

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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To: Regional Literature Committees

From: Mary Jensen, Chairperson
WSC Literature Committee

Date: October 11, 1991

Re: *Conference Report*

Enclosed you will find the literature portion of the *Conference Report*. Because our financial situation remains the same, I'm asking you to continue to copy reports from the WSCLC to your area literature committees. It appears that the efforts you've made in sharing literature information are working.

We appreciate your cooperation, and feel certain that this kind of interaction can only benefit the relationship between regional and area literature committees. Once again, we would like to thank you for your assistance during these times.

To: The Fellowship

From: Mary Jensen, Chairperson
WSC Literature Committee

This is proving to be a very exciting, productive year in literature. In July, I sent out an update on our literature projects, and I hope that all of you had a chance to read that report. In this communication, I will include some of the highlights from the early part of the conference year (in case some of you may not have received the previous mailing), and bring you up to date with our work.

April-July Highlights

The WSCLC Steps Ad Hoc Committee has been restructured somewhat. First, the number of members attending each meeting has been reduced from eleven (which included one rotating WSCLC member) to eight (which includes two rotating WSCLC members). In addition, there are three pool members who receive mailings and provide input to the ad hoc committee. Secondly, the WSCLC chairperson no longer chairs the ad hoc committee. Bryce Sullivan has been appointed to continue as the ad hoc committee's chairperson. This separation of leadership mirrors the difference between the WSCLC as the administrative body, and the steps ad hoc committee as the production body for this project.

It appears that not having the same person chair both groups has been a sound decision. First, it allows the WSCLC chairperson more objectivity in reviewing drafts and in making, with the literature committee, administrative decisions about the work. These decisions generally concern the production schedule, the composition of the ad hoc committee, the release of review form drafts, the review process, and the factoring of input into the drafts. The rotation of WSCLC members, including the chairperson, into the ad hoc group helps bring a fresh perspective to the work and increases our awareness of how the ad hoc committee functions. Secondly, the amount of work a literature chairperson is responsible for in any given year is tremendous; having two major projects on the "A" list increases that load. However, having trusted servants willing to accept appointments like chairing the WSCLC Steps Ad Hoc Committee, or participating on the daily book review panels has greatly assisted us in our work.

We had one ad hoc meeting during this period. The afternoon before that meeting, our primary writer resigned. We tentatively brought another writer into that weekend's meeting, and provided her with an overview of the project, our vision of the book, and the use of organizational and concept outlines developed for each step. We prepared her to write a first draft of Steps Five and Six and a third draft of Step Four.

Meanwhile, back at the daily book project: Early in the conference year, one member of our editorial staff for this project resigned from the WSO and moved out of state. This member, who had been a recent employee of the WSO, was contracted by the office to write a certain number of first-draft daily book entries. The decision to hire a contracted writer was questioned by the WSB, who recommended that her contract be terminated. Although we believe that the 1990 conference's adoption of the revised "6G" in the literature guidelines clarified this issue, we are communicating with other trusted servants involved to find the best way to resolve this issue. Discussion on this matter may need to take place at the 1992 WSC, so that we can have the benefit of further input from the fellowship.

We were fortunate to have had a workable "plan b" in place at the time of losing this writer. Our final review panel has taken on some of the editorial tasks at the third draft stage, freeing current office employees to concentrate on earlier draft generations.

Each entry goes through an exhaustive review process. Review panels, composed of WSCLC registered and general members, provide input at the first and second draft stages. The final review panel recommends changes to the editorial staff based on second draft input. The WSCLC will further revise these drafts at the November meeting, where we will be preparing the approval form of the book. The final review panel is also responsible for monitoring fellowship input from the review batches. I'll tell you more about how the final review panel uses fellowship input later in this report.

July-August work of the WSCLC Steps Project

During the August meeting of the WSCLC Steps Ad Hoc Committee, the first drafts of Steps Five and Six and the third draft of Step Four were reviewed by the committee. They were very encouraged by the work produced by the staff team between meetings. They felt that the new writer had developed the steps drafts in an organized manner that reflected their discussions of the concepts as presented in the outlines. Step Four was released to the WSCLC and the WSB for review. They also prepared the writer to generate a first draft of Steps Seven and Eight. The ad hoc committee's work is proceeding according to the schedule presented to the conference, with the exception of the preparation for drafting Step Nine. After the September steps meeting, where this work will be included, the group will be 100% on schedule.

Daily Book Project

The daily book is completely on schedule as of this date. Registered and general members have consistently sent in weekly input on batches reviewed. The amount of effort the review panels and the staff editorial team have put into this project is overwhelming. It appears that everyone associated with the project is willing to do whatever it takes to fulfill the promise we made at the conference to have this book ready for the 1992 *Conference Agenda Report* in approval form.

I have already talked a little about the three-stage review process. I'd like to tell you about how we interpret the review and input batches that we are receiving from the fellowship.

The final review panel for this project has two major functions. The first is to prepare the editorial staff for writing third drafts based on WSCLC and general literature members' input on second drafts. The second function is to monitor information from the review and input coming in from the fellowship. We keep up-to-date tallies on the questionnaire that accompanied fellowship review batches, reporting the statistics on those surveys, and alerting the editorial staff and the WSCLC when items on the survey seem to suggest that we are going in an inappropriate direction. The final review panel also makes note of general and specific comments made by reviewers. Some of these comments relate to the project as a whole (e.g., the use of the word "God") while others relate to particular wordings and concepts in individual entries. From this kind of input received in the first batch, it seems likely that some changes may need to be made to particular entries or that, in the case of one entry, a passage may need to be eliminated altogether. During the Tulsa workshop, certain decisions were made by the WSCLC that were directly related to input received from the fellowship on the first batch.

*The Tulsa Workshop
Open Forums*

We offered two open forums in Tulsa—one before we conducted business and one afterward. We did this because it has always seemed that some folks would rather share their ideas before we begin our work and others in reflection. Several general members who are helping with the daily book project were in attendance, and many of the questions and discussion from the fellowship represented concerned the daily book. An addendum which includes more specific remarks and questions raised during the open forums will be attached to our minutes.

Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous

Do you ever notice how the seemingly simple things become the most complex? Well, that's what happened with the *Introductory Guide*. We learned a valuable lesson here in how *not* to survey the fellowship and how *to* seek communication from other committees at an earlier stage of a survey's development. Let me just stress this: think carefully before ever adding a neutral category to a survey instrument. I'd *like* to say, "*Never say neutral again!*" but you'd probably get me on a "no musts" clause. In any event, neutral was our major malfunction in this case.

We spent considerable time debating how the neutral category had been interpreted. Did it mean that folks were okay going with the majority? Or did it mean that it was an abstention and should be treated as a "no?" Or was it a feeling of being okay with including that item, but not being very excited about it? The committee could not come to consensus about how to deal with this category. Mercifully, most items were clearly "yes" or "no." The muddy waters surrounded some of the personal stories.

On Friday, the committee "walked through the pain" and decided to retain the personal stories in question. This was done for two reasons. First, it was believed, at that point, that the WSC H&I Committee wanted personal stories inserted, and it is acknowledged that this inventory item will probably have a high rate of use by H&I subcommittees. Secondly, many WSCLC members believed that if we have one story to fit the needs of H&I, we'd better have a couple of others to which non-institutionalized newcomers could relate. None of us felt real good about this decision. The committee was divided on this issue, and it was clear that consensus could not be reached. Interpretation of the word "neutral" played a heavy role in this discussion.

During the question and answer period on Saturday, many questions came from participants about the inclusion of personal stories in the *Introductory Guide*. At one point, the WSC H&I chairperson was asked whether his committee wanted these stories. When he answered that the committee had not discussed the contents of the *Guide*, only the need for it, we were taken aback. Ivan, the WSC H&I chairperson, and I discussed the discrepancy in information, and he agreed to bring the *Guide* up Sunday morning during the WSC H&I Committee meeting, then come into the literature committee meeting to report. When he did so, it was clear that the WSC H&I Committee did not want the personal stories included, but did feel a need for three items that were not on the survey: the complete IP *Just for Today*, the IP *Staying Clean on the Outside*, and the IP *Recovery and Relapse*. Ivan alluded to the support of the WSC H&I Committee toward the *Guide* and their belief that it would be a highly useful publication for that committee.

After Ivan left, the committee reviewed their decision from Friday. Based on new information, we eliminated the personal stories in question, added the complete form of *Just for Today* rather than just the italicized portion, and added *Staying Clean on the Outside*. Although not listed on the survey form, these IPs had several "write-in" votes, which we believe warranted

their inclusion. However, the committee did not add *Recovery and Relapse* since it appears in the Little White Booklet.

So, this apparently simple task took on gigantic proportions in Tulsa. Our only hope is that, if given this kind of task in the future, we'll avoid the kinds of details we overlooked. We left the quarterly, however, with the feeling that we had used the survey instrument responsibly and that the contents of our new *Introductory Guide* will serve a need of our newcomers well.

The Steps Project

We were able to make more definitive statements about the relationship between the WSCLC and the WSCLC Steps Ad Hoc Committee than we have been able to make before. In reemphasizing the third-draft limitations placed on the ad hoc committee, we began to explore what that meant. After the ad hoc committee has had an opportunity to provide input on the third-draft, they will release their creative supervision of the draft to the WSCLC. The literature committee will then be responsible for factoring the input from members of the WSCLC and the WSB, and for approving the drafts before they go out for fellowship review. Members of the WSCLC and WSB will also provide conceptual input to the ad hoc committee at the first-draft stage. It is felt that this type of concept review by these two bodies at the first-draft stage will prevent the need for substantial conceptual changes in later drafts.

The WSCLC was generally very pleased with the work the ad hoc committee is doing so far this year. The first drafts of Steps Five and Six were received positively as being more organized and conceptually clear than previous first drafts they'd seen.

The Daily Book Project

Based on fellowship input on the first batch, the committee reviewed some of its decisions made last year. Although the majority of reviewers tended to be okay with the use of original quotations as leads, a significant number were opposed to anything but conference-approved literature leads. We decided to change all the original leads to conference-approved leads. Since only about two dozen original leads had been used, those entries will be distributed to review panel members who will be responsible for locating appropriate leads from conference-approved literature. In addition, no more first-person singular ("I") passages will be generated, although we will maintain the entries written so far. The total number of entries written in this voice will be about 9% when the project is completed.

A significant number of reviewers had suggested that the closing "For Today" be changed to "Just for Today," even though this question was not on the survey. The committee decided to change the closing to "Just for Today."

Some reviewers objected to the number of times the word "God" was used. The editorial staff has been directed to use the word "God" less frequently, showing preference for the phrases "Higher Power," "God of our understanding," "Power greater than ourselves," etc.

Finally, we looked at two individual entries. The first, "Recovery Gardening," elicited such a divided reception that the final review panel felt that it needed special attention. We are uncertain whether it is that specific piece or the whole category of metaphoric writing that causes reviewers to respond so positively or negatively. We decided to keep this piece for the time being, and to monitor the reception of other metaphors as the second and third batches come in from the fellowship.

The second entry is one that had made it through the second-draft stage and, if we went strictly by the numbers, would have made it through the third-draft stage. There were a significant

number of registered and general literature committee members, however, who felt that this piece may jeopardize the book. It is a humorous entry written for April 1st. Although most committee members like the piece, we decided to reject it for the daily book both because of its bizarre form of humor and because we questioned how widespread the celebration of April Fool's Day is throughout our world-wide fellowship.

The Revisions and Evaluations Subcommittees

The WSCLC Revisions and Evaluations Subcommittees met on Saturday. The revisions subcommittee looked at the input from literature committees about the IPs we currently have on our tables. They were assisted in this task by several general members. Each working group studied the surveys submitted by regional and area literature subcommittees last year. Based on this work, the revisions subcommittee is prepared to make recommendations based on that input as to which I.P.s need revision and what the priority for revising them seems to be.

The evaluations subcommittee looked at the projects on our "C" and "D" lists, and are prepared to recommend where those items should be placed on our working lists next year. We had received a letter requesting that all of the *History of NA* source material be sent to the chairperson of a group working outside of the service structure. The evaluations subcommittee discussed this kind of request and agreed with the content of a letter I sent refusing the release of that source material. Reports from these two subcommittees will be given at the November meeting of the WSCLC.

WSCLC November Meeting

We have scheduled a four-day meeting for November 21-24 in Van Nuys. During this meeting, we will need to make final edits on the daily book and sequence the entries, factor WSCLC and WSB input on Steps One-Six into the drafts, finalize our work lists for next year, and prepare any motions we will want to include in the 1992 *Conference Agenda Report*. Coming out of that meeting, we should have an approval form of the daily book and a staff team prepared to make final edits to the first six step drafts. We intend to release these drafts to the fellowship by the end of December.

Final Thoughts

I just want to say here that the spirit of cooperation and unity was strong at the quarterly workshop. Not only were the general literature members "hanging in there" with us, but it seemed that was happening all around. The opportunity to work with WSC H&I (though belatedly) on an assignment was something we intend to do more of--not just with WSC H&I, but with the other boards and committees as well. Communication and interaction is becoming increasingly necessary among all participants in service. It's exciting to be here when people are openly seeking information, guidance, and hope from each other.

We want to thank you for providing us with input on the steps and daily book projects. Please continue to let us know your perceptions of the work, and realize that your reviews provide guidance for us as we continue to develop these two books.

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