



The Pre-Conference Service Fair Scheduled for March 14th HAS BEEN CANCELED

Attached is the Agenda Item Feedback Questionnaire for the selected Agenda Items that we had planned to examine and discuss at Saturday's event.

If you'd like to weigh in on these items, print out this PDF, vote and make your comments, and return this form to your GSR or DCM (before March 28th) to provide our Area Delegate with truly representative group conscience to help guide his participation in this year's General Service Conference.

Agenda Item Feedback Questionnaire

Below are brief summaries of selected Agenda Items for this year's General Service Conference chosen for their potential for providing great discussion and consideration of the principles contained in AA's Twelve Traditions. A full list of the final agenda items may be found on the "Delegate's Page" at www.cnia.org.

(1) Change Contribution Percentages in the "Pie Chart" on Page 12 of "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix" (Agenda Item Nos. IV(A)(1) & (2)).

On page 12 of the pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix," there are pie charts which serve as samples of group contributions to the various service entities.

Although the pamphlet does state that contributions are to be determined by each group, it proceeds to provide "sample" contribution splits:

Groups with an Intergroup or Central Office

10% to District
10% to Area
30% to GSO
50% to Intergroup or Central Office

Groups with NO Intergroup or Central Office

40% to District
30% to Area
30% to GSO

There are two proposals concerning these pie charts.

First Proposal. The first proposal (Agenda Item No. IV(A)(1)) comes from Area 66 (West Texas). It proposes that the pie charts be modified to the following percentages:

Groups with and Intergroup or Central Office

30% to District
20% to Area
10% to GSO
40% to Intergroup or Central Office

Groups with NO Intergroup or Central Office

60% to District
30% to Area
10% to G.S.O.

The reason for this proposal is that the districts and the areas rely upon a much smaller pool of groups than GSO, which “has all the groups in Canada and the USA to receive contributions from.” For Area 66, “[i]t seems logical that the less amount of groups you have to receive contributions from, the higher the percentage you need to get in order to carry the message *locally*.”

Second Proposal. The second proposal (Item No. IV(A)(2)) is made by Area 61 (Rhode Island).

Area 61 proposes that the “sample” pie charts be eliminated and, in their place, the following text be added:

“Duties of the entities notated above area 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.”

The proposal is based on the sentiment that the “sample” pie charts appear to sanction or approve a specific percentage of “splits.” The proposal notes that the services offered by the respective service entities vary widely from district to district and area to area. The proposal submits that each group needs to determine the services provided in its locality, and to determine percentages based upon its group conscience.

Your Vote:

NO, do not make changes to the existing pamphlet “Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix”

YES, make changes as described in the 1st Proposal: Agenda Item No. IV(A)(1)

YES, make changes as described in the 2nd Proposal: Agenda Item No. IV(A)(2)

Comment: _____

(2) Proposal to Change the Gendered Pronouns in the A.A. Preamble (Agenda Item Nos. V(D) & (E)).

In 2018 and 2019, the AA Grapevine received six requests to revise the A.A. Preamble.

The Grapevine Board made the decision to separate the requests into two different Agenda Items. One asked to consider revising the “gender-neutral pronouns” and the other made a request to consider replacing the words “men and women” with the word “people.”

First Proposal. This proposal, from the “Happy, Joyous, and Free” group in Area 29, would substitute gender-neutral pronouns into the A.A. Preamble in the Grapevine.

For example, as modified, the Preamble would begin with “Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other”

The reason for the proposed change is that the Preamble, in its current form, is not all-inclusive. Thus, according to the group, it might be difficult for all listening to the preamble to identify. The group also notes that substituting in gender-neutral pronouns would “not jeopardize our primary purpose as the intent of the Preamble would remain the same.”

Second Proposal. Several Areas have requested that the phrase “men and women” in the Preamble be changed to “people.”

Area 49, one of the requestors, notes the following: (1) there are approximately 2 million transgender individuals in the U.S. and Canada; (2) those individuals are two and a half times more likely to abuse alcohol than their Cisgender peers; and (3) one in five transgender individuals do not identify as either male or female. The proposed change would thus, in the view of the proponents, make AA more welcoming to all of those who suffer from alcoholism.

Another of the proposing Areas – Area 13 (Washington) notes that some groups are now welcoming members as young as 12 years of age, and that such minors hardly consider themselves to be men or women, but simply alcoholics.

They further note the language of the Third Tradition (Long Form), which reads as follows:

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

Your Vote:

YES, change the words “men and women” to “people” in the AA Preamble.

NO, do not make changes to the AA Preamble.

Comment: _____

(3) Requests Concerning the Big Book’s Accessibility and Relatability (Agenda Item No. VI(K)).

Numerous requests have been made related to the Big Book. These requests have included requests for a plain language version, simplified language, accessible translations, large print versions, and workbooks to help study the program.

The trustees’ committee on literature reviewed these requests, and summarized them “as essentially driving at two identified needs of: (1) accessibility, and, (2) relatability.”

In exploring the issue further, the trustees’ committee recommends the following next steps:

- (1) to determine the specific literacy level of the Big Book;
- (2) to continue to explore how non-Conference approved literature is being utilized by A.A. members to carry the message for the purpose of better addressing any perceived gaps and their solutions at the local level for accessibility and relatability to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous; and
- (3) to request additional input on this topic from other trustees’ committees in 2020 on this topic, including but not limited to Public Information, Corrections and Treatment and Accessibilities committees.

The background materials on this item contain numerous requests related to the Big Book made by groups, districts, and areas throughout the U.S. and Canada. Many of them are interesting and thought-provoking.

Your Vote:

___ YES, determine the literacy level of the Big Book, explore the use of non-AA publications being used make the program of AA more accessible and relatable, and request additional input from other 2020 trustee committees on this topic to determine the need for revising, rewriting, or providing supplemental materials to make the Big Book more accessible to those who find difficulty in reading and understanding it.

___ NO, do not explore the need for revising, rewriting or providing supplemental materials to make the Big Book more accessible to those who find difficulty in reading and understanding it.

Comment: _____

(4) Consider Requests to Revise the Big Book (Agenda Item No. VI(L)). There are two requests for revisions to the Big Book:

(1) A request to add pages 3 through 41 of the pamphlet “The A.A. Group” as an appendix to the Big Book;

Your Vote: (Item 1)

___ YES, consider this request to add pages 3 through 41 of the pamphlet “The AA Group” as an appendix to the Big Book.

___ NO, do not consider this request to add pages 3 through 41 of the pamphlet “The AA Group” as an appendix to the Big Book.

Comment: _____

(2) A request to revise the first 164 pages of the Big Book for the following purposes:

- (i) switching to gender-neutral pronouns wherever possible;
- (ii) changing “passages or sections that are no longer consistent with or relevant when taken in context of society in general or the A.A. membership composition; and
- (iii) specifically evaluating the chapters *To Wives* and *The Family Afterward* for revisions to be more consistent with today’s membership.

This proposal emphasizes that its goal is to change the language, but to avoid changes to the overall message.

Your Vote (Item 2)

___ YES, consider this request to revise the first 164 pages of the Big Book to switch to gender-neutral pronouns whenever possible; to change passages or sections that are no longer consistent with or relevant when taken in context of society in general or our current AA membership; and to evaluate the chapters *To Wives* and *The Family Afterword* for revisions to be more consistent with today’s membership.

___ NO, do not consider any changes to the first 164 pages of the Big Book.

Comment: _____

(5) Consider Proposals Related to a Possible Fifth Edition of the Big Book (Agenda Item No. VI (M)). This agenda item consists of the following three proposals:

- (i) consider development of a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*;
- (ii) consider developing a Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* with updated stories and revisions to Appendices III and V;
- (iii) consider a proposed addendum to a Fifth Edition forward of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* at the time it is published.

The reasons for the requests for a proposed Fifth Edition include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The Editions of *Alcoholics Anonymous* have been published in somewhat regular intervals:
 - First Edition in 1939
 - Second Edition 16 years later in 1955
 - Third Edition 21 years later in 1976
 - Fourth Edition 25 years later in 2001
- An updated stories section might better reflect the experience of the current generations, thus allowing more people to identify. The proposal to update the stories section emphasizes adding stories, and not necessarily removing any stories.
- Appendix III (“The Medical View on A.A.”) could be revised to include language similar to that included in other A.A. literature, such as the pamphlet “The A.A. Member – Medications and Other Drugs.” In addition, Appendix III references a pamphlet that is now out of print – “Three Talks to Medical Societies by Bill W.”
- Appendix V includes only the perspectives of Catholic and Episcopalian faiths. The perspectives of many other faiths could be included.
- One proposal requests that an addendum be added emphasizing that, despite the Big Book’s language, which tends to give the impression that alcoholics are males, “alcoholism makes no distinction regarding age, ethnicity, nationality, economic status, or gender orientation,” and neither does A.A.

Your Vote (Agenda Item No. VI (M)):

YES, consider the development of a fifth edition of the Big Book.

YES, consider the development of a fifth edition of the Big Book with updated stories and the proposed revisions to Appendices III and V.

YES, consider the development of a fifth edition of the Big Book with the proposed addendum to the Fifth Edition Forward making clear the that “alcoholism makes no distinction regarding age, ethnicity, nationality, economic status, or gender orientation,” and neither does AA.

NO, do not consider the development of a fifth edition of the Big Book.

Comment: _____

(6) Discuss a Request “to Create a New Form of Communication” to Address Anonymity on Social Media (Agenda Item No. VIII(I)).

Area 29 notes that, although the pamphlet on sponsorship has been updated to include a discussion of anonymity online, this does not appear to have changed practices in the fellowship. The proposal is to create a new form of communication—perhaps a “postcard sized card, poster and/or tabletop card”—to emphasize the “principles before posting” on social media.

Your Vote:

YES, discuss a request to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media.

NO, do not discuss a request to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media.

Comment: _____

(7) Discuss a Request to Develop a Plan to Create an A.A. Podcast (Agenda Item No. VIII(J)).

A “podcast” is a digital form of radio that you can listen to through the Internet or an app. There are already many podcasts about AA; however, none of these is actually produced by AA World Services or the General Services Board. According to the proposal, this “is a form of media we are not currently using to reach the alcoholic.”

The podcast could be used to cover a variety of sobriety and service topics, including:

- Experience with Steps/Traditions/Concepts
- The Service Manual
- Experience/strength/hope from current and past trustees and delegates
- Our different pieces of literature
- Grapevine and La Vina

Your Vote:

YES, discuss a request to develop a plan to create an AA podcast.

NO, do not discuss a request to develop a plan to create and AA podcast.

Comment: _____

