabilitation, and education. We should endorse none especially but hold ourselves in readiness to co-operate so far as we can with them all. Let us constantly remind ourselves that the experts in religion are the clergymen; that the practice of medicine is for physicians; and that we, the recovered alcoholics, are their Assistants." - Bill W

IV, Medicine Looks At Alcoholics Anonymous,

(Page 236 2 paragraph- 1st paragraph page 237)

BILL: I know you all sense that this is a very significant meeting on a very significant occasion, because it has to do with our relations to the men of medicine. A.A. can be likened to a temple supported by three pillars: one is religion, another is medicine, and the third is our own experience as people who have suffered from alcoholism. Medicine in its broad aspects includes the science of the mind and its effect upon the body, as well as the effect of a physical malady upon the mind. In our two distinguished guests, Dr. Bauer and Dr. Tiebout, we have here people truly expert in each of these departments.

It would be a sorry day for A.A. if we ever came to think that we had a monopoly on fixing drunks. I think we ought to encourage every research in this area, whether it concerns the mind or the body. As individuals we often ought to associate ourselves with such enterprises. As excuse-makers and rationalizers, we drunks are champions. It is the business of the psychiatrist to get behind our excuses and to find the deeper causes for our conduct. Though uninstructed in psychiatry, we can, after a little time in A.A., see that our motives have not been what we thought they were and that we have been motivated by forces unknown to us. Therefore we ought to look, with the deepest respect, interest, and profit upon the findings of psychiatry, remembering that up to now the psychiatrists have been far more tolerant of us than we have been of them. So we thank them for the steadfast friendship and support which they have given us in nearly every quarter of the profession. When it comes to the general practitioner or specialist in the chemistry of the body, his findings too ought to be made use of by us as

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individuals. Of course as a movement we should never presume to intrude on the province of medicine. The practice of medicine is for doctors; the teaching of formal religion is for clergymen. So let us modestly fill our role; let us make our link, the once-missing one, strong. And let's thank God for folks like Dr. Bauer and Dr. Tiebout

CONFIDENTIAL: 76th General Service Conference BackgroundCX
ITEM C
DOC 2**(1) Submit a clear and concisely worded motion.**

It is recommended that the pamphlet "The A.A. Member - Medications & Other Drugs" (Item P-11) be revised and expanded.

(2) What problem does this proposed item address?

Parts of the material in the pamphlet are out-of-date and redundant. The pamphlet currently addresses primarily issues related to treatment of concurrent mental health problems, and cross-addiction. It does not address use/abuse of pain medications in acute or chronic pain situations, nor use of legal marijuana and other OTC addictive medications. The text and member stories could be expanded to include additional more current topics and more up-to-date information.

(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.).

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.

The item was thoroughly discussed in Area 21, and it was given approval and endorsement by a unanimous vote in the September Assembly.

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

"The content of this pamphlet was last update in 1984 and member's stories added in 2007. The areas of prescription, illegal and OTC medications has greatly expanded in the time since these updates.

See attached sheet with the background material."

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

CONFIDENTIAL: 76th General Service Conference BackgroundCX
ITEM C
DOC 2

That the pamphlet can be rewritten to be more useful for A.A. members in dealing with topics related to other drugs of abuse, correct use of prescription drugs, dangers of some OTC drugs, taking pain medications while in sobriety, cross addiction, etc.

(6) Provide a primary contact for the submission.

Jodi B., Area 21 Delegate, Panel 75. Tom H., Area 21 Chair

(7) Final comments:

The topic of how A.A. members handle interactions with other drugs and medications has been of importance to the fellowship since before the first GSC when the existing pamphlet on "Sedatives" was getting revised. This continues to be a complicated topic, which is related to possible relapse and confusion. Updating this pamphlet would be helpful in dealing with this ever-changing area of concern for members.

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2026 Conference Committee on Agenda

ITEM C: Discuss workshop topic ideas for the 2027 General Service Conference.

Background:

1. List of 2027 General Service Conference workshop topic ideas
2. List of General Service Conference workshop topics recommended by Conference 1985–2026

Suggested Workshop Topics for the 2027 General Service Conference

1. Why remain anonymous?
 - a. How does social media work into the 11th Tradition?
 - b. Does live streaming of a social event hurt anyone?
 - c. How do our action and our friends speak for us?
2. Cultivating future delegates
3. Sharing stories of missteps and lessons learned with humility and grace
4. Using laughter as a tool for connection, not distraction
5. A lighthearted dive into the unexpected spiritual lessons of everyday service

**Workshop Topics Recommended by the General Service Conference
1985–2026**

- 2026: Keeping Our Own House in Order.
- 2025: How do we address the new financial reality facing our spiritual movement?
- 2024: Connecting Home Groups to the Conference Throughout the Year, to Better Inform the Group's Conscience.
- 2023: Practicing Our Twelve Traditions Across All Group Settings.
- 2022: The Warranties — Our Promise to the Fellowship and the World
- 2021: Inform — Communicate
Involve — Act
Inspire — Attract
- 2020: Attraction Through Action
- 2019: Clarity of Purpose — Addressing the Needs of Our Meetings
- 2018: Getting the A.A. Message Out...
- 2017: Anonymity — The Spiritual Foundation
- 2016: GSB Brainstorming Ideas — no Workshop
- 2015: Conference Inventory — no Workshop
- 2014: Conference Inventory — no Workshop
- 2013: Conference Inventory — no Workshop
- 2012: Safety in A.A.: Our Common Welfare
- 2011: How to Increase Participation in A.A. — Striving for Self-Support in All Our Affairs
- 2010: Discuss the General Service Agenda Selection Process
- 2009: Language of the Heart — Keeping It Simple

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- 2008: Love and Tolerance, Now More Than Ever
- 2007: Spiritual Value of Our A.A. Dollars
- 2006: Passing It On in a Changing World
- 2005: Do I Carry the A.A. Message Or My Own?
- 2004: How is Singleness of Purpose Important to the Individual, Group, District, Area, GSO and Grapevine Office?
- 2003: Sponsorship — Remembering to Practice Our Principles
- 2002: Using the Steps, Traditions and Concepts in Our Daily Lives
- 2001: Love and Service
 - a. Carrying the A.A. Message of Service
 - b. Living the A.A. Principles in All Our Affairs
 - c. Maintaining the Spirit of Anonymity
- 2000: Trusting Our Future to A.A. Principles
 - a. Twelve Steps
 - b. Twelve Traditions
 - c. Twelve Concepts
- 1999: Moving Forward: Unity Through Humility
 - a. Harmony in the A.A. Community
 - b. Principle of Rotation
 - c. Spiritual Significance of Anonymity
- 1998: Our Twelfth Step Work
 - a. In the Home Group
 - b. In the Service Structure
 - c. Around the World
- 1997: Spirituality — Our Foundation
 - a. Spirit of Rotation
 - b. Working with Faith, Serving with Love
 - c. Unity — We are Responsible
- 1996: Preserving Our Fellowship — Our Challenge
 - a. Through Your Home Group
 - b. Through Your District
 - c. Through Your Conference Area
- 1995: How We Pass It On:
 - a. Our Basic Message

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- b. Sponsorship in Recovery and Service
 - c. Communication — The Language of A.A.
- 1994: The Twelfth Step in Action:
- a. Where have we been?
 - b. Where are we now?
 - c. Where are we going?
- 1993: A.A. Takes Its Inventory — The General Service Conference Structure (Focus to be on the other six articles of the Conference Charter)
A Vision for Us — Where Are We and Where Are We Going?
- 1992: The A.A. message in a Changing World
- 1991: a. Sponsorship: Gratitude in Action
b. Sponsorship: Our Three Legacies
c. Sponsorship: The Hand of A.A.
- 1990: a. Home Group — Where Love and Service Begin
b. Home Group — Our Link to the Fellowship
c. Home Group — Our Responsibility and Link to A.A.'s Future
- 1989: Anonymity — Our Past, Present and Future or
Anonymity — Living Our Traditions
Love and Service
- 1988: Our Singleness of Purpose — Key to Unity
(Per conference: A second workshop be scheduled, if time permits, with the subject to be determined at the trustees' Conference Committee's discretion)
- 1987: Unity — Let's Talk About It
Living Sober — Growing Together or Growing Apart?
- 1986: a. Letting Go of Old Ideas:
New Ways of Carrying the A.A. Message
Are We Getting Too Rigid?
b. A.A.'s Impact on the World
Are We Being Friendly With Our Friends?
How A.A. Cooperates
- 1985: (Presentation and/or workshop for 1985)
- a. Will the Hand of A.A. Always Be There?
The Middle Years of Sobriety — A Dangerous Time
Communication Within the Fellowship
 - b. The Warranties
 - c. Beyond the Seventh Tradition — Group Responsibility

3

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- In the Meeting Place
- To the Newcomer
- d. Fifty Years of Caring and Sharing
 - In Treatment Centers
 - In Correctional Facilities
 - With Young People
 - In the Group
- e. The GSR — The Key Role
 - Obtaining the Most Qualified Member
 - The Service Sponsor

2026 Conference Committee on Policy/Admissions

ITEM C.1: Discuss the suggestion to discontinue the annual review of service kits and workbooks by Conference committees.

Background notes:

From the November 2, 2025, trustees' General Service Conference Committee report:

The committee discussed the subcommittee recommendation that the 2026 Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions discuss discontinuing standing agenda items where Conference committees review their kits/workbooks during the General Service Conference and agreed to forward to the 2026 Conference Committee on Policy and Admissions. The committee acknowledged the value in communicating that suggestions for updates to the kits and workbooks can be presented to GSO Staff at any point during the year.

Note: Workbooks (and applicable service kits) for Archives, CPC, Corrections, Literature, Public Information, and Treatment and Accessibilities are reviewed by the appropriate Conference committees during each General Service Conference.

Between Conferences, ideas for changes to a workbook may be received. These may be reviewed by the appropriate trustees' committee and/or respective GSO Staff assignment and implemented as directed.

The trustees' committee may also choose to forward an idea to the Conference committee for review. Members of the Conference committee then have an opportunity to review proposed changes to a workbook during the next General Service Conference.

Note: Workbooks and kits are service pieces. Any suggested changes to their content from the Conference committee are put forth as Committee Considerations rather than recommendations.

Background:

1. Conference Committees' scopes with corresponding kit and workbooks.
2. Service Committee Kits and Workbooks on GSO website.
<https://www.aa.org/service-committees>

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Conference committees' scopes with corresponding kits and workbooks

ARCHIVES

The function of this committee is to:

1. Discuss the report of the trustees' Archives Committee.
2. Make recommendations on archival policies.

COOPERTATION WITH THE PROFESIONAL COMMUNITY

The committee has the responsibility of suggesting to the Conference policies and activities that may help:

1. Further A.A.'s primary purpose of carrying the message to the still-suffering alcoholic through sharing information about the A.A. program with those professional groups and individuals who have contact with alcoholics.
2. Further mutual understanding and cooperation between the Fellowship and those concerned about the problem of alcoholism and seeking help for alcoholics.
3. Increase the awareness amongst members and outside groups and organizations on ways of cooperating with everyone while affiliating with no one, in adherence to A.A. Traditions.

CORRECTIONS

The purpose of the committee is to encourage A.A. members to assume the responsibility of carrying the message to alcoholics who cannot, of their own free will, seek A.A. help.

The committee will review all aspects of service to A.A. groups in correctional facilities and make recommendations for changes and/or improvements.

LITERATURE

- Review new recovery literature and audiovisual needs.
- Review existing recovery pamphlets.
- Review new recovery pamphlet drafts as they are prepared.
- Recommend specific action to the board's Literature Committee.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

The function of this committee was enlarged by the 1966 Conference to include all "Public Information" activities rather than just A.A.'s relations with other alcoholism agencies, as it had been the case since its formation in April 1959. Since 1971, these responsibilities are covered by the Committee on Cooperation with the Professional Community. The responsibilities of the PI Committee are to:

1. Create greater understanding of the Fellowship of A.A. by carrying the message through:
 - a. public media
 - b. electronic media
 - c. public information meetings
 - d. speaking to community groups
2. Prevent misunderstanding of the A.A. program.
3. Serve as an advisory board to help the trustees' Public Information Committee implement approved policies.

TREATMENT AND ACCESSIBILITIES

The purpose of a Treatment and Accessibilities Committee is to coordinate the work of individual A.A. members and groups interested in carrying our message of recovery to alcoholics in a wide variety of treatment settings, and to set up means of "bridging the gap" from the treatment setting to the A.A. Fellowship. In addition, the committee supports the work of individual A.A. members and groups serving those who experience barriers to accessing the A.A. message and participating in A.A.'s Three Legacies — Recovery, Unity, and Service. Finally, the committee supports the work of individual A.A. members and groups striving to ensure that A.A. members who live in underserved or remote communities — communities difficult to reach because of geography, language or culture — have access to the A.A. message.

The committee will review all aspects of service to A.A. groups/meetings in non-correctional in-patient and out-patient treatment settings, as well as to A.A.s who experience access barriers, and make recommendations for changes and/or improvements.

2026 Conference Committee on Literature

ITEM D: Review draft of the Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Background notes:

Excerpt from the February 1, 2026, trustees' Literature Committee meeting:

The committee reviewed the final report of the Fifth Edition Big Book subcommittee along with a complete draft of the Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The committee **agreed to forward** the final report along with the draft manuscript of the Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* to the 2026 Conference Committee on Literature.

2025 Conference Committee on Literature Additional Committee Consideration:

The committee had a thoughtful discussion about the progress report and project timeline for the development of a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The committee requested that a manuscript or progress report be brought back to the 2026 Conference Committee on Literature.

2021 Conference Advisory Actions:

A Fifth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed, including an update of stories to better reflect current membership, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that: "The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, 'The Doctor's Opinion,' 'Dr. Bob's Nightmare,' and the Appendices remain as is," and that a progress report be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Literature.

Pending its development, the draft of the Fifth Edition of the Big Book would include a new foreword, an updated preface and updates to expand on existing ideas in Appendices III and V.

Secretary's note: *Previous history and actions on this item are located in the History and Actions for the Conference Committee on Literature and trustees' Committee on Literature.*

CONFIDENTIAL: 76th General Service Conference Background

Background:

1. Fifth Edition *Alcoholics Anonymous* Final Report
2. Draft of the Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (*Confidential, "For Committee Eyes Only"*)
 - Front matter: Foreword to the Fifth Edition and revised Preface
 - New Personal Stories: Part II, Experience, Strength and Hope
 - Revised Appendices III, V and VI.
3. Memo to Committee regarding confidential background

**2025-2026 trustees' Literature Committee
Fifth Edition Big Book Subcommittee Final Report**

The subcommittee was charged with implementing the following Advisory Actions of the 71st General Service Conference:

- That a Fifth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be developed, including an update of stories to better reflect current membership, keeping in mind the 1995 Advisory Action that: “The first 164 pages of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor’s Opinion,’ ‘Dr. Bob’s Nightmare,’ and the Appendices remain as is,”
- Pending its development, the draft Fifth Edition of the Big Book would include a new Foreword, an updated Preface and updates to expand on existing ideas in Appendices III and V.

Members of the Fifth Edition subcommittees from 2021-2026, as well as those who have served on the trustees' Literature Committee in this time have expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the process of developing the draft Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

The subcommittee is especially grateful to the 2,393 members of the Fellowship who submitted their personal stories for consideration.

Updated stories to better reflect the current membership:

The Advisory Action stated that the new edition should include “an update of stories to better reflect current membership.”

To gather those stories, the trustees' Literature Committee created a subcommittee in 2021. They began their work by reviewing the processes that had led to the creation of the first four editions of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The subcommittee was careful to craft a process grounded in A.A. principles and history. Mindful of A.A. cofounder Bill W.'s observation that “the audience for the book is people who are coming to Alcoholics Anonymous now. Those who are here have already heard our stories.”

The “Call for Stories” was opened in April 2022 and closed October 31, 2022. Stories were accepted in English, Spanish and French. Members were able to submit stories electronically, as well as in hard copy through postal mail.

As the stories were coming in, the subcommittee began work on developing a process for evaluating stories.

Each story was first anonymized and given a number. Members were thanked for their submissions and the General Service Office (GSO) Staff followed up to make sure that each

member who submitted their story had also provided permission for their story to be edited and used (Assignment of Copyright).

Stories received in Spanish and French were translated into English so they could be read and reviewed by subcommittee members.

The subcommittee reviewed past practices and discussed the approach for the Fifth Edition. The subcommittee developed a grid where characteristics of each story and any comments could be noted, with emphasis on varied personal and A.A. experience.

For the Fourth Edition there were more than 1,200 stories submitted, and for the Fifth Edition there were 2,393 story submissions from grateful and enthusiastic A.A. members. It was awe inspiring and brought some challenges into the process regarding the ability of a subcommittee to effectively and carefully review every submission. In 2023-2024, members of the Fifth Edition Big Book subcommittee engaged additional volunteer readers who, along with the subcommittee, reviewed stories, noting unique elements of each story in the grid. This facilitated the subcommittee's selection of 159 stories for further consideration.

Additional volunteer readers proved to be an effective method to engage additional help to deal with a high volume of content. As a result, the subcommittee requested that the trustees' Literature Committee formalize a process for engagement of additional volunteers where needed for future projects.

By early 2025, the subcommittee was able to reduce the number of stories being considered down to 48. These were shared with the full trustees' Literature Committee and Conference Committee on Literature who were both provided the opportunity to provide input on which stories would be selected and express any concerns they had about any of the stories.

Throughout 2025, the subcommittee continued to meet and discuss the stories, frequently referring back to the Advisory Action. Emphasis was placed on selecting stories with depth and weight that would help a newcomer identify and find hope. In the end, a final set of 26 new stories were selected. These stories reflect A.A.'s geographic diversity and include stories of those who got sober as young people and those who got sober later in life. The stories also reflect different kinds of lived experiences, including those who identify as being part of remote communities, those who came to the U.S. or Canada as immigrants, members who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community and those who have served in the military. These new stories also include members who got sober during periods of incarceration and some who struggled with the notion of a Higher Power. All found sobriety, hope and a new way of life through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Personal Stories from the Fourth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*:

The subcommittee invited members of the trustees' Literature Committee and the Conference Committee on Literature to help determine which stories from the Fourth Edition Big Book should be retained.

After reviewing that feedback, the subcommittee recommended that of the 42 personal stories in the Fourth Edition *Alcoholics Anonymous*, twelve should be included in the Fifth Edition, including:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Bob’s Nightmare • Alcoholics Anonymous Number Three • Gratitude in Action • Women Suffer Too • The Vicious Cycle • Jim’s Story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Keys of The Kingdom • Crossing the River of Denial • Winner Takes All • Acceptance Was The Answer • Listening To The Wind • Freedom From Bondage
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Those that were not retained include the following 30 stories:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Southern Friend • The Man Who Mastered Fear • He Sold Himself Short • The Missing Link • Fear of Fear • The Housewife Who Drank at Home • Physician, Heal Thyself! • My Chance to Live • Student of Life • Because I’m an Alcoholic • It Might Have Been Worse • Tighrope • Flooded with Feeling • Me an Alcoholic? • The Perpetual Quest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Drunk, Like You • Window of Opportunity • My Bottle, My Resentments, and Me • He Lived Only to Drink • Safe Haven • Twice Gifted • Building a New Life • On The Move • A Vision of Recovery • Gutter Bravado • Empty On the Inside • Grounded • Another Chance • A Late Start • A.A. Taught Him to Handle Sobriety
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The subcommittee noted that there is no plan in place to continue to publish the 30 stories that have been removed, and that should the Conference wish for these to be published in a volume like *Experience, Strength, and Hope* or otherwise made available, an Advisory Action from the General Service Conference would be in order.

Updates to expand on existing ideas in Appendices III and V:

The subcommittee consulted with the trustees’ Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) Committee in review of “The Medical View on A.A.” (III) and “The Religious View on A.A.” (V) appendices. Past and present Class A trustees were very helpful. The GSO Publishing Department incorporated the feedback and suggestions into drafts of each Appendix. Multiple drafts of each Appendix were reviewed by the subcommittee before they were finalized.

Updates to Appendix VI: How to Get in Touch with A.A.:

The subcommittee also requested that the Publishing Department review and make recommendations to Appendix VI, keeping in mind the diverse ways that people seek help and information, and to reflect current practices. In December 2025, a revised draft of Appendix VI was approved by the subcommittee.

Updated Preface and Foreword to the Fifth Edition:

The Foreword to the Fifth Edition and Preface are in the purview of the Publishing Department and were written after the stories had been selected and other content finalized. The Fifth Edition Subcommittee provided input and these were then shared with the trustees' Literature Committee.

General Service Office (GSO):

Both the GSO Staff on the literature assignment and the Publishing Department have gathered experience through this process that is being retained and applied to other projects where applicable. The subcommittee wishes to thank the Staff and employees for their tireless support throughout this process.

Proposed Agenda Items (PAIs):

The subcommittee received three PAIs from AAWS that pertained to the format and the cover of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The subcommittee noted that there have been also previous requests for a more anonymity conscience jacketless cover. The subcommittee requested that Publishing Department and AAWS consider this expressed need when formatting the Fifth Edition.

The subcommittee also received four PAIs from the trustees' Literature Committee, these were not forwarded to the Conference but pertained to the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and were provided to the subcommittee for review. These were carefully considered and the subcommittee took no further action.

Conclusion:

The development of this draft of the Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* has been a real labor of love, and could not have been completed without the incredible work of hundreds of A.A. members, including the area delegates (especially those serving on the Conference Committee on Literature), dozens of board members (trustees, nontrustee directors and appointed committee members), GSO Staff, Staff associates, the Publishing Department and the many, many members who submitted their stories.

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April 2026

To: Members of the 2026 General Service Conference

From: Misha Q., Secretary, trustees' Literature Committee and Conference Committee on Literature

Subject: **Confidential** draft literature

As a Conference committee reviews a new, or extensively revised literature item it is general practice that drafts are reviewed by **committee members only**. This means that the rest of the Conference members will not be getting copies of the pamphlet or book in their background materials for the Conference.

The Conference Committee on Literature will be reviewing the draft manuscript of the Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, primarily to determine whether or not the scope of changes presented meets the intended goals of the 2021 Advisory Action to develop a new edition.

Also, as with all Conference-approved A.A. literature, the Conference committee will be looking at the draft manuscript to see “that everything in such literature is in accord with A.A. principles” and that “Conference-approved material always deals with the recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous or with information about the A.A. Fellowship.” (Concerns about routine grammar, punctuation, editing, etc., will be addressed by the Publishing Department.)

Once the Conference committee reviews the draft manuscript, several things may happen. Among them:

- The committee might approve the manuscript and recommend that the manuscript be approved by the Conference as a whole.
- The committee might send the manuscript back to the trustees' Literature Committee with any significant concerns about the proposed draft.

Until a book or pamphlet is “Conference-approved,” it is confidential and for committee eyes only. Prior to then, any number of changes might be made by the trustees' Literature Committee or the corresponding Conference committee. This confidential process ensures that the message that reaches the A.A. Fellowship is a reflection of A.A. as a whole, an assurance made by the Conference-approval process.

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