

Proposed Agenda Items (PAIs)

June 2026 CNIA ACM Discussions

What We're Doing

Reviewing proposed agenda items to determine whether our area feels they raise issues that may warrant discussion by the Fellowship through the Conference process.

The question is: **"Is this something our area feels should be discussed by the Fellowship?"**

What We Need From Districts

DCMs: Please discuss these proposals with your GSRs and bring district feedback back to the July ACM:

1. [Permanent Process for Changes to Foundational Text](#)
2. [Revising the Conference Charter](#)
3. [Revising and Clarifying Concept III](#)

What We're Not Doing

At this stage, we're not debating the merits of the proposals, discussing detailed pros and cons, or deciding whether the Conference should ultimately take a particular action.

Those discussions would come later if a proposal is placed on a Conference agenda.

Right now, we're simply considering whether the proposal is worthy of submission for broader Fellowship consideration.

PAI 1: Permanent Process for Changes to Foundational Text

Submitted by: Arcade Steps and Traditions Group (District 29); Arcade Men's Group has a similar PAI

(1) Proposed Motion

That the General Service Conference establish a permanent process for considering any future changes to the first 164 pages of the book Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, and Dr. Bob's Nightmare, recognizing these sections as uniquely important to the history, identity, and recovery experience of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Further, that any future proposal affecting these sections require:

1. Broad participation by groups throughout the Fellowship.
2. A multi-year period of study and discussion.
3. Clear evidence of widespread support from the Fellowship prior to Conference consideration.
4. Full disclosure of the purpose, background, rationale, and potential impact of any proposed change.
5. A substantial unanimity threshold established by the Conference before any change may be approved.

(2) What problem does this proposed item address?

Every generation of A.A. members inherits something precious.

None of us wrote the Big Book. None of us created the Twelve Steps. None of us sat at the kitchen tables where Alcoholics Anonymous was born. We received these things from those who came before us, just as future alcoholics will receive them from us.

That responsibility deserves careful thought.

For many members, the first 164 pages of Alcoholics Anonymous, together with the Preface and Dr. Bob's Nightmare, are more than literature. They are the original account of a spiritual solution that has helped alcoholics recover for nearly ninety years. They remain the foundation upon which countless sponsorship relationships, meetings, workshops, and recovery experiences are built.

Recent discussion regarding changes to foundational text has revealed that many members hold differing expectations about how such changes should be considered. While opinions may vary on any specific proposal, many members share a common belief that material of this significance should be approached with exceptional caution and broad Fellowship involvement.

This proposal is intended to provide that safeguard.

The issue is not whether future generations should be allowed to discuss important questions. The issue is whether future generations will inherit a process that

encourages patience, participation, transparency, and substantial unity before decisions affecting cornerstone recovery literature are made.

The Conference Charter, Twelve Concepts, and Conference Warranties provide guidance in this regard.

They encourage participation. They protect appeal and petition. They emphasize discussion over haste and substantial unanimity over simple majorities whenever possible. They remind us that authority in Alcoholics Anonymous is a matter of trust and responsibility, not ownership.

Many members believe these principles are especially important when dealing with literature that occupies such a central place in A.A.'s history and recovery message.

There is also concern among some members that the distance between the service structure and the average group may be growing. Whether that perception is accurate or not, it deserves thoughtful consideration. The health of Alcoholics Anonymous depends upon maintaining a strong connection between the groups and those entrusted with service responsibilities.

Our Fellowship has always been strongest when service remains closely connected to the primary purpose: carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

This proposal seeks to strengthen that connection.

Its purpose is not to prevent change. Its purpose is to ensure that any future consideration of foundational literature reflects the broadest possible participation, the deepest possible reflection, and the greatest possible unity.

Alcoholics Anonymous has survived and flourished because previous generations exercised restraint when restraint was needed and patience when patience was required.

This proposal asks us to do the same.

(3) What level of group conscience discussed the proposed agenda item?

This proposal is currently being discussed among A.A. members and groups concerned with preserving unity, continuity, participation, and confidence in the process by which foundational literature is considered.

It is anticipated that additional discussion will occur at the group, district, and area levels before formal submission.

(4) Background information and supporting reasoning

Reference materials may include:

- The A.A. Service Manual
- The Twelve Concepts for World Service
- The Twelve Traditions

- The Conference Charter
- Conference Warranties Three, Four, Five, and Six
- Historical Conference actions related to literature
- Writings and statements by Bill W.
- The pamphlet A.A. Tradition: How It Developed
- Historical understanding of the role of the first 164 pages, the Preface, and Dr. Bob's Nightmare within Alcoholics Anonymous

(5) Intended or expected outcomes if approved

- Promote broad Fellowship participation in future discussions involving foundational literature
- Encourage patience, transparency, and substantial unanimity when considering significant changes
- Strengthen confidence between the Fellowship and the General Service structure
- Help reduce confusion and controversy surrounding future literature proposals
- Reinforce the role of groups as the spiritual foundation of Alcoholics Anonymous
- Preserve continuity between past, present, and future generations of recovering alcoholics

(6) Final comments

This proposal is offered in a spirit of gratitude.

Every member who has found recovery through Alcoholics Anonymous is the beneficiary of decisions made by those who came before us. We have inherited a Fellowship that has helped millions of alcoholics and continues to save lives every day.

The responsibility before us is not simply to protect words on a page. It is to carefully consider how we preserve, steward, and pass forward the message entrusted to us.

Future generations deserve a process that reflects the same patience, humility, participation, and unity that helped build Alcoholics Anonymous.

This proposal seeks to help provide that safeguard.

PAI 2: Revising the Conference Charter

Submitted by: CNIA Districts 42, 43, 47

(1) Proposed Agenda Item

That "The Dr's Opinion," the first 164 pages of the Big Book, and "Dr. Bob's Nightmare" be placed into the AA Charter and become subject to the protections therein.

(2) Background information

November 13, 2023

Dear Trusted Servants:

A.A.'s Co-Founder, Bill W., in his 1953 address to the General Service Conference, stated that he did not consider himself the author of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Big Book (*Our Great Responsibility*, p. 92). He also alluded to the fact that in the various A.A. literature published prior to his passing, he borrowed heavily from other sources, and that other A.A. members made significant contributions.

On the other hand, addressing the historical context of some of the writings of our Founders, many members in our Fellowship have expressed strong sentiment against any changes in the first 164 pages of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Big Book, as well as the Preface, the Forewords, The Doctor's Opinion, Doctor Bob's Nightmare, and the Appendices. In fact, as early as 1995 and most recently in 2022, Advisory Actions designed to protect the above-referenced contents have been passed by the General Service Conference.

In response to a Committee Consideration from the 73rd General Service Conference suggesting that trustees' Literature Committee *seek input from the Fellowship (including but not limited to Area delegate feedback) regarding any possible future changes to literature written by A.A.'s Founders*, the trustees' Literature committee agreed it would be beneficial to gather shared experience from the Fellowship regarding this topic.

We would like to hear from you – the top of the triangle! While we hope that the suggested questions will help to spark thoughtful sharing and discussion, please feel free to add questions that we may not have thought of that you feel may best inform the discussion. Most of all, we are grateful for and thank you for your participation.

In fellowship,

The trustees' Literature Committee (2023-2024)

(3) Excerpts from [75th General Service Conference Agenda Items](#)

Policy and Admissions	36 (93 and 96 as background)	36 - We propose that an Advisory Action be issued that requires that any future motion voted on by the General Service Conference that would change or amend the Founders Literature (as described in Section 4 below) would require a Super Majority (three-quarters of the voting members) to pass..
		93- Move to create a policy where the world wide membership of Alcoholics Anonymous reaches substantial unanimity on any changes to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and portions of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous including, but not limited to: the first 164 pages, the Preface, the Forwards, "The Doctor's Opinion," "Dr. Bob's Nightmare," and the Appendix "Spiritual Experience."
		96 - In consideration of the intent of recent Advisory Actions to protect from change the Founders Literature (described below), and the Fellowship's feelings that Founders Literature be retained as originally published, it is resolved that in the future, the English language versions of the Founders Literature shall not be changed or amended by the GSC except by first asking the consent of the AA groups of the US and Canada. Those groups shall be suitably notified of any proposal for change and shall be allowed no less than six months for consideration thereof. And before any Conference action be taken to change or amend the English language versions of the Founders Literature, there must first be received in writing within the time allotted, the consent of at least three-quarters of those known groups in the US and Canada who respond to such proposal.

Report and Charter	81 (15, 26 and 109 as background)	81 - Area 35, Northern Minnesota, would like to add to AA's Current Conference Charter under article #3, that A.A.W.S. and Grapevine publications of pre-1972 "Founders Writings" have no contextual changes to their writings without a supermajority of $\frac{3}{4}$ approval from the full General Service Conference. This includes but is not limited to AAWS publications of the books: Alcoholics Anonymous (Big Book) specifically the The Doctor's Opinion, the first 164 pages two stories Dr. Bobs Nightmare along with AA Number Three and Appendix II Spiritual Experience, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, As Bill Sees It, Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age, Our Great Responsibility, and the Twelve Concepts essays currently in the Service Manual. AAWS pamphlets: Problems other than Alcohol and Let's be Friendly with Our Friends etc. Including Grapevine publications, Language of the Heart and Best of Bill along with any archival articles pre-1972 written by our Founders both Alcoholic: Bill W., Dr. Bob S., Hank P., Bobbie B., etc., and non-alcoholic: Dr. Silkworth, Father Dowling, Dr. Harry Tiebout, Bernard Smith, Frank Amos, etc. These writings should be left intact.
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15 - Whenever any changes are brought to the Conference floor to the Founders' writings, considered by this motion to be:

1. The book Alcoholics Anonymous — specifically, the first 164 pages, the chapter "The Doctor's Opinion," Forewords to the first and second editions, the Appendices on Spiritual Awakening and the Traditions, and Dr. Bob's Nightmare

2. The book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions the Conference must achieve a super-majority of 75% in order for the General Service Board to act upon it. However, the General Service Board shall not immediately act upon the Conference's directions, and instead, shall request all Area Delegates to conduct further discussions in their respective Areas. Area delegates' report backs will be conducted the second following General Service Conference at which the Conference may amend or change the previously approved change to the Founders' writings described above. For final action by the General Service Board, the Conference must achieve substantial unanimity 67%).

26 - Change the wording of "The Current Conference Charter" in Appendix K of the "The A.A. Service Manual", 2021-2023 Edition (p. 119), Revised May 2021, Section 3 -- suggested change in UPPERCASE below. Additionally update the Bylaws to give the essays in the 12&12 and the sections of the big book described below the same protection as the short form of the steps and traditions.

"THE CONTENT AND WORDS OF THE BOOK ALCHOLICS ANONYMOUS INCLUDING: THE FIRST 164 PAGES, THE PREFACE, THE FORWARDS, THE DOCTOR'S OPINION, DR. BOB'S NIGHTMARE, AA NUMBER 3 AND THE APPENDIXES ALL REMAIN AS THEY APPEAR IN SEPTEMBER 2022 AND WILL NOT CHANGE EVEN WITH THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF ANY PERCENTAGE OF THE AA GROUPS, THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERNCE, A PUBLISHING COMPANY OR ANYOTHER PERSON OR ENTITY. ADDITIONALLY, no change in Article 12 of the Charter or in A.A. Tradition or in the Twelve Steps of A.A. may be made with less than a written consent of three-quarters of the A.A. groups, as described in the resolution adopted by the 1955 Conference and Convention."

109 -In accordance with Appendix L: Resolution authorizing the general service conference, our motion would include all registered A.A. worldwide groups. Our request is that the explanations of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts from the Appendices in the book; Plain Language Big Book: A Tool for Reading Alcoholics Anonymous, be sent to all the registered A.A. groups worldwide so they are suitably notified of modifications and would have the right to vote on them.

PAI 3: Revising and Clarifying Concept III

Submitted by: Arcade Steps and Traditions Group (District 29); Arcade Men's Group has a similar PAI

(1) Proposed Motion

That the General Service Conference revise Concept III of the Twelve Concepts for World Service to clarify that the "Right of Decision" for GSRs, DCMs, and delegates does not supersede the informed conscience of the groups and areas they represent on matters affecting Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

Further, that Concept III be clarified to affirm that ultimate authority rests with the Fellowship and its groups, consistent with Tradition Two and the inverted triangle.

(2) What problem does this proposed item address?

Many members believe the growing division within A.A. is not primarily the result of individual delegates or specific Conference actions, but of an increasingly broad interpretation of Concept III that allows trusted servants to act apart from the conscience of those who elected them.

Bill W. reminded us that trusted servants do not govern. Yet many members now perceive that the "Right of Decision" has gradually shifted authority upward into the service structure, creating the impression that delegates, committees, and Conference bodies can speak for the Fellowship while acting independently of it.

The result is growing distrust, division, and a perception that the inverted triangle has been turned upside down.

The problem is not service. The problem is when representation becomes substitution.

(3) Intended outcome

- Reaffirm that authority rests with the Fellowship and its groups
- Clarify the limits of the "Right of Decision"
- Strengthen accountability between delegates and the areas they represent
- Restore trust in the service structure
- Prevent further drift toward centralized authority within A.A.

(4) Final comments

Bill W. also wrote within Concept III that when trusted servants cease to reflect those they serve, the Fellowship retains the ultimate remedy through the power of the purse and the election of new representatives.

Alcoholics Anonymous remains strongest when trusted servants carry the conscience of the Fellowship, not replace it.

This proposal seeks to restore that balance.