

## 2019 ABC Ballot for Adult Children of Alcoholics

**Proposal 2019 – 1** Submitted on October 25, 2018 by OR0124, Lake Oswego, Oregon

**Issue:** We propose that . . . Expand language in BRB to include all concepts of spirituality

**History/Reasoning:** We perceive that the possible influence of the Oxford group’s Christian foundations (from AA’s origins) has also filtered down into our literature. Of course, there are ACA members who may find this acceptable and familiar. However, there are many ACA members who do not hold these specific beliefs, and so find the Christian assumption divisive to a broader membership and appear less than openly welcoming for those with a different (other than Christian) concept of a Higher Power.

**Argument in Favor:** We propose utilizing language which includes all concepts of spirituality, higher power and God and which would exclude none: throughout the big red book (including Step One and “the Solution”) are pronouns which imply implicitly or state explicitly that God/Higher Power is a person and often even specifically implies the male gender. We propose removing all pronouns that anthropomorphize Higher Power within the text written by the authors of the BRB. This Proposal excludes the personal stories many of which also anthropomorphize Higher Power or God (as an individual preference). We propose the following change to the BRB to increase the appeal of ACA to a broader membership base.

**WSO Analysis:** There is already a conscious effort being made by the WSO Literature Committee to be more inclusive. Starting with the publication our own ACA WSO meditation book, Strengthening My Recovery, we have used the term Higher Power almost exclusively. We will continue to do so as the most reasonable way of being inclusive of all beliefs. This will be the same when a revision of the BRB is done in the future. Because WSO is already working on this, and because time at the ABC is scarce, if this Proposal is approved for the ABC agenda, WSO recommends an expedited discussion and vote of support.

*If this Proposal receives a two-thirds yes vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.*

**Proposal 2019 – 2** Submitted on November 6, 2018 by NY109, Brooklyn, New York

**Issue:** We propose that . . . the ACA Bill of Rights become official ACA literature.

**History/Reasoning:** The Bill of Rights is a piece of literature commonly read in meetings and in New York, on the West Coast, and elsewhere. Many “old-timers” who have had decades in recovery recall that in the earliest days of the program, before so much literature had been formalized and published (such as the Big Red Book, the Daily Affirmations, etc.) early meetings read the original Laundry List and the Bill of Rights, and that was it. And yet the Bill of Rights has never been officially acknowledged as program literature. Although there are at least two, slightly different versions of the Bill of Rights that have been handed down over the years, we have identified the version that we believe is clearest and that has resonated the most with our members. We are happy to share this with the committee upon request but do the Proposal word limit, we have not included it here.

**Argument in Favor:** In addition to being a foundational piece of ACA literature, the Bill of Rights offers, in clear, direct, accessible language, guidelines for helping the adult child establish autonomy and basic boundaries in the day-to-day management of her recovery. Many members read the Bill of Rights every day as part of their daily affirmations; others have carried a copy with them in their purse or wallet for years. It is perhaps an especially useful piece of literature for beginners, though its message can resonate at any stage of recovery. One common attribute of adult children is feeling ill-equipped to handle the demands of our adult lives, having been raised to ignore and to denigrate our own needs as unworthy. In such simple

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statements as “I have a right to say ‘no’ without feeling guilty” or, “I have the right to change my mind”, the Bill of Rights provides simple, straightforward affirmations for alleviating the adult child of the guilt and shame that can accompany our efforts to focus on our own needs, our own recovery, and ultimately our own spiritual journey. While something similar to the Bill of Rights appears in the Big Red Book (pgs. 329-330), we feel that it does not fully embody the breadth and gentleness found in this original document, and, moreover, that the value of this historic piece of literature deserves to be acknowledged and preserved, so that it then might be more consistently available to those in need.

**WSO Analysis:** This is already on the Literature Committee’s project list as a result of discussions that followed the 2018 ABC and AWC. A Bill of Rights will be an important, empowering document for adult children, who often are conditioned to feel “less than.” Rather than use an existing one that is of unknown origin, WSO has begun forming a team to create our own that reflects a cross section of fellowship perspectives. We plan to have something ready for submission by the 2020 ABC. All ACA members, including the authors of this Proposal, are invited to join this effort. Because WSO already is working on this, and because time at the ABC is scarce, if this measure is approved for the ABC agenda, WSO recommends an expedited discussion and vote of support for the creation of our own original Bill of Rights rather than something from an unknown source.

*If this Proposal receives a two-thirds yes vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.*

**Proposal 2019 – 3** Submitted on November 20, 2018 by UT0038, Park City, Utah

**Issue:** We propose that . . . Change Organization Name from ACA to ACDF

**History/Reasoning:** see below

**Argument in Favor:** To more accurately define the ACA organization, we propose to change the organization name from “Adult Children of Alcoholics” (ACA) to “Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families” (ACDF). The reality is that Adult Children of Alcoholics is a subset of the membership that includes Adult Children from all forms of Family Dysfunction. All organization materials should be universally changed from ACA to ACDF. The reason for this change would be to clarify the true identity of the organization, which is defined on the ACA website as “a fellowship of recovering people that includes adult children of alcoholics, codependents, and addicts of various sorts.” It appears that the name “Adult Children of Alcoholics” is a vestige left over from being originally formed as an offshoot of the original 12 Step program AL-Ateen. Societal changes would suggest that the name be updated to reflect the current state of our society and be more inclusive given the current types of family dysfunction prevalent today. The name “Adult Children of Alcoholics” may inadvertently deter some individuals needing support from attending due to the implication derived from the name that this organization is only for those who come from dysfunctional alcoholic family environments. As defined by King University Online: “A dysfunctional family is one in which conflict and instability are common. Parents might abuse or neglect their children, and other family members are often forced to accommodate and enable negative behavior. In some cases, dysfunctional families can be the result of addiction, codependency, or untreated mental illness.” If it is the intent of the organization to provide resources for recovery to the most people possible, than a more accurate and inclusive organization name would better serve that goal.

**WSO Analysis:** While ensuring that people know that our fellowship includes dysfunctional families is vitally important, WSO does not believe this name change is necessarily appropriate, both logistically and financially. It would require us to abandon our ACA logo, which is becoming more and more recognizable

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around the world. Plus, we believe we can be inclusive in other ways, which World Service is already working on. This includes both in our literature and our public service announcements.

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**Proposal 2019 – 4** Submitted on November 22, 2018 by KS023, Pittsburg, Kansas

**Issue:** We propose that . . . the Newcomer Booklet be modified so that all the text in it, be inclusive of adult children raised in alcoholic homes and homes where there was no alcohol.

**History/Reasoning:** a. When a newcomer came to our meeting and the Identity Papers were being read, they never returned because no matter what else was said in the meeting, alcohol was not in their childhood and the member needing identification, didn't find it. b. As it is now, the Identity Papers section of the Newcomer Booklet does not mention adults who were raised in dysfunctional families. The Identity Papers are copywritten, and can't be altered. There is an asterisk explaining all this, but we believe that the Newcomer should hear an inclusive message without having to investigate an asterisk. There is a booklet that people can buy which includes the Identity Papers in full, so the Newcomer Booklet, need not include a portion of the Identity Papers, in our opinion. c. We've rewritten that particular section replacing the Identity Papers section with ACA literature, aimed at Newcomers to ACA. The selected literature is fully inclusive of adults who were raised in alcoholic/dysfunctional families.

**Argument in Favor:** By the time an adult child comes to ACA, they may have sought out other 12 step programs that didn't address their childhood effects. Maybe they read self-help books that helped a little bit. Or a meeting they attended where they had to change wording here and there because it wasn't written for them. Never feeling like they're in the right place for help, is very common. But when they walk into ACA for the first time, they are seeking identification so that they feel they finally fit somewhere, and that they can recover in ACA. Most adult children don't have a book when they walk in the door and if they read the Newcomer Booklet, they will not get the full truth about the program and how they can find recovery. When the adult child walks in the first time of their life, it's a pretty important time that ACA "gets it right" with wording that is clearly telling them that ALL can belong in ACA, and ALL can recover in ACA, whether alcohol was a part of their childhood or not. That's why we believe this change should be made. We also corrected some typos in the Solution and we updated the Eleventh Tradition. We have a document to offer to the fellowship for review.

**WSO Analysis:** WSO is currently ensuring that new literature is inclusive of language that makes it clear that we are a fellowship for those raised in all types of dysfunctional homes. The Literature Committee is mindful of this with any rewrites that are currently happening and are contemplated, which includes the Newcomers booklet. As our Newcomer Booklet is the first piece of ACA Literature many see, this change can be adopted for future printings with little difficulty. Past printings will retain the Identity Paper language. Because WSO is already working on this, and because time at the ABC is scarce, if this Proposal is approved for the ABC agenda, WSO recommends an expedited discussion and vote of support.

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**Proposal 2019 – 5** Submitted on November 24, 2018 by IL203, Chicago, Illinois

**Issue:** We propose . . . a change to the wording of Step 5 as follows: Admitted to our Higher Power, to ourselves and to another human being our own role in the dysfunction in our lives.

**History/Reasoning:** We are grateful for the Steps of AA that ACA has adapted. However, we feel that some of the wording applies to an entirely different group of people. Many ACAs find the original wording—the exact nature of our wrongs—to sound punitive and problematic. We were too often made to feel that there was something wrong with us - that we were defective – that we were bad or worthless and that the alcoholic/dysfunctional behavior was somehow our fault. We came to believe this was true about ourselves. Referring to “our wrongs” can trigger intense shame in many of us, and can serve as an obstacle to our healthy recovery.

**Argument in Favor:** We believe the proposed wording enables us to take a gentler, more nurturing and compassionate approach to the 5th Step that is an outcome of the blameless inventory of Step 4. This suggested wording casts us neither in the role of victim nor perpetrator. It allows us to come to terms with the circumstances of our upbringing as well as allowing for our own accountability for any role we had in repeating behaviors learned in our families of origin. Our literature supports this perspective, encouraging us to examine our history and our own role without “the shame and blame that are carryovers from the past.”

**WSO Analysis:** While the WSO appreciates the effort behind this Proposal, it is important to understand that ACA exists within a larger world of 12-Step programs and that there may be unforeseen consequences of straying too far from the parameters of the original 12 Steps of AA. While we recognize the merits of being able, over time, to finely tune a lot of the language of our program to better reflect and offer recovery to our membership, WSO does not recommend changing one Step in this manner as it may lead to further attempts to change the steps. New publications under development will more clearly explain how adult children may think of the Steps in ways that place greater emphasis on self-love.

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**Proposal 2019 – 6** Submitted on November 28, 2018 by the WSO Board of Trustees

**Issue:** We propose . . . the following vision statement for ACA Fellowship: “We are whole and free of dysfunction.”

**History/Reasoning:** In October of 2017 the Board of Trustees participated in a Strategic Planning meeting to bring together the needs of the rapidly growing ACA fellowship and focus our efforts on those we decided were the most important. As a working board comprised of volunteers, it was necessary to know our direction so all could get behind the work needing to be accomplished in the next year. As part of this process, we developed a vision statement for ACA that could clearly direct our mission.

**Argument in Favor:** There is currently no vision statement for the ACA Fellowship. Having a vision statement will keep our organization focused and allow us to easily explain the outcome of membership.

**WSO Analysis:** The Ballot Prep Committee believes this Proposal merits discussion at the ABC. We believe the time is right for our fellowship to claim its vision: for its organizational aspirations; for its declaration to society; and, most importantly, for its dedication and inspiration to every member.

*If this Proposal receives a two-thirds yes vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.*

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**Proposal 2019 – 7** Submitted on November 28, 2018 by the WSO Board of Trustees

**Issue:** We propose that . . . the following mission statement be accepted for the Fellowship: “ACA creates a safe, welcoming fellowship for those who suffer from childhood trauma, giving them the tools to heal.”

**History/Reasoning:** In October of 2017 the Board participated in a Strategic Planning meeting to bring together the needs of the rapidly growing ACA fellowship and focus our efforts on those we decided were the most important. As a working board comprised of volunteers, it was necessary to know our direction so all could get behind the work needing to be accomplished in the next year. As part of this process, we developed a mission statement for the ACA Fellowship that expresses, in practical terms, the mission of the ACA Fellowship.

**Argument in Favor:** The ACA Fellowship currently has no designated Mission Statement, but various “purpose” statements, or statements about “the mission of ACA” exist on documents: these are not uniform. The following is from the OPPM: The sole purpose of the Adult Children of Alcoholics World Service Organization (ACA WSO) is to serve the Fellowship of Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA). It is an agency created and now designated by the fellowship of ACA to maintain service for those who might be seeking, through ACA, the means for recovering from being raised in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional home, through sharing information and experiences with one another and by applying to their own lives, in whole or in part, the Twelve Steps, which constitute the recovery program upon which ACA is founded. (See Bylaw II) The ACA WSO shall do this by using the 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts of Service in its deliberations and decision-making process and use its best efforts to ensure that the traditions are maintained throughout the fellowship. The Bylaws state: The sole purpose is to serve the fellowship of Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA) by maintaining service for those who might be seeking, through ACA, the means for recovering from being raised in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional home. To achieve its purpose, ACA WSO shall provide public information, meeting locations, educational material and such other services as may be deemed necessary; to organize and provide support service to those Meetings, Intergroups, and Regions that are registered with ACA WSO and are guided by the Twelve Steps and follow the Twelve Traditions of ACA. The organization will convene an annual conference where consideration regarding the business of ACA WSO occurs and priorities for the coming year are discussed and implemented when/where feasible. A mission statement should be less than 20 words that clearly state our mission in simple language. The OPPM and Bylaw Statements of Purpose above are longer, more formal, and less warm in tone, which makes sense because of the documents for which they were prepared. The proposed Mission Statement uses simple language to convey concrete actions that will bring about our proposed Vision.

**WSO Analysis:** The Ballot Prep Committee believes this Proposal merits discussion at the ABC. Referred to as a creed or statement of corporate philosophy, a mission statement is an overarching organizational purpose. A mission statement reflects the values and beliefs of the organization and reminds its members of its reason for being.

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**Proposal 2019 – 8** Submitted on November 28, 2018 by IG650, Southeast Florida

**Issue:** This proposition requests consideration for changing the name of Adult Children of Alcoholics to Adult Children Anonymous.

**History/Reasoning:** See below

**Argument in Favor:** The primary reason for this change is that the present name of our organization is inaccurate. We are a program that serves all forms of dysfunction rather than just issues related to alcoholism. The elimination of the term “alcoholism” and replacing it with the term “anonymous” is more inclusive and will enable us to reach more struggling fellow travelers. As it stands now many people would not know that our program is a place of hope for them. Any efforts on our behalf to strengthen exclusion should be strongly considered and this is a powerful step in that direction. In the BRB, Chapter 3, "My Parents Did Not Drink But I can Relate," there is an 11 page chapter explaining the different kinds of dysfunction that can create an adult child without the involvement of alcohol. There's many adult children in this situation that turn themselves away from ACA because alcohol was not part of the dysfunction from which they lived. (They turn away from the name ACA and, subsequently never have the opportunity to read the BRB and read Chapter 3 to find that they do indeed belong). Oftentimes active members of ACA find themselves trying to explain the full capacity of what we accomplish regarding childhood trauma and these conversations are time-consuming and often ineffective because the word alcoholism often halts the listening capacity. When people hear the somewhat charged word “alcoholism” many times they immediately disregard the possibility of potentially being served by our extraordinary organization, and we are subsequently strongly limited regarding carrying our very important message. Also, Many Adult Children are the grandchildren of alcoholics and they did not experience the alcoholism firsthand because many times their own parents were in denial or did not discuss the grandparents’ drinking. These people do not recognize that the dysfunction that they were raised in stemmed from their grandparents’ alcoholism and this could possibly be discovered after attendance to ACA. Most ACA’s are fully aware of the healing our rooms entail and carrying the message to as many people is imperative. This change is also timely in that the Literature Committee is currently updating the BRB into The Little Big Red Book. This is an opportune time to make the name change that will make our membership more inclusive regarding the many different kinds of dysfunction. In addition, there are other current updates of other literature and new literature that can easily update the name and give the explanation of the change. Additionally, implementing the use of “Anonymous” presents us as a 12 step program. Twelve Step Programs are highly respected worldwide. The anonymity aspect has attraction as well and speaks to the safety of the inner child regarding the sacredness of shares and the significance of cross talk. And the term “Anonymous” allows us to keep the acronym and logo the same.

**WSO Analysis:** This change would not require a logo change. However, it would require that a thorough trademark search be completed for ‘Adult Children Anonymous’ to be sure we would be entitled to use it. If this becomes an agenda item at the ABC, any resulting motion to change ACA’s name will initiate a long process that will take several years to complete. Discussion of this Proposal at the ABC may also lead to other options, such as trademarking this name for use as a DBA (Doing Business As).

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**Proposal 2019 – 9** Submitted on November 28, 2018 by NY0176, Brooklyn, New York

**Issue:** We propose that . . . ACA adopt the following statement, and to post it prominently on social media, websites, and literature: "ACA is an inclusive organization and open to all. We strive to create an atmosphere that reflects the diverse communities we serve and where everyone feels empowered to be their full, authentic selves."

**History/Reasoning:** It has become the norm for organizations in the public sphere/serving the public good to proclaim what should be obvious, that all people are welcome regardless of race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, etc.

**Argument in Favor:** Our meeting is based in Brooklyn, NY where we have a quite diverse community in all respects, and our meeting reflects that. Even so, we are sensitive to the fact that someone walking into a room that is predominantly any one category - white, male, female, affluent, able-bodied, middle-age, etc. - may feel intimidated if they are not the same as that majority. We also acknowledge the existence of unconscious bias in society, and seek to overcome that. So, it is in this vein that we propose adopting a diversity and inclusion statement. This has also become the cultural and social norm for most organizations in the public sector, to say the obvious, that all are welcome.

**WSO Analysis:** We recognize the value of proclaiming our dedication to diversity and inclusion. Such a statement is common in organizations, and for ACA, it would make it easier for those unfamiliar with our program to determine if this is a place for them to feel emotionally safe and wanted. WSO recommends that this Proposal be discussed at the ABC.

*If this Proposal receives a two-thirds yes vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.*

**Proposal 2019 – 10** Submitted on November 29, 2018 by NY0176, Brooklyn, New York

**Issue:** We propose that . . . ACA establish a Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, to consider ongoing issues as relate to the topics.

**History/Reasoning:** It has become the norm for organizations in the public sphere/serving the public good be intentional and conscious of their issues with regards to diversity and inclusion. What does the composition of the organization and the people attracted to it/and to its services look like, relative to the general population? Are groups over or under represented? Why might that be? Are there proactive actions that can be taken. Is messaging inherently biased without intent, and can this be corrected? Is there a vehicle to deal with complaints about diversity or inclusion? What should be obvious, that all people are welcome regardless of race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, etc. often needs to be stated explicitly.

**Argument in Favor:** ACA is a global organization in the public sphere and open to all. It is good to remind ourselves and our current and potential constituents that all are welcome, as members and to serve in various capacities, including in WSO service and on the WSO Board.

**WSO Analysis:** The WSO does not feel a new working group is necessary for this subject matter. Endorsement of Proposal 9, that we have a prominent diversity statement, will make it clear to all that we are an inclusive organization. Our literature, especially that being currently written, focuses on inclusivity of all individuals affected by childhood trauma. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the entire Fellowship to ensure that discrimination does not find a home in ACA.

*If this Proposal receives a two-thirds yes vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.*

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**Proposal 2019 – 11** Submitted on November 29, 2018 by CA915, Arroyo Grande, California

**Issue:** We propose that . . . we add "and we work with our sponsors." to the Solution statement read in meetings. The sentence now reads, "This is the action and work that heals us: we use the Steps; we use the meetings; we use the telephone." So added would be: We use the Steps; we use the meetings; we use the telephone; (and we work with our Sponsors).

**History/Reasoning:** ACA has not been very successful with the Sponsorship model. In part, we may be sabotaging ourselves giving isolationists permission to not have sponsors by adopting the "fellow traveler" notion of sponsors (we sponsor each other...).

**Argument in Favor:** Sponsors are like tour guides - if you take the guided trip, you see everything you want to see and get to where you want to go. If you try to go it alone, you won't reach the destination called recovery nearly as fast.

**WSO Analysis:** WSO believes it is premature to add anything to our literature that defines primary supportive relationships in ACA as sponsorship. There is currently a sub-committee working on describing and defining the many different ways ACA members can work together to enhance their recovery. This sub-committee will recommend literature changes based on its findings.

*If this Proposal receives a two-thirds yes vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.*

**Proposal 2019 – 12** Submitted on November 29, 2018 by AK021, Anchorage, Alaska

**Issue:** We propose that . . . No new Proposals will be allowed to be added to the agenda at the ACA WSO Annual Business Conference (ABC) unless new information of a time sensitive nature comes to light at the ABC requiring action to be taken before the next year's ABC. All Proposals must be vetted by 2/3 of our members to come to the floor of the ACA Annual Business Conference (ABC) to be voted on. In addition, the ACA Trustees provide history/reasoning regarding why they are for or against said Proposal.

**History/Reasoning:** A proposition was written to combine the 2019 ACA ABC and ACA Convention in Malmo, Sweden. This unvetted Proposal by 2/3 of our members was allowed to be heard because it was time sensitive. However, there were other Proposals that were added onto the agenda that were not time sensitive, they were not vetted by 2/3 of the members, nor did the Board have adequate time to evaluate and give an opinion.

**Argument in Favor:** All Proposals need to be submitted to WSO by the November 30th deadline. The ACA Trustees then write an opinion on each Proposal and provide the history and reasoning why they are for or against said Proposal. The Proposals are then distributed to the fellowship for discussion and vote. Only those Proposals attaining or exceeding 2/3 vote are placed on the Agenda to be discussed and voted on by the Delegates at the Annual Business Conference. At the 2018 ABC in Toronto, new information was given informing the Delegates that the 2019 ABC would be in Malmo, Sweden and 2019 Convention was going to be the USA at a place to be determined. This was new information. It was very important to the Delegates that the two functions continue to be held in unison. The Delegates believed strongly that we are a World Service Organization and to hold the two events separately in two separate countries does not honor our world wide fellow travelers. ACA is not a US program, but a World Wide program. Allowing non-time sensitive and non-vetted Proposals to be added to the agenda, circumvents the Democratic process of obtaining 2/3's vote from the fellowship.



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**WSO Analysis:** We agree that motions from the floor at the ABC can be seen to circumvent the Proposal/Ballot process that is a cornerstone of how the ABC is run. However, WSO Committees and Delegates need to be able to make motions that may be time sensitive. We believe motions from the floor can be managed in a way that does not circumvent the process. Any such motion that the ABC Delegates do not see as time sensitive will be given to the Board for deliberation. If the submitting group(s) is not satisfied with how a motion from the floor is handled, they may submit it using the official Proposal process for the following ABC. If this Proposal is approved for the ABC agenda, WSO suggests an expedited discussion because a new process will already be in place.

*If this Proposal receives a two-thirds yes vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.*

**Proposal 2019 – 13** Submitted on November 29, 2018 by AK021, Anchorage, Alaska

**Issue:** We propose that . . . The Board of Trustees needs to implement the ACA Service Structure for support and resources: Groups need to be assigned to Intergroups, and Intergroups need to be assigned to Regions. Communication and resolution of issues need to go through these channels before being escalated to the WSO level. The implementation of this service structure would provide for more direct support to individuals and groups and in turn, would provide for growth, a stronger organization, including the development of service leaders at all levels.

**History/Reasoning:** As of Nov. 2018, there were 2095 meetings, 92 Intergroups, and 1 Region worldwide. Because ACA doesn't have a strong organizational structure, not all groups are aligned with an Intergroup and their only support comes directly from the WSO office. In addition, there is only 1 Region in the world, so the majority of Intergroups are not assigned to a Region which would provide more direct support. Due to this lack of Service Structure, the WSO Board Trustees are being spread very thin providing limited support to the groups and Intergroups among their many other Trustee Committees.

**Argument in Favor:** Due to the lack of structure at the Intergroup and Region levels, ACA members have few opportunities to participate and develop service skills at each level. Doing service at each level develops a comprehensive understanding and skill set to handle the challenges of service at a higher level. In turn, it will result in a stronger and healthier organization. AA's service model is well defined and they are thriving as members progress by giving service through the following levels: Group - Group Service Representative - District - Areas - Delegates to the General Service Board (Delegates who have done service at the prior levels as a Group Service Representative, District level, and Area level) - General Service Board - World Service Organization Board of Trustees. (Their Trustees have done service at all levels.)

**WSO Analysis:** The Service Structure Committee reminds us of the Fourth Tradition: "Each group is autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or ACA as a whole . . ." Assigning meetings to Intergroups or assigning Intergroups to Regions could violate this tradition. Because WSO is actively developing outreach and education to encourage meetings and Intergroups to voluntarily join ACA's global service network, we do not feel this Proposal requires discussion at the ABC.

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**Proposal 2019 – 14** Submitted on November 30, 2018 by CA1312 Cottonwood, California

**Issue:** We propose that . . . Should ACA reconsider its 1989\*(?) decision, under Tradition Eight, to not pay royalties to ACA-member authors of anonymous books that are contributed to ACA WSO, so that such royalties may be paid, upon approval of conference of both the book(s) and payment terms and duration?

**History/Reasoning:** From time to time, ACA members (as individuals or as a group) may author anonymous ACA 12-Step program books that they want to donate to ACA, for which they wish to receive a royalty during their lifetime (and mate's). Alcoholics Anonymous had just such an arrangement with Bill W. (Wilson), AA's Co-Founder. (see attached,) This very issue came up in 1988, before ACA WSO was incorporated and the acting-Board then took the stance that any member-authored anonymous materials offered to ACA would have to provide the copyright to the ACA Literature Committee, without receiving payment, royalties and with no editorial restrictions or conditions. The Board refused to consider AA Co-Founder Bill Wilson's explanation of Tradition Eight, which reads as follows: "Might an AA member be paid a fee for their services as an AA member? . . .[T]his was shouted down. Some of us have become counselors . . . . We find this sort of activity works well, as long as it involves some legitimate service that is not straight AA work. For instance, I've done a lot of AA work I am never paid for, but I am paid as an author. . . "(P-53, "The Co-Founders of Alcoholic Anonymous, pg. 32) Bill goes on to detail how WSO staff and others are paid for work they do that involves doing a task for which any worker doing it is entitled to be paid. AA WSO verifies Bill received \$1/book royalty for Alcoholics Anonymous, Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions and other texts until he died. Then his wife, Lois, received this until her death. AA got everything else. This is the only way an author gets paid!

**Argument in Favor:** It was an error to presume that no individual ACA or ACA Group might warrant recognition for further developing 12-Step materials for ACA. ACA WSO Conference, were it to adopt AA's policy on Tradition Eight, would be able to offer the same "deal" to anonymous member-authors who wish to donate their original 12-Step work to ACA, after it is vetted and approved by conference. Thus ACA's "official" literature will remain open to improvement through the experience and wisdom of our members in recovery.

**WSO Analysis:** WSO agrees with the original decision that was made and, therefore, does not recommend discussion of the matter at the ABC. We feel it would be extremely difficult to administer a policy that would pay anonymous members for their contributions to our literature. WSO literature represents our collective Experience, Strength and Hope. We are all authors. The fellowship is blessed with many volunteers who contribute time and written material, and we feel we will continue to have a wealth of information available. If we begin to pay some people, it could set up a system of inequity that may eventually require all volunteers to be paid.

*If this Proposal receives a two-thirds yes vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.*