

**ACA WSO Literature Committee Quarterly Meeting
July 17, 2016**

Attendees:

Larry
Toni
Laura
Patti
Melanie
Greg
Robin
Marietta
Mardi
Toni
Anna
Precious
Mardi
Charlie

Begin with serenity prayer.

The purpose of the meeting is to cover all aspects of literature and how processes are working out in general:

- ComLine
- Translation
- Literature Review

Laura from the delegate training subcommittee wants a co-chair to write an article for the delegate's corner for August. She has a 2-page draft of an article on the balloting process and would like to publish it in the *ComLine*. Tom R and Laura have for articles for ABC edition.

Robin noted the deadline for 4th quarter ComLine is July 31. September 1 is the release date for this issue. Be sure to send ComLine articles to litstaff@adultchildren.org

Translations

Anna mentioned updates regarding Polish. The Poles don't have a defined structure or fellowship even though there are large numbers of meetings. They have one intergroup for Poland and Polish speakers. They use translations during meetings.

The Polish-speaking community has a big challenge. Though they try to use translated literature, translating the literature is a slow process. In Poland, the sponsorship model is patterned after AA, which is not healthy for adult children.

Within the Polish fellowship and in London, AA members attend ACA meetings and offer sponsorship. Unfortunately in Poland it's split. There are many ACAs in Poland using AA model – they don't use ACA literature, suggestions, tools. They have to read and follow AA precepts. They have the style of sponsorship similar to AA, and they work with the AA BRB. This is a difficult situation. Some members who are more familiar with the AA program are divided about inner child work because they are not comfortable with it, claiming it is therapy.

There is a very strong influence from therapists who introduce large amounts of group therapy. Quite often meetings use a therapeutic type of literature. Polish adult children did not know about WSO, or the red book or Tony A. Many discover this only by chance.

The Polish ACA community in London started using literature and translating into Polish. They also have a sponsorship program. For 30 years in Polish meetings had no ACA literature.

Polish ACA is old, yet also very young regarding its connection with WSO. The Polish ACA community needs time to introduce tools and inner child work. They also need some sort of support to help adult children realize the AA model can be harmful and not working well with recovery; and perhaps we could slowly change into ACA mode.

Melanie mentioned that with international members sponsorship can be altogether different. Some are extremely passionate about not using fellow traveler model, and preferred using the sponsor model. There is potential for harm because the sponsorship model implies an authoritarian relationship. It's a bigger problem than just in Poland.

Greg mentioned having a small but growing bilingual group, with some members who only speak Spanish. They are trying to translate some of the smaller pieces into the local Spanish. One item he's not sure about – Lit Dev Policy – how do we bring these into ACA? The Spanish people speak down here is different from European Spanish.

Larry noted that Spanish is the second most spoken language in the world. (Spanish is also the third most commonly used language on the internet). There more than 20 Spanish locales: Spanish as spoken in Mexico, Argentina, Panama, Venezuela, and so on. Even Texas has its own Spanish. The original ACA volunteer Spanish translators used traditional, or Castilian Spanish, which is used primarily in Spain. We are attempting to use International Spanish for ACA translations, and are building a glossary for Spanish translators. This will take time and patience.

Regarding sponsorship: it might be a good idea to go online and find a sponsor. Many adult children sponsor one another via skype and email around the world. This would be a good subtopic of a future *ComLine*, and can be a way of getting a sense of how adult children around the world are finding sponsors.

We can make a future *ComLine* focused on this topic. We can reach out to translation groups regarding sponsorship and challenges they are facing. There are other people in other countries experiencing various dynamics. We can turn our attention towards the communication gap and bridge it.

There is a section on our website called best practices:

<http://www.meetings.adultchildren.org/best-practices>

Larry suggested that Anna could enter the challenges faced by the ACA Polish community in the best practices section. Perhaps others could read this, and some who see this might find the information useful.

Melanie said Moscow has requested a speaker meeting from someone in the United States. That may be a way to help this along too. Perhaps there is a meeting where Anna could have someone from the outside talk on this subject -- a speaker meeting via telephone or Skype.. There may be many people willing to step up and speak from this point of view.

Larry responded that it is a great idea to try to have some kind of meeting where people can hear this. But it seems like it needs to be home-grown. The literature committee we would like to support Anna as much as possible. If you have translated materials you want printed and distributed, let us know. If you choose, you can publish in the *ComLine* in Polish/English or in Polish only. Tell the literature committee if you need the sponsorship trifold translated. Whatever is most convenient and most effective, please let us know and we will do what we can to help.

Anna replied there are plenty of Polish speaking people in United States. They could share their experience in Polish. If we could record it and if someone could write it -- this would be useful because we don't have experienced speakers in Polish ACA. We don't have people who have enough experience to share because of the varied numbers of people.

Laura and Tom are looking to have a delegate's corner in the *ComLine*. They want to put together some articles to publish. If possible, they would like to see the articles in the ABC *ComLine*, and in the subsequent edition that comes out in the fall.

Greg made a point about Spanish translation for people in Texas who don't speak European-style Spanish.

Larry said we have a liaison for Spanish literature. We also have translation of all ACA trifolds and all ACA booklets. Adult children in Panama sent a completed translation of the meditations book, *Strengthening My Recovery*, and another group is working on the Spanish translation of *The Laundry Lists Workbook*. The BRB (Big Red Book / Fellowship text) is a few chapters short of being finished.

We need Spanish-speaking volunteers to take our traditional Castilian Spanish translations and revise them to International Spanish. If your groups' Spanish speakers are conversant w the workbook and want to volunteer to work with international Spanish, we can use their help. Give them the litstaff email address: litstaff@adultchildren.com. Robin will forward to chair of committee to move those things along.

We have a lot on our website that is in Spanish, and the literature committee policy does allow translations that have not been published. We do give a limited amount of literature for meeting use. The amount of literature we can give for free is limited because of copyright protection issues.

There seems to be a cultural challenge – Al-anon people showing up at ACA meetings. Literature seems to be the binary issue. One woman trying to put this together is working very hard.

ComLine

Mardi shared her experience as new editor of the *ComLine* newsletter. She said it's a learning curve, she and appreciates the help she's receiving. She would like for member to share stories that are 600 words or fewer. Mardi is grateful for the program, and felt for a long time that the should step up and perform this service for ACA. Larry thanked her for her service and reminded her that the learning curve would be pushed up a notch. Fortunately, we have Patti as a backup and Robin for support.

Literature Review Subcommittee

Charles is chairing this subcommittee; there are approximately 15-16 pieces up for review in his roster. There are five members of this subcommittee, and Charlie will welcome new volunteers. Their task is to evaluate submissions from the fellowship as opposed to projects initiated by the board.

They have had two meetings to date. Their first efforts are focused on “Ready, Set, Go” – the RSG – Chicago / AA-based back-to basics program. They are finalizing their actual report, and will have an evaluation in approximately 3 weeks for the membership to review. They now have full copies of all the documents. Their agenda is to finalize the report on “Ready, Set Go”, and then parcel out the remaining shorter, less involved documents. They are identifying pairs of volunteers who can work through the remaining documents.

The literature development process has been of great help in guiding them. They have a battery of 11 questions they can ask regarding any piece, and they have a consistent process to determine if and/or how a literature piece works into the fellowship's sense of literature where within the range (newcomer, etc.) any particular piece would best fit as being fair and forwarding the message of ACA.

They have a need for more volunteers.

Toni expressed concerns about Ready, Set Go, and is anxious about how RSG RSG is being used by people in the fellowship. She is concerned that it's being mishandled and feels at a loss as to what to do.

Larry made three points:

1. This piece was originally to go through the Literature Committee. The Downer's group wanted RSG to be approved as a standalone without any edits. The Literature Committee put it on the website for fellowship review. Downer's group still has the copyright and has as much right to enforce their copyright.
2. Regarding copyrights, Charlie has five people to review RSG as it was presented to Literature Committee. We are thinking of its final form. If there are changes being made, Charlie needs to review it as the Downer's group is publishing it. It's similar to something done in AA for awhile, which was republished. We need to be very clear that there will be no assertion of copyright infringement.
3. Copyright issues are a very interesting premise. People make take something off our site and use it. Once we put it on our site as literature we reach a different audience -- we reach an international audience. If literature is approved by WSO, then there will be a different audience. Copyright infringements may be much more important in the future.

Toni wants to turn RSG over to the WSO to go through the evaluation process.

Larry emphasized the Operating Policy and Procedures Manual (OPPM). If a group offers a piece of literature, the only thing the Literature Committee can do is either publish as-is, put it through process. Go back to group and say we'd like to change...and get group's approval. Then the Literature Committee has to decide whether to publish as is or take it as official literature.

Regarding how people use a piece that has been put forward to the public, it is best to let go and let God. Sometimes letting go and letting God doesn't mean a group presenting literature gives reviewers people a pass. In the 11th step you may find you need to stand up for yourself. WSO does not get involved in public controversy.

Any of the others on the call have advice for Toni regarding hijacked literature?

Precious mentioned the 4th step and schematics that have been presented at the convention site that are not fully approved. She's contended with this because why break up a piece that's working? She's tried to change meetings that use pieces of those documents, but don't change. She quit using RSG. She couldn't get into RSG and was ready to let go. She wanted to take it over. She wanted to insert herself into that and thus needed to free herself from that. So she can focus on herself. I wouldn't use it. I would not vote for that document to be folded in or recognized.

Larry said he circulated a draft of RSG at meeting he's attended. A fellow traveler took a copy, and was in a space where RSG really resonated with him. Some people have positive experiences; others don't. Some people use literature in ways not as intended. That happens with every piece of literature. The copy of the RSG on the site is not the finalized copy that the Downer's group submitted. It has undergone changes, one of which is to suggest participants attend six ACA meetings before engaging with Ready, Set Go.

Literature Development Policy Statement

There is an increasing amount of interest from the fellowship on how literature is created. That is why we drafted the Literature Development Policy Statement.

We need to look at/review/adopt/make changes to the Literature Development Policy Statement. How many have reviewed it? Laura, Greg, Melanie, Charlie, Marietta

Greg I thought the Literature Development Policy Statement was good to have something cohesive that a group in particular can understand what goes on, and to give everybody an idea for the formality of this process.

There are some things – a small section missing (a miracle happens here) in regard with the review cycle. The groups need at least 90 days to review and comment on all this literature. That should be part of this policy presentation. The Literature Committee could determine the length of time to adjudicate comments -- incorporate comments or not – all done in time sufficient before ABC. One of the deficiencies is that we there are psychology/psychiatry experts with different viewpoints, and inconsistencies with presentation in BRB. Sometimes a spiritual program takes a back seat to self-help. Would like to see a back & forth process with literature review. Marietta agreed wholeheartedly.

Regarding literature review/approval process, Larry said we receive a literature piece from a group who wants it published. We send the piece to the board. It then goes to ABC. ABC requires it to be posted three months for fellowship input. Comments are received and put into action or not, and explanations/rationales ensue. A back and forth process would stretch things out too far.

Greg asked, while it may stretch things too far, what is it that constitutes approval of fellowship for publication of document? Greg gave an example of a hypothetical process and asked where responsibility for approval lies.

Larry clarified the approval process: ABC approves a specimen of what's being put forward in principle. Comments by the fellowship that are consistent with the project are then forwarded by the Literature Committee. The ABC does not review an entire piece. For example, the Literature Committee can review comments for updating the Workbook, and then issue a second edition. Once approved by ABC in principle, the Literature Committee can re-evaluate and correct for clarity and consistency.

The ABC receives a very good draft. In principle we adopt it, but fellowship comments should still be received and incorporated. The body can review for a second edition.

Laura asked about the second section – the literature core – is there another policy statement called the literature core?

Three years ago Larry reached out to initial writer of ACA literature, who is a world class researcher, and an expert in trauma recovery. It would be helpful if we had a core document that could be used by Literature Committee members to understand the full breadth, length and depth of ACA recovery. This researcher provided a document. However, he feels it's not final, and he thinks it needs a final review. He wants to ensure it's a core document that we can use to see where in the overarching picture where the ACA literature does fall. This document is not for publication; it is only for our internal use.

Greg remarked it would it make sense that a literature piece is developed by a group or developed internally. The board decides if they want to bring it to the ABC. If they do, it will be as a good specimen, asking the delegates if it should be put forward to the fellowship to receive comments to incorporate or not as favorable to the message of recovery.

Greg: concerned about how review is documented – psychology review.

Larry: one thing we should know our initial writer of ACA literature contacted a trauma recovery specialist –Earnie Larsen – and got his input. This planted the seeds for The Other Laundry List.

The Literature Committee has its own conscience, and we are a collection of adult children experts. What we don't know is what mental health professionals are thinking. A mental health advisory committee would not have the same influential weight, but we should invite them to review literature we are presenting. Mental health professionals would be purely advisory. It would healthy for ACA as a general practice – whether we

developing literature or working with finance – we might benefit from sound advice from professionals to tell us if we are walking on thin ice.

Anna sometimes felt while translating literature into Polish, it's almost like a psychology text, which feels confused with the program. The ACA Steps vs Tony's steps. How do we do the steps, and what's in the book? English speaking meetings often criticize character defects; basically now like spiritual, psychology, Tony steps. This can be quite confusing to the newcomer.

Larry emphasized the core piece is not written for lay people, and as such would not be received well by the community/fellowship. Psychological components, individual shares and the Tony A perspective were consolidated into our literature. Over the next 3-5 years we should disentangle from this.

Melanie asked about the Tony A speech from 1991, and why it's no longer accessible. It is on the internet , but not on the WSO website.

WSO did not have a copyright release to put any Tony A recordings on our website. This is not a disparagement about Tony A. and his steps. Use Tony A's steps and ACA steps for integration.

The literature core – our internal document – this is titled the Schematicized Recovery Packet. Though we do not distribute it, this information is publicly available on the on the convention site where Tony A's recordings reside. It is not confirmed that the convention site has copyright releases.

Anna said she contacted Tony's widow for permission to translate Tony's book. It's now only available in English on Kindle.

Patti asked if there was an advisory committee on *The Laundry Lists Workbook*. It's an excellent book and her group is on trait 14. It's a wonderful book ad she and thought maybe we had used an advisory committee. She can't wait to see what the next workbook will be.

Larry confirmed that Marty S. was an advisor for *The Laundry Lists Workbook*.

Charlie said the literature development policy statement was helpful to the review subcommittee. He presented two thoughts. They have developed criteria that they are using to evaluate proposals. He asked, 1) is there a relatively simple statement covering these criteria – something to help people know what we have and what we need? And 2) a possible way of dealing with this – can we ask the fellowship to submit comments several months before ABC? Perhaps have an open comment phone meeting to allow for back & forth discussion?

Larry said we could do both. Have an open meeting in January, then have town hall. Then take to ABC. Then we would open to second period of commentary.

Greg stated his own experience with town halls has not been great. We could have no response; we could be faced with filibusters; we could receive overwhelming response. There's the issue on how to manage it. Greg prefers a written query and response process – a verbal discussion could get out of hand.

Larry said we could marry the two ideas. How about if we go through the process we have now, but after the WSO decides to put a literature piece forward for commentary, we publish all comments as accepted/rejected. *Then* have a town hall.

On any issue, we're going to have a lot of differing opinions, and every opinion will be endorsed. As a committee, we're not diminishing any one person, we're saying as regards to a particular *project* we decline to follow this idea. We will decline as lovingly and gently as we can. Some will be disappointed because not everyone will be pleased.

Larry will revise the Literature Development Policy Statement to incorporate Charlie's criteria.

Almost all changes proffered in LLWB were accepted and those who offered suggestions saw their input in the text. One or two said the entire project should be abandoned. This also happened with the meditation book. We rejected that premise of abandoning the project, and offered instead to open it as special project. The space was offered for this, and the project objective was spelled out before the project was started.

We would like to establish an advisory subcommittee: invite a professional in the field to have a rapport with. Tian Dayton has written extensively on adult children, trauma, and addictive behaviors. Larry will ask her if she'd be open to the possibility of being an advisory person to chat with us.

Several welcome this idea. Historically we've always had our work informed. Many of us have read Tian's work and understand it. There is a sense that we were still examining that while developing the BRB, and trauma work is not fully integrated with BRB. Tian's work could greatly help us. There are others in that same realm, some of whose work is cited – Sharon Cruise for one. We should avoid a too-narrow focus, and look to have several people on the advisory board so we have varied perspective. And to recall it is an *advisory* board.

If you know of someone's professional background or authorship that would add to this group's ability to deal with literature and see if they can help us ensure this literature is as great as it can be, tell us who they are. We'll make an effort to get these people to help us. The Literature Committee will send out an email. Possibly give 15 minutes each quarterly meeting to each professional. Larry will reach out to Tian and Marty S.

There is no connection between WSO and Tony A's widow. If you would like to contact Tony A's widow regarding translating Tony's book, email particulars to litstaff@adultchildren.org.

Close with Serenity Prayer

Respectfully,

Larry A., Literature Chair

Robin R. Literature Staff