

Plain Language Book

History

At the 2016, 66th General Service Conference, the Conference Committee on Literature presented an additional committee consideration to Trustees' Literature Committee "That the need for 'plain-language recovery literature' be explored by the Trustees' Literature Committee as a way to make the life-saving message of Alcoholics Anonymous more accessible."

At the 70th General Service Conference, a video presentation done by RIPTAB (Researching issues, possible tools and access to the Big Book) was presented along with a request to distribute to the Fellowship with a request for feedback.

At the 71st General Service Conference, an advisory action passed which recommended "That a draft version of the book Alcoholics Anonymous 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 go the 2022 Conference Committee on Literature."

At the 73rd General Service Conference, all members of the General Service Conference were provided an opportunity to read a draft of Chapters 1 - 6 in the "reading room." Later that week, a sharing session was had and that feedback was given to the writer.

At the 74th General Service Conference, the Conference Committee on Literature will be given the full product to review on Saturday from 9am to 5pm. All other Conference members will again have access in the reading room through the week.

Possible actions at the 74th General Service Conference:

1. The Conference Committee on Literature can recommend to publish. If this happens, it will go before the whole conference for discussion and a vote. (Remember, you need 2/3 of all Conference Members to agree to become an Advisory Action).
2. The Conference Committee on Literature can send it back to Trustees' Literature Committee with notes on changes to bring back to the 75th General Service Conference.
3. The Conference Committee on Literature could recommend to discontinue the project. This would then be discussed and a vote with the Conference.
4. Lots of other things could happen too.....No one has a crystal ball!

FQA

What is Plain Language?

- Plain language is a style of writing designed for word choice, sentence structure, and layout to improve readability and understanding.

Are they changing the Big Book?

- No. The 4th edition of the Big Book will continue to be published and printed. Eventually, a 5th edition of the Big Book will come out, with updated personal stories. The plain language big book is a new, separate piece of literature.

Will the plain language big book have personal stories?

- No. It will consist of the forewords, the Doctor's Opinion, the 11 chapters of the Big Book, and Dr. Bob's Nightmare.

How much is this project costing AA?

- This initial selection of professional services had cost about \$15,000. The final contract for the chosen professional costs around \$125,000. Overall, the costs are in the range of \$140 – 150K.

What printing options will be available if this book gets published?

- It has not been determined yet if the book will be hard cover, soft cover, large print, etc.

If the project has already been approved, is there anything we can do?

- Absolutely. Your delegate will go to the 74th General Service Conference with your conscience to participate in the discussion, sharing, and a vote if taken.

Will the fellowship get to see the book before it is voted on?

- No. Some samples may be provided in the background material, but full access will not be available.

Was AI (ChatGPT or similar) used in the plain language big book development?

- No. No AI or text generator was used in the plain language draft.

Were any Non-Alcoholics on the Tools to Access the Big Book (TABB) subcommittee?

- No. All members were alcoholics.

Are they degenderizing the Big Book?

- No. However, the plain language big book will include more gender diversity. The original Big Book contains about 250 he/him/his to about 50 she/her/hers. The plain language big book will not be as heavily skewed in one direction.

Are they trying to remove God from the program?

- No. God is 100% still in the plain language big book.

Are they rewriting the Steps?

Not to our understanding. Based on last year's feedback, that portion has been removed.

Who will own the copyright and royalties?

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services