

World Service Conference Report

World Service Conference Literature Committee

I first would like to acknowledge and extend the committee's gratitude to the members of our fellowship who as individuals, groups, and area and regional literature committees worked on the review and input for the first four Step Working Guides. Once again, you are showing this addict that "together we can." Thank you.

Our committee has already met twice, and as this March report goes to print we will be meeting a third time. The Step Working Guides core group, our small work group, also met twice this conference year. At our March meeting, the committee expects to review and input the first drafts of Steps Five through Eight as well as review the input we've received on the first four steps. When the next set of drafts is ready for fellowship review and input, we certainly hope for the same commitment as was given to the first set of step drafts. More information about the input we received and the next set of drafts will be available in the report we'll be sending you after our meeting.

You will notice the WSC Literature Committee's motion (#10) for approval of our "A" worklist in the *1997 Conference Agenda Report*. In order to continue our work, we must resubmit our work list each year for approval. Although both the Step Working Guides and the Sponsorship Booklet are on the list, the finances and resources of world services will only accommodate work on the Step Working Guides project. Our plans for this next year include one core group meeting and two full committee meetings. This should enable us to have the final approval draft of the Step Working Guides ready at least ninety days before the 1998 WSC, as mandated by both WSC and WSCLC policy.

As previously reported, the WSCLC has been soliciting input about the personal stories section of the Basic Text, but to date we haven't received any. By an informal straw poll, the committee gathered a consensus opinion that any collection of stories, whether for inclusion in the Basic Text or as a stand-alone book, should be comprised of recovery stories from our worldwide fellowship. We would like the collection to include personal stories from as many nations, cultures, and languages as possible. We still would like you to share your ideas about other options, so please let us hear from you.

Finally, I have a personal recommendation; although it does not come from the WSCLC, I still believe it deserves consideration and discussion. Throughout the seven years during which I have been involved with the Literature Committee, I have had many members of the fellowship speak to me about two topics of great importance to them: sponsorship and

service. Drawing on their input, I have thought about a variety of ways in which we could respond to their desires. I have also advanced my idea to other NA members for their advice and feedback.

My proposal is this: When the moratorium on changes to the Basic Text expires, new chapters on sponsorship and service should be developed and added to the Basic Text. This is not a new idea; in years past, at least two regions have made similar proposals. At WSC'95, the Connecticut Region proposed an additional chapter on sponsorship. Prior to that, the United Kingdom Regional Literature Committee proposed a chapter on service. The UK RLC even submitted an original draft as initial material.

By the time the moratorium expires, it will have been ten years (two moratorium periods of five years each) since any improvements have been made to the Basic Text. I've understood the need for the two moratoriums. We had gone through six changes in the Basic Text in the six years between the book's initial approval in 1982 and the creation of the Fifth Edition in 1988, and we needed a break. By the time the moratorium is over, we will have had a break of ten years; then, I believe, it will be time to move forward again. I want to emphasize that I am not advocating changes to the existing narrative in the Basic Text; I am simply advocating the addition of two new chapters.

Like some members, my first reaction to any proposal for more changes to the Basic Text has been a negative one. However, one particular member said to me, "Jorge, the Basic Text we use today, the Fifth Edition, is not a historical document; it is a tool we use that teaches and guides us. We should all want that tool to be developed to its fullest potential. The only 'historical version' of the Basic Text is our First Edition." His statement, along with my personal experiences, led me to put forth this proposal.

It is my understanding that the moratorium ends at the beginning of the 1998 World Service Conference. Even though we are a year away from the end of the moratorium, it would naturally take a few years to actually get to the stage where we could add new chapters. Our fellowship always desires the opportunity to discuss and determine the direction for the development of our recovery material in advance. Instead of waiting until the 1998 WSC, we can use this time to see what our fellowship says. I believe it is time to act on these ideas, and I appreciate the opportunity to present them to you.

Once again, I would like to thank every member who has contributed his or her time and energy this past conference year. Our love for NA shines through our work. Thank you all.

Love and peace,

Jorge Blanco, Chairperson