

Conference Committee on Literature
New York Hilton Midtown

April 27, 2026: 8 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

April 28, 2026: 7 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

The Conference Committee on Literature met two times following two Joint Meetings with the trustees' Literature Committee on March 25, 2026, by videoconference and April 26, 2026. The committee accepted the report of the trustees' committee and considered the following agenda items:

A. Review the Conference Committee on Literature Composition, Scope and Procedure

The committee recommended the following language be added to the Conference Committee on Literature Composition, Scope, and Procedure under the Procedure section:

“To have the Conference Committee chairperson maintain consistent contact with the chairperson of the trustees' Literature Committee throughout the year.”

B. Review draft of the Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

The committee recommended that the Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be approved with minor editorial changes.

C. The committee recommended that the word “Eskimo” be removed from “Chapter 7: Working With Others” and replaced with a neutral, non-racial term.

The committee acknowledged the 1995 Conference Advisory Action which recommended that the first 164 pages of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Preface, the Forewords, The Doctor's Opinion, Dr. Bob's Nightmare and the Appendices remain as is. However, the committee agreed that use of pejorative words is not appropriate for our basic text.

The committee noted that in accordance with the 2021 Conference Advisory Action authorizing development of the Fifth Edition *Alcoholics Anonymous*, which reads in part: “Pending its development, the draft Fifth Edition of the Big Book would include a new foreword, an updated preface and updates to expand on existing ideas in Appendices III and V”:

“Appendix III — The Medical View on A.A.” and “Appendix V — The Religious View on A.A.” have been revised in keeping with the 2021 Conference Advisory Action

The committee noted that although the 1995 Conference Advisory Action recommended keeping the Appendices “as is,” the following changes have been made for the Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*:

- “Appendix IV — The Lasker Award” was revised to include a footnote to direct readers to the awards page on aa.org.
- “Appendix VI — How to Get in Touch with A.A.” was revised to reflect more current best practices.

In keeping with the “A.A. World Services, Inc. Policy on Publication: Keeping A.A. Literature Current,” which was accepted by the General Service Conference Advisory Action in 2020, and subsequently revised by the AAWS Board in 2022, the committee noted that the Publishing Department of the General Service Office will maintain editorial responsibilities for the Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, including:

- Editorial “fine tuning” such as footnotes, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, page numbers, headings and subheadings
- Finalizing the titles and order of personal stories
- Editorial review of the title page, jacket copy and table of contents
- Coordinating the flow of work between the book designer, typesetters, copyeditors, proofreaders and the printers
- Designing the book cover and jacket
- Listing other A.A. literature in the final pages of the book
- Determining the potential inclusion of QR codes based upon current best practices as identified by AAWS, Inc.

Additional Committee Considerations:

- The committee requested that the Preface to the Fifth Edition *Alcoholics Anonymous* be updated to direct readers to Appendix IV for more information on the Lasker Award.
- The committee agreed to provide minor editorial suggestions for the Publishing Department if the Fifth Edition of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* is approved for publication by Conference, including the removal of a pejorative phrase from one of the new personal stories.
- Noting the recommendation to remove the word “Eskimo” from “Chapter 7: Working With Others,” if approved by the Conference, the committee suggested that consideration be given to making similar changes to translations of the Big Book, including those in Spanish and French.
- The committee suggested that the final sentence of the final paragraph of the draft introduction to “Part II, Experience Strength and Hope,” in the Fifth Edition *Alcoholics Anonymous* which reads:

No matter their background or life experience, no matter how smooth or rocky their path, these alcoholics share how they have been able to find, gain and maintain sobriety by using the fundamental principles of A.A. as a firm foundation for recovery.

be changed to the following:

These alcoholics share how they have been able to find, gain and maintain sobriety by using the fundamental principles of A.A. as a firm foundation for recovery, no matter their background, life experience, and no matter how smooth or rocky their path.

- The committee discussed the revised draft chapters for the book *Living Sober* and suggested that the revisions continue in the current fashion. The committee requested that a revised draft or progress report be brought to the 2027 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee discussed the suggestion to publish the personal stories from the Fourth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* not included in the Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* and suggested that the trustees' Literature Committee:

- Ø Provide more information on expected costs, potential sales and break-even point.

- Ø Provide more information about whether the proposed book would be more successful as a revised version of *Experience, Strength and Hope* or as a new standalone volume.

- Ø Consider renaming the book to avoid confusion with the newly approved Part II section of the Fifth Edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

The committee requested that a progress report be brought back to the 2028 Conference Committee on Literature.

The committee discussed the progress report on the development of the Fourth Edition of the book *Alcohólicos Anónimos* (Spanish). The committee recognized the work that has gone into developing the revised draft and requested that a manuscript or progress report be brought back to the 2027 Conference Committee on Literature. The committee offered the following suggestions:

- Ø Additional communication to the Fellowship on the status of the project would be helpful to clarify misunderstanding.

- Ø Consideration be given to inviting a Spanish-speaking member of the Conference Committee on Literature to participate in the final review of the manuscript prior to Conference.

Ø Consideration be given to inviting Cesar F., ACM and chair of the Working Group for developing a Fourth Edition of *Alcohólicos Anónimos* (Spanish-language Big Book) to attend the 2027 General Service Conference to be available as a resource for Conference deliberations on the manuscript.

- The committee reviewed the progress report of the subcommittee exploring the needs of Spanish-speaking members for tools to access the Big Book and requested that a progress report be brought back to the 2027 Conference Committee on Literature.
- The committee reviewed the progress report on the development of a *Plain Language Big Book* amendment process and offered the following suggestions:

Ø That the trustees' Literature Committee consider providing more detail on the specific changes to the *Plain Language Big Book* that have been suggested both within, and outside of, the PAI process, including the total number of substantive changes and editorial changes. The committee emphasized the PAI process as the avenue for suggestions from the Fellowship for changes to Conference-approved literature

Ø That consideration be given to providing reference points throughout the *Plain Language Big Book* to the corresponding pages in the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*

Ø That consideration be given to resizing the *Plain Language Big Book* to match the size of the large print format Big Book

The committee asked that a progress report be brought back to the 2027 Conference Committee on Literature.

- The committee reviewed the progress report on the development of a pamphlet for the Asian and Asian-American Alcoholic and requested that a progress report or draft manuscript be brought back to the 2027 Conference Committee on Literature.

- The committee reviewed the Recovery Literature Matrix. The committee recognized the updates to the matrix and suggested that future literature matrixes include:

Ø A key defining abbreviations and color coding

Ø More information on the scope of revisions

Ø The number of pieces distributed (paid and unpaid)

Ø Digital downloads and page views

Ø Ensuring that the grid is readable (font size)

Ø Information on whether pieces are included in service kits

- Ø Note which committee, Staff member or department has purview for review and revision of a piece of literature.
- Ø Noting whether pieces fall into categories of recovery, service or archival material
- Ø Sortable columns (for Conference committee eyes only)
- Ø The committee noted that copyright information for individual items continues to be useful.

- The committee discussed the content and format of the Literature Workbook (Item M-52i) and the A.A. Literature Catalog (Item F-10). The committee agreed to provide the Staff secretary with any suggested updates.

The committee elected Kaitie Skinner, delegate for Area 26 Kentucky, chairperson; and Amanda Behnken, delegate for Area 68 Southwest Texas, alternate chairperson.

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