



Alcoholics Anonymous

Members of Area 39,

In response to a Committee Consideration from the 73rd General Service Conference suggesting that trustees' Literature Committee seek input from the Fellowship regarding any possible future changes to literature written by A.A.'s Founders, the trustees' Literature committee created the attached letter with some questions to start this important conversation. I have also included the questions that accompanied the original Committee Consideration.

The vision for this project is to encourage discussions and gather feedback in regard to any proposed changes, updates, footnotes, policies etc. regarding the Founders writings in our primary literature.

Please take the time to join this conversation. Your voice matters! Help encourage group discussions – could be as a district, group or just interested members coming together. I will take input from individuals also, but would really like to see this important topic being discussed. (One person voices an opinion. Multiple people may create an informed group conscience.)

Prepare a short report sharing the sense of the discussion. Please include:

- When you met and how many members took part.
- Highlights of the discussion. Include any policy suggestions you might have.

Share the report with me at or before the March assembly so I can be prepared for a Sharing Session at the 74th General Service Conference in April. I will take the reports with me, hard copy or digital.

Gratefully yours in service,
Debbie Harp, Area 39 Delegate
daharp@gmail.com

NOTE:

There was a lot of confusing, incorrect information circulated about this project. And some instructions changed along the way. If you snail mailed a response on this subject to GSO you might want to send them to me also.

**Please direct all
communications to:**

P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Fax: (212) 870-3003

November 13, 2023

Dear Trusted Servants:

A.A.'s Co-Founder, Bill W., in his 1953 address to the General Service Conference, stated that he did not consider himself the author of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Big Book (*Our Great Responsibility*, p. 92). He also alluded to the fact that in the various A.A. literature published prior to his passing, he borrowed heavily from other sources, and that other A.A. members made significant contributions.

On the other hand, addressing the historical context of some of the writings of our Founders, many members in our Fellowship have expressed strong sentiment against any changes in the first 164 pages of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the Big Book, as well as the Preface, the Forewords, The Doctor's Opinion, Doctor Bob's Nightmare, and the Appendices. In fact, as early as 1995 and most recently in 2022, Advisory Actions designed to protect the above-referenced contents have been passed by the General Service Conference.

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.

In fellowship,

The trustees' Literature Committee (2023-2024)

Attachment: Suggested Questions

HOW SHOULD WE TREAT A.A. FOUNDERS' WRITINGS
SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Questions from the Trustees Literature Committee

1. Do you think that A.A. Founders would object to or embrace revisions to their writings? If yes, why? If not, why?
2. 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?
3. What reasons would you consider for changing our Founders' writings?
4. How do you feel about changing A.A. Founders' writings to replace outdated references?
5. What suggestions do you have for preserving the Founders' writings, along with keeping pace with our current A.A. Society and its future?
6. 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.)
7. What additional ideas, thoughts or suggestions can you share about changing or not changing the Founders' writings?

**Questions from the Original Committee Consideration by the
Conference Finance Committee**

This was an EDW agenda item (equitable division of workload)

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