

TO: The World Service Conference 1988

FROM: Vince Daley, Chairperson,
It Works Ad-Hoc Committee

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It's been a long year and a long road with a lot of pressures, deadlines, and obstacles. Yet this project was a special experience for all who participated, an experience that needs to be shared as an example of what we can do together that we cannot do alone. When I say "we" I'm speaking of the Fellowship, our world service boards committees and a loving God.

Twelve months ago, at the close of last year's Conference, this seemed like an impossible mission with a great potential for disaster. There appeared to be good wisdom and spiritual guidance in the proposal that created this process but it needed to be broken down into something concrete and practical so it could be carried out. A basic plan of action was needed.

We were faced with many questions. How were we to organize and coordinate workshops on a world wide scale? How would we organize, compile, and store the material generated by our Fellowship? What kind of guidance could we provide the Fellowship on the input process of their material so we would all be working in the same direction? Could this be done in one conference year? And finally the big question that arose at the JAC meeting in June: would there be any funds to do this?

Members of the *It Works* Ad-hoc Committee began searching for cities in which to hold workshops. Regions came forward and offered assistance. And finally, through a lot of discussions with members of the BOT, BOD, World Literature Committee and *It Works* Ad-hoc Committee the big picture (as Michael and I like to call it) began to form.

The World Service Office opened up their resources and we were given the part time help of several special workers, the use of a computer and a copier. The review form draft was printed and distribution began. At every world workshop with the exception of those held in Australia and the United Kingdom we had the assistance of WSO staff and hardware. Consequently our members at the workshops could focus on the work in front of them and we were able to process a tremendous amount of material in an orderly fashion in a short period of time. The office handled the travel arrangements as there were many members to move around to many places and this committee could not have done that.

So What Did We Do?

This was truly a full fledged effort of all our service arms and boards interacting with the Fellowship. And it was good for us. The communication, hope and goodwill that was generated did much to heal old wounds and bring us together as a Fellowship. Times are changing. There were no divisive issues in this process. In this process we learned from past mistakes and successes and moved forward. And in all the cities, wherever we went, the local membership greeted us graciously and enthusiastically. They were excited at the prospect of being able to write and participate in the development of our book, eager to learn, eager to share.

World workshops were held in Baltimore, Sydney, Seattle, Dallas, Kansas City, Chicago, San Francisco, and Ft. Lauderdale. The United Kingdom held their own and provided us with excellent material. Frankfurt and Montreal had to drop out because their priority was, most importantly, literature translations. We opened the whole process up by encouraging regions to host their own workshops so that every member who wanted to participate could do so. Over a thousand members contributed written material with at least 400 to 500 members attending our world workshops. Every single piece of input we received from the Fellowship was reviewed and processed by our step groups at the workshops with two exceptions: the input from Australia and the United Kingdom was not reviewed in that manner because it was received late and is included in its entirety on the final master list of changes.

And what I hold before you is the end product, a single master list of changes that the Fellowship is basically in agreement on. It must be noted that our members apparently had no problem deciding what they wanted in our book.

What Else Happened?

This process officially introduced the use of the computer to our literature development process. In May of 1987, I had a vision of several forklifts of material being dumped in front of this conference. Today we have this (master list) a very workable organization of material with clear direction that we hope to combine into a single review form draft. Two things made this possible. The Fellowship's use of a prepared written input sheet and the use of computers. These things eliminated the possibility of a U-Haul truck full of paper that would have taken a year or two to go through.

The prepared written input sheets are important because the Fellowship, by utilizing these sheets, gave specific direction to the next group of members working on this material. The World Literature Committee is picking up on this and making it a regular part of the review process. No longer do we have to spend a half hour trying to figure out what paragraph on what page a member's input refers to, no longer do we have to look at pages of photocopied text with words and lines scratched out and substitute sentences, vaguely legible, scrawled in the margins. This saves days, weeks, years of time and eliminates many mistakes. We

recommend every literature committee have someone who can type their input on these sheets. Then send them in as you complete them.

This last year saw an addition of 100 literature committees. We are waking up as a Fellowship, realizing there's more to an Area Literature Committee than just ordering literature. We're learning that it's our responsibility at the area and regional level to provide the forum and atmosphere where our members can participate in the creation and development of our literature.

Finances

As for finances, we originally were budgeted \$30,000 which we cut to \$18,000 at the June JAC. Our actual expenses for the year are \$11,511.53. The financial costs incurred by the WSO were considerably higher. We want to thank the Fellowship for coming through with their donations. We also need to thank the many hosting areas and regions who contributed financially to the workshops, as there were times when Conference money was short or nonexistent. We did everything we could to stretch our dollars and cut corners without letting the project suffer. Many members traveled far at their personal expense to help and participate. This kind of dedication and selfless service is truly inspiring.

I've heard it said that recovery in Narcotics Anonymous is like a banquet and you can help yourself to as much of what we have to offer as you like. What I witnessed this year is that involvement in N.A. service is one of the main courses. It is not something separate from our steps and traditions, our meetings and sponsorship but ranks with them in the middle somewhere. It is not something that we should be afraid to talk about. Service is an important part of the recovery experience. Hundreds of members broke their routine this year and came together to work on our Step book. They opened up, let their walls down, took risks and formed new friendships. We were exposed to a mountain of material on our steps and walked away with better understandings and a deeper awareness of our steps and what Narcotics Anonymous is. We all got back a lot more than we gave. For a period of time, we were in touch with a world wide fellowship that lives and exists beyond our home groups and small local communities.

Anyway, we feel that, to the best of our ability, the task set before the Ad-hoc Committee *It Works* has been accomplished and recommend that the Conference dissolve this committee.

Thank you for letting me be of service.