

February 2022  
Area 08 Conference Agenda Item Worksheet

This is a list of the items that have been chosen to discuss. Each person will have an opportunity to give remarks on any items they choose. Please use the area website to send your message.

**Policy/Admissions – Item F**

Consider request to restore a paragraph in the story “Freedom from Bondage” in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.


Conference Committee: **Policy/Admissions — Item F**

Agenda Topic	<b>Consider request to restore a paragraph in the story “Freedom from Bondage” in the book <i>Alcoholics Anonymous</i>.</b>
Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/the-big-book">https://www.aa.org/the-big-book</a>	<p>This motion comes from an Area where it passed with substantial unanimity. The text that was removed from page 546 is shown in the background in its original location: “I looked around me at people who seemed happy and tried to analyze their happiness, and it seemed to me that without exception these people had something or somebody they loved very much. I didn’t have the courage to love; I was not even sure I had the capacity. Fear of rejection and its ensuing pain were not to be risked, and I turned away from myself once more for the answer, this time to the drinks I had always refused before, and in alcohol I found a false courage.”</p> <p>Also included in the background is a history of the deletion of the paragraph in 2002 with excerpts from reports from the trustees’ Literature Committee explaining the reason for the deletion—which focuses on creating a similar page count between the Third Edition and Fourth Edition. If not for the edits to this story (and several others), there would be multiple blank pages at the end of the book because of how books are published.</p>
What does the Delegate need to know?	Does your group think the paragraph should be added back to the story “Freedom from Bondage” in future printings? Why or why not?

## Public Information – Item K

Review request to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media.


### Conference Committee: **Public Information — Item K**

Agenda Topic	<b>Review request to create a new form of communication to address anonymity on social media</b>
Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda?	The trustees' and Conference P.I. committees have been discussing this request since 2020. A.A. literature on anonymity is available ("Understanding Anonymity," A.A. Guidelines on Internet, etc.) but that the content is dated and does not accurately reflect current technology or the Fellowship's experience. The Conference committee suggested the trustees' committee gather: shared experience from the Fellowship on how A.A. members adhere to anonymity Traditions on various social media platforms; suggested safety and etiquette while using social media; and information on anonymity on video meeting platforms. The trustees' committee may create and distribute a survey to capture the current A.A. experience when it comes to "Anonymity on Social Media." A draft survey is in the background material.
What does the Delegate need to know?	We will not hear group consciences on this item at the Assembly, but you can share them with the Delegate via email, through a web form on the Area website, or by phone.

## Public Information – J3

1. Review suggested revisions to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity. Does the pamphlet need to be revised?
2. Do you have any feedback on the suggestions?

#1

#2

### Conference Committee: **Public Information — Item J3**

Agenda Topic	Discuss Public Information pamphlets/materials: <b>Review suggested revisions to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity.”</b>
Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-47_understandinganonymity.pdf">https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-47_understandinganonymity.pdf</a>	From the 2021 Additional Committee Consideration of the Conference Committee on Public Information: The committee requested that G.S.O. Publishing conduct editorial updates to the pamphlet “Understanding Anonymity” to reflect current technology terminologies and service resources.” Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Fellowship has profoundly expanded its digital presence. Included in the background are some suggested revisions to a section on website and social media pages, and a suggestion of new content about virtual A.A. meetings.  Link to the current pamphlet: <a href="http://www.aa.org/understanding-anonymity">www.aa.org/understanding-anonymity</a>
What does the Delegate need to know?	Are members of your group familiar with this pamphlet? Do they have any feedback on the suggested revisions?

## Report & Charter – Item D

Consider request to include a G.S.R. preamble in the pamphlet “G.S.R.: Your Group’s Link to A.A. as a Whole.”

1. Should we add the GSR preamble to the GSR pamphlet?
2. Would it be beneficial why or why not?


### Conference Committee: Report & Charter — Item D

Agenda Topic	Consider request to include a G.S.R. preamble in the pamphlet “G.S.R.: Your Group’s Link to A.A. as a Whole.”
Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-19_gsr.pdf">https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-19_gsr.pdf</a>	<p>This proposal came from a group in Illinois and was passed at their Area Assembly in December 2019. The group believes that adding the G.S.R. preamble to the G.S.R. pamphlet would be beneficial because they believe the G.S.R. preamble is a clear-cut directive to G.S.R.s regarding their responsibility, adding the G.S.R. preamble to the pamphlet would provide consistency and thus unity across A.A. as a whole, and, if added, it would affirm Conference approval when read at District and Area Functions.</p> <p>The G.S.R. preamble included in the proposal states: “We are the General Service Representatives. We are the link in the chain of communication for our groups with the General Service Conference and the world of A.A. We realize the ultimate authority is a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. As trusted servants, our job is to bring information to our groups in order that they can reach an informed group conscience. In passing along this group conscience, we are helping to maintain the unity and strength so vital to our fellowship. Let us, therefore, have the patience and tolerance to listen while others share, the courage to speak up when we have something to share, and the wisdom to do what is right for our group and A.A. as a whole.”</p>
What does the Delegate need to know?	Does your group think that adding a G.S.R. preamble to the pamphlet would be beneficial? Why or why not?

## Report & Charter – Item E

Consider requests that the chapter titled “The Doctor's Opinion” be returned to page one, as it was in the First Edition.

1. Should the “The Doctor's Opinion” be moved to page 1?


### Conference Committee: Report & Charter — Item E

Agenda Topic	<b>Consider requests that the chapter titled “The Doctor's Opinion” be returned to page one, as it was in the First Edition.</b>
Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda?	<p>The trustees' Literature Committee received and forwarded two separate requests asking that, upon the creation of a Fifth Edition of the book <i>Alcoholics Anonymous</i>, the chapter titled “The Doctor's Opinion” be returned to page one, as it was in the First Edition published in 1939. When the Second Edition was published, Roman numerals were printed prior to what is now page one (material prior to page one also includes the Preface and the Forewords). There is nothing in the background explaining the reasoning behind changing the page numbering in the book.</p> <p>One proposal states that most readers do not read the pages with Roman numerals. If someone is reading without guidance from another member, they might miss this section. There are links to slides included in the background with a note that in the 1995 Advisory Action it states, “The first 164 pages of the Big Book, <i>Alcoholics Anonymous</i>, the Preface, the Forewords, ‘The Doctor's Opinion,’ ‘Doctor Bob's Nightmare’ and the Appendices remain as is.” The other proposal says that the placement of “The Doctor's Opinion” on page 1 of the First Edition was of paramount importance. It is noted that some members are comfortable with the memorization of current page numbers, but they are asking for a restoration to the original page numbering to “help more newcomers have a better chance at sobriety.”</p>
What does the Delegate need to know?	Does your group think “The Doctor's Opinion” should be renumbered to be page 1 in future printings of the Big Book? Why or why not?

## Trustees – Item G

Consider request to revise the pamphlet “Do You Think You're Different?” to include stories reflecting greater diversity.


### Conference Committee: Trustees — Item G

Agenda Topic	<b>Consider request to revise the pamphlet “Do You Think You're Different?” to include stories reflecting greater diversity.</b>
Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-13_doyouthinkyoure_diff.pdf">https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-13_doyouthinkyoure_diff.pdf</a>	<p>This proposal to revise the pamphlet “Do You Think You’re Different?” (P-13) comes from the Archives Chair in Area 79 (BC/Yukon), with assistance from the Delegate. The submitter of this item feels that in keeping with the purpose of the pamphlet, new stories are needed to better represent all the diverse populations of the U.S. and Canada with language that is more current and respectful.</p> <p>The pamphlet can be found here: <a href="http://www.aa.org/do-you-think-youre-different">www.aa.org/do-you-think-youre-different</a></p>
What does the Delegate need to know?	Does your group think that this pamphlet needs to be updated with new stories to reflect greater diversity? Why or why not? If so, does your group have any suggestions?

## Finance – Item B

Consider request to add a disclaimer to the front of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.

1. Should we add a historical disclaimer to the front of the book?
2. Will adding a disclaimer take away from the purpose of the book or the message?


### Conference Committee: **Finance— Item B**

Agenda Topic	<b>Consider request to add a historical disclaimer to the front of the book <i>Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</i>.</b>
<p>Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/resources/media?terms=twelve+steps+twelve+traditions&amp;format=audio&amp;items_per_page=24&amp;sort_by_combine=title_ASC">https://www.aa.org/resources/media?terms=twelve+steps+twelve+traditions&amp;format=audio&amp;items_per_page=24&amp;sort_by_combine=title_ASC</a></p>	<p>This proposal from Texas included a number of letters from groups and districts in support and suggests that rather than making changes to the text, something like the following could be added as a disclaimer: “While the language in this text may seem dated, please remember that Bill W. wrote in the language and custom of his times. Bill was very tolerant of different individuals and members. All alcoholics, were and are now welcomed cordially into A.A. Were Bill to write this book today, it may be worded differently in some places. Society may change, but the basic spiritual principles of Alcoholics Anonymous are classic and eternal. We hope that this book continues to broaden and deepen the understanding of the Twelve Steps as written in the book <i>Alcoholics Anonymous</i>.”</p> <p>G.S.O. received many other requests to reverse or rescind one or more of the changes approved at last year’s General Service Conference, and several requests to preserve, unaltered, the text of the book <i>Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</i> as originally published. These requests are excerpted in the background and fall generally into the following categories: the sentiment that no changes should be made to Bill’s writing, concerns that one change could lead to a “slippery slope” of endless future changes, that the COVID pandemic (or other issues) didn’t allow for a fully informed group conscience, and that the changes are the result of outside issues and therefore not in keeping with Tradition 10.</p>
What does the Delegate need to know?	What does your group think about the idea of adding a historical disclaimer at the beginning of the book <i>Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</i> ?

## Policy/Admissions – Item G

Consider request to revise the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” to reflect shared experience on service sponsorship.

1. Do you think the pamphlet should be revised?
2. Will including more shared experiences on service sponsorship?


### Conference Committee: Policy/Admissions — Item G

Agenda Topic	<b>Consider request to revise the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” to reflect shared experience on service sponsorship.</b>
<p>Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-15_Q%26AonSpon.pdf">https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-15_Q%26AonSpon.pdf</a></p>	<p>This proposal came from Area 44, New Jersey and was not able to be addressed by the Conference Literature committee in previous years. They are requesting that the Service Sponsorship section in the pamphlet “Questions &amp; Answers on Sponsorship” (P-15) be expanded, and that the pamphlet be retitled to include Service Sponsorship. Some benefits and goals from the proposal: reinforce the notion that service work often begins with a suggestion from a service sponsor; have more members engage in service work; point out the benefits of service to the individual, the group and the fellowship; define service work as a responsibility of the recovering A.A. member; discuss ways in which a person in service can attract others to service; explore ways in which a service sponsor can assist those new to service; and, present personal experiences of those serving as service sponsors.</p> <p>The background also includes links to the current pamphlet and service material on service sponsorship. It is noted that since the item was originally submitted, a section on service sponsorship was added to the revised <i>A.A. Service Manual 2021-2023 edition</i>.</p>
What does the Delegate need to know?	Does your group feel the pamphlet “Questions and Answers on Sponsorship” should be revised to include more shared experience on service sponsorship? Why or why not?



## Literature – Item R

Discuss changes to the text of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* as directed by the 71<sup>st</sup> General Service Conference.

1. How does your group feel about the changes that were made to the book 12x12?


### Conference Committee: **Literature — Item R**

Agenda Topic	<b>Discuss changes to the text of the book <i>Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</i> as directed by the 71st General Service Conference.</b>
<p>Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/resources/media?terms=twelve+steps+twelve+traditions&amp;format=audio&amp;items_per_page=24&amp;sort_by_combine=title_ASC">https://www.aa.org/resources/media?terms=twelve+steps+twelve+traditions&amp;format=audio&amp;items_per_page=24&amp;sort_by_combine=title_ASC</a></p>	<p>In 2021, three recommendations to change the book <i>Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</i> were passed by substantial unanimity at the 71st Conference. 1. A revision was made to page 117, replacing the phrase “mate of the opposite sex” with the word “partner.” 2. A revision was made on page 66 in the chapter “Step Six” to replace the sentence “No one wants to be angry enough to murder, lustful enough to rape, gluttonous enough to ruin his health.” The new sentence is: “No one wants to commit the deadly sins of anger, lust or gluttony.” 3. The long form of each Tradition is now included at the end of each essay for that Tradition in the book (with the complete set of Traditions still at the back of the book as before). New printings of the book in 2021-2022 have included these changes.</p> <p>The General Service Office has since received 40 requests to reverse or rescind one or more of these changes, and/or to preserve, unaltered, the text of the book <i>Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</i>, as originally published. The proposed agenda items, excerpts of which are sampled in the background information, fell broadly into four categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. References to previous Conference advisory actions and the sentiment that Bill’s writing should not be changed.</li> <li>2. The “slippery slope” concern, that these changes could lead to endless future changes.</li> <li>3. That the COVID pandemic, or other issues, didn’t allow for a fully informed group conscience.</li> <li>4. That the changes are the result of outside issues and therefore not in keeping with Tradition 10, or other Traditions.</li> </ol> <p>Also in the background is a History of Proposed Changes and Editorial Updates (2002 – Current) for <i>Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</i> prepared by the Archives department.</p>
What does the Delegate need to know?	How does your group feel about the changes that were made to the book <i>Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions</i> ?

## Grapevine/La Viña – Item D

Discuss the wide-ranging impact the Preamble change has had on our A.A. Fellowship.

C. Consider requests to limit changes to the book Alcoholics Anonymous


### Conference Committee: Grapevine and La Viña — Item D

Agenda Topic	<b>Discuss the wide-ranging impact the Preamble change has had on our A.A. Fellowship.</b>
Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/smf-92_en.pdf">https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/smf-92_en.pdf</a>	<p>In 2021, as the result of a floor action at the General Service Conference, the A.A. Preamble published in the Grapevine was revised, with the word “people” replacing “men and women.”</p> <p>A letter from the Grapevine Board Chair included in the background notes that, almost immediately following last year’s Conference, the Grapevine Board began receiving considerable feedback (some favorable, some unfavorable, and some simply asking for additional information) regarding the Preamble revision. While some people said that the A.A. unity was enhanced by the welcoming language, others said unity was disrupted by the change. Some members expressed concern that Grapevine’s editorial independence was negatively impacted; however, it was the Board, Publisher, and Editors who proposed this change and forwarded the change for discussion as an agenda item to the General Service Conference. Some people noted that each group is autonomous – and that their groups had changed the Preamble prior to the official change, while others said their groups would continue using “men and women.” Some people suggested the language change was an outside issue, while others said it was an inside issue supported by Tradition 3 (welcoming, inclusive, etc.). The Grapevine Board Chair concludes that more discussion is required so that we can move forward as a Fellowship.</p> <p>A timeline of how the Preamble change occurred is also included in the background.</p>
What does the Delegate need to know?	How well has your group received the new A.A. Preamble? Do you have any examples of how the change has helped or hindered unity in the Fellowship? Do you have any examples of how it has helped or hindered newcomers getting sober in A.A.?

## Trustee – Item F

Consider revising text highlighting service roles at the group level in the pamphlet “The A.A. Group.”


### Conference Committee: Trustees — Item F

Agenda Topic	<b>Consider revising text highlighting service roles at the group level in the pamphlet “The A.A. Group.”</b>
Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-16_theaagroup.pdf">https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-16_theaagroup.pdf</a>	A group has proposed that language from page 29 in the English version of the pamphlet “The A.A. Group” (P-16) be revised. Currently, in the section in the pamphlet on A.A. Group Inventory, question 9 asks: “Mindful that holding office is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our officers with care?” Their suggestion is to change it to: “Mindful that trusted service is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our trusted servants with care?”
What does the Delegate need to know?	Note: The question on page 32 of the Spanish version of the pamphlet (SP-16) is worded differently. Does your group think that this text needs revising? Why or why not?

## Treatment and Accessibilities – Item F

Consider request to revise the pamphlet “The A.A. Group” to reflect the importance of the group as a “spiritual entity” as stated in the Long Form of Tradition Five.

1. Should “spiritual entity” be added in a different section of the pamphlet?


### Conference Committee: Treatment and Accessibilities — Item F

Agenda Topic	<b>Consider request to revise the pamphlet “The A.A. Group” to reflect the importance of the group as a “spiritual entity” as stated in the Long Form of Tradition Five.</b>
Historical Context; Why is it on the Agenda? <a href="https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-16_theaagroup.pdf">https://www.aa.org/sites/default/files/literature/assets/p-16_theaagroup.pdf</a>	On page 12 of the pamphlet “The A.A. Group... where it all begins,” the section titled “What Is an A.A. Group?” describes the Group in terms of Tradition Three and Warranty Six. The Group as a spiritual entity is not mentioned until page 31 and only in reference to safety. The long form of Tradition Five states, “Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose—that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.” The members that submitted this request feel the inclusion of the Long Form of Tradition Five in this section will provide a clearer picture that an A.A. Group is a spiritual entity.
What does the Delegate need to know?	Does your group feel that there is a need for this addition to the pamphlet? Why or why not?