

Dear Southeast Region Delegates and Alternate Delegates,

I've received several emails and phone calls concerning the recent letter from the Trustees Literature Committee (TLC) so I've compiled all the information I could gather on the subject as I am sure you are receiving inquiries as well. Please direct any feedback to the Literature Desk at GSO, literature@aa.org. Please see the attachment which is the official inquiry.

FAQ's

Is this a survey? No. It is not a survey. In fact, the TLC specifically did not want to send out a survey. Instead, they developed "suggested" questions to help inform discussions that will take place at the local level. Ideally (but not mandated), discussions facilitated by Area delegates. As noted in the cover letter to the questions, members are encouraged to come up with their own questions, should they choose to do so.

Why am I getting this? In response to a Committee Consideration that came out of the 73rd GSC (2023) requesting that the TLC explore a way to seek input from the Fellowship with respect to changes to the writings authored by A.A.'s founders.

Background: The 2023 Finance Committee had several items on their agenda (as a result of Equitable Distribution of Workload – EDW) related to rescinding recent changes to A.A. literature (i.e., the preamble, the change in the 12X12, etc.). Although the 2023 Finance Committee, after thoughtful discussion, determined to take no action on these items; it was the consensus of that committee that it may be beneficial to seek input from the Fellowship regarding the broad topic of changes to A.A. literature written by our founders. The TLC agreed and (in several interim meetings allowing them to have focused discussions as to the best way to seek input from the Fellowship) subsequently developed the "suggested" questions to help inform discussions at the local level.

Once finalized, the cover note and questions was distributed to the Area Delegates (via OnBoard – and now located in the Resource section on OnBoard) with the hope that the Area Delegates will utilize accordingly as noted above. Subsequently, many delegates distributed the correspondence and questions, and I suspect given the many questions, with little "context." This has caused some confusion. The literature assignment has been responding to the emails and providing clarification with positive results.

Ok so now what? Can I just send in my individual answers to the questions? As with anything in A.A., we always benefit from wider discussions (e.g., group / district / area levels). And as stated, ideally, trusted servants can facilitate discussions in their areas. It is hoped that the delegates attending the 74th GSC can bring back some of those discussions (those plans are still in the works). That being said, the literature assignment is also accepting all responses at literature@aa.org. The intent is to compile the responses and present to the TLC in January 2024 who can determine how to share with the Conference, etc.

(Note: As a result of the 2022-2023 Equitable Distribution of Workload plan, the following item was on the agenda of the Conference Committee on Corrections.)

The Additional Committee Consideration;

- The committee considered a request to discuss proposed agenda items related to changes to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. The committee suggested that the 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 committee requested that a progress report be brought back to the 2024 Conference Committee on Finance. (Mindful of budgetary restraints, the committee suggests financial prudence when determining how best to obtain Fellowship sharing.)

Questions to be considered might include:

- Should suggested revisions be subjected to a 2-year Conference review process.
- Should any future suggested changes retain the original writing with footnotes for text being updated?
- Should there be a threshold for review (group, district, area)?
- Should the changes to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions by 2021 General Service Conference remain?
- Should a new policy regarding Bill W.'s writing be readjusted to guide future changes?

The attached was sent to Conference Delegates (via OnBoard and now located in the Resource file on Onboard). This correspondence is in response to the 2023 Conference Committee Consideration (see excerpt from letter below – I bolded pertinent information), requesting that the TLC explore a way to obtain Fellowship feedback regarding the writings of AA's co-founders.

Excerpt from cover note that was distributed to Area Delegates:

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.

The TLC actions that led up to the distribution was fully reported out in the meeting reports that was part of the GSB background and available to all trustees (see attached meeting reports), including the October meeting report – see excerpt below:

Excerpt from October TLC 2023 meeting report:

Fellowship input regarding changes to co-founders' writings: The committee reviewed the draft questions prepared in response to the 2023 Committee Consideration requesting that the 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 committee will finalize the document and take the next steps for distribution to the Area Delegates.

It should be noted that as opposed to a "survey," this was an attempt to spark and help to inform discussion. Ideally, it was the hope of the TLC that the delegates would utilize the proposed questions to help inform discussions in their respective areas and that the area delegates would bring this back to the 74th GSC for discussion (this portion is still being worked out).

Trustees' Literature Committee

Interim Committee Meeting

September 20, 2023, 6pm – 7pm

Meeting Notes

Present: Irma V., chair, Teddy B., Vera F., Teresa J., Clinton M., Gerry R. (ACM), Joyce S., John W., Irene D. (rotating secretary), and Sandra W. (interim secretary)

The purpose of this interim meeting was to allow the committee to have a focused discussion on the following committee consideration forwarded to the TLC by the 2023 Conference Committee on Finance:

The committee suggested that the 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 committee requested that a progress report be brought back to the 2024 Conference Committee on Finance. (Mindful of budgetary restraints, the committee suggests financial prudence when determining how best to obtain Fellowship sharing.)

Committee members had a wide ranging and thoughtful discussion regarding not only the genesis of the request (this topic has been bandied about the Fellowship for some time, coming to somewhat of a crescendo in recent years) but also how best to gather Fellowship sharing as it pertains to changes to AA's founders' writings.

Although the idea of a survey was initially considered, the committee agreed that a survey would not be the best avenue to take, mindful, among other considerations not to take actions that would inadvertently circumvent the Conference structure and process.

The committee discussed alternative means of gathering Fellowship sharing including, but not limited to:

Sharing session at the 74th General Service Conference (Note that Vera F. who sits on the Conference Improvement Committee agreed to bring this idea up at their next scheduled meeting and report back to this committee.)

Developing suggested questions and providing to Delegates who can facilitate sharing sessions within their respective areas.

Holding sharing sessions at Regional Forums.

The committee also discussed a timeframe within which to complete the request. It was agreed that given the committee consideration requested that a progress report be brought back to the 74th GSC, there was no undue rush to complete, allowing the committee the time to be thoughtful in their process and approach.

Next steps:

The chair requested that each committee member come up with three questions and submit for discussion at the next interim meeting, with the intent that the committee will have a finalized list of questions to discuss at the October board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Trustees' Literature Committee

Interim Committee Meeting

October 12, 2023, 8pm – 9pm

Meeting Notes

Present: Irma V., chair, Teddy B., Vera F., Cesar F. (ACM), Teresa J., Mike L. (GSB Chair), Clinton M., Gerry R. (ACM), Joyce S., John W., and Sandra W. (interim secretary)

The purpose of the October 12 interim meeting is to allow the committee to continue the focused discussion on the committee consideration forwarded to the TLC by the 2023 Conference Committee on Finance (noted below); specifically, to review and discuss the draft questions submitted by committee members in advance of this meeting.

Committee Consideration from 73rd GSC

The committee suggested that the 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 committee requested that a progress report be brought back to the 2024 Conference Committee on Finance. (Mindful of budgetary restraints, the committee suggests financial prudence when determining how best to obtain Fellowship sharing.)

Committee members had a wide ranging and thoughtful discussion regarding the submitted questions and landed on the following seven questions, noting that the committee can continue to discuss and finalize during their upcoming October meeting:

- Do you think that our Founders would object to or embrace revisions to their writings? If yes, why? If not, why?
- Do you think the Founders' writings are effective in reaching new members? If not, what measures do you think can be taken to resolve this issue? Please be as concise as possible.
- How do you feel about changing our Founders' writings to replace outdated references?
- What reasons would you consider for changing our Founders' writings?
- What suggestions do you have for preserving the Founders' writings, along with keeping pace with our current A.A. Society and its future?
- Should there be a special Conference process for approval of changes to our Founders' writings? (e.g., super, or qualified majority – 75%, and/or 2-year consideration process.)
- What additional ideas, thoughts or suggestions can you share about changing or not changing the Founders' writings? Please be as concise as possible.

The committee also discussed developing an introduction to the suggested questions. It was discussed that perhaps some of the language in submitted questions that were not used may be useful in the introduction. In any event, the staff secretary agreed to draft an introduction which will be added to the background along with the proposed questions and reviewed by the committee at their October meeting.

Regarding the suggestion for a sharing session during the 74th General Service Conference around this topic, Vera F. agreed to bring the suggestion to the Conference Planning Committee and advise TLC accordingly.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.