

2024 Conference Committee on Literature

ITEM F: Review draft manuscript of the translation of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Fourth Edition) into plain and simple language.

Background Notes:

Excerpt from the January 28, 2024, trustees' Literature Committee report:

The committee reviewed the draft manuscript of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Fourth Edition) translated into plain and simple language and agreed to forward to the 2024 Conference Committee on Literature with the requested copyediting.

The committee also reviewed the draft "letter of understanding" outlining the confidentiality guidelines related to review of the manuscript (to ensure A.A.'s legal rights in the registration of the approved final draft of the manuscript with the U.S. Copyright Office, maintain the integrity of A.A. literature and ultimately our most valued asset which is A.A. unity).

2023 Committee Consideration

The committee reviewed a progress report regarding the translation of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Fourth Edition) into plain and simple language and agreed with the general direction of the project. The committee requested that the project continue to move forward and that a draft or progress report be brought back to the 2024 Conference Committee on Literature.

2021 Conference Advisory Action:

That a draft version of the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous* (Fourth Edition), be translated into plain and simple language and be developed in a way that is accessible and relatable to as wide of an audience as possible and that a progress report or draft be brought back to the 2022 Conference Committee on Literature.

Background:

1. Draft Manuscript (**To be provided to Committee on Saturday, April 13, 2024**).
2. April 2024 Letter of Understanding to Conference regarding confidentiality guidelines.

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April 2024

To: Members of the 2024 General Service Conference

From: Sandra Wilson, Secretary, trustees' and Conference Committees on Literature

Subject: **Confidential Draft Manuscript Letter of Understanding**

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING

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 do not receive copies of the draft manuscript of the Plain Language Big Book (the "Manuscript").¹

The 74th General Service Conference Committee on Literature (the "Committee") will be reviewing the Manuscript primarily to determine whether or not it meets the intended goals of the development of a plain and simple language Big Book.

Also, as with all Conference-approved A.A. literature, the Committee will be looking at the Manuscript to assure "that everything in such literature is in accord with A.A. principles. 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.)

After the Conference Committee reviews the draft manuscript, several things may happen. Among them:

- The Committee might approve the Manuscript and recommend the Manuscript be approved by the Conference as a whole. If approved by the Committee, members of the Conference will be provided with an opportunity to review the manuscript prior to voting on the item. (**See** Footnote 1.)

¹ **In a departure from general practice and procedures pertaining to Conference approved literature, Reading Rooms** will be made available during Conference Week to provide Conference members the opportunity to review the Manuscript **whether or not** a Recommendation is submitted to the Conference for approval.

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CONFIDENTIAL: 74th General Service Conference Background

- The Committee might also send the Manuscript back to the trustees' Committee on Literature with any significant concerns / changes about the proposed draft.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Until a draft is “Conference-approved,” (i.e., approved by a 2/3rds vote of the Conference) and published, it is considered confidential. Prior to then, any number of changes might be suggested by the Conference to be made by the trustees' Committee on Literature.

To ensure A.A.'s legal rights in the registration of the approved final draft of the Manuscript with the U.S. Copyright Office, maintain the integrity of A.A. literature and ultimately our most valued asset which is A.A. unity, it is critical that **all** Conference members adhere to “confidentiality” guidelines that expressly limit the review and discussion of the Manuscript to Conference members only and prevent the copying and/or distribution of the Manuscript (in whole or in part) at any time prior to publication which may lead to having multiple unapproved draft versions available to the public.

This confidential process ensures that A.A. literature will be protected from copyright challenges, and that the message that reaches the A.A. Fellowship reflects A.A. as a whole, an assurance made by the Conference-approval process.

I acknowledge receipt of the Manuscript and agree to completely adhere to the guidelines and procedures as outlined in the Letter of Understanding, including, but not limited to:

- I agree to limit review and discussion of the Manuscript to members of the 74th General Service Conference.
- I agree that I will not copy and/or distribute the Manuscript (in whole or in part) at any time prior to publication.

Conference member name (please print): _____

Conference member signature: _____

Date: _____

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