

## Ballot Preparation Committee Workshop – August 2020

This document contains proposals submitted in previous years. The right column in both cases shows the advantage of the new format with only the Issue and Background.

### Example One:

This example shows that rather than focusing solely on changing to Higher Power in the Steps, that the idea be more broad and inclusive of all of our literature.

**Issue:** We propose that . . . Adult Children of Alcoholics and Dysfunctional Families (ACA) use the more inclusive term “Higher Power” in its wording of the 12 Steps.

**History/Reasoning:** The ACA 12 Steps represent the core of our program and are read at nearly every ACA meeting around the World. We understand that when the ACA 12 Steps were adapted from AA, in order to be gender neutral, the word God was substituted for ‘him’ or ‘his’ in Steps 3, 7 and 11, and is thus used more than most other 12 Step Programs.

**Argument in Favor:** This proposal is not a criticism of anyone's belief system, but rather an acknowledgement that this may be a way to make ACA more accessible and inclusive. Chapter 5 of the Big Red Book is entitled “ACA is a Spiritual Not a Religious Program.” We believe that using the term Higher Power in the 12 Steps reinforces the principles articulated in that chapter. In addition to other reasons for this change, many who come to our rooms searching for recovery have experienced religious abuse and trauma in their childhoods. For them, Higher Power is a term with far less triggering potential. Also, while we acknowledge the word God is used to denote a power or entity greater than ourselves within many cultures and religions, both Christian and otherwise, in others it is not. Adjusting our terminology in this way can allow the program to feel more accessible to those of all backgrounds and beliefs while remaining true to ACA principles. The more inclusive our program can be, the better the chances it can reach all adult children.

**Issue:** We propose that WSO revise all printed materials to help ensure a feeling of spiritual inclusivity in the ACA Program. This would especially include using the term Higher Power consistently, as well as removing strictly Christian-based references in our materials.

**Background:** This proposal is not a criticism of anyone's belief system, but rather an acknowledgement that using the term Higher Power rather than God may be a way to make ACA more accessible and inclusive. Chapter 5 of the Big Red Book is entitled “ACA is a Spiritual Not a Religious Program.” We believe that using the term Higher Power in our literature reinforces the principles articulated in that chapter. In addition to other reasons for this change, many who come to our rooms searching for recovery have experienced religious abuse and trauma in their childhoods. For them, Higher Power is a term with far less triggering potential. Also, while we acknowledge the word God is used to denote a power or entity greater than ourselves within many cultures and religions, both Christian and otherwise, in others it is not. Adjusting our terminology in this way can allow the program to feel more accessible to those of all backgrounds and beliefs while remaining true to ACA principles. The more inclusive our program can be, the better the chance it can reach all adult children.

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**Example Two:**

Two proposals were submitted in different years that wanted to increase participation in the Annual Business Conference. The third column shows how the 2018 version was rewritten for even more clarity and simplicity.

<b>Proposal 2017-7:</b> Submitted by TEL210, IG616, & TEL282	<b>Proposal 2018 – 7:</b> Submitted by NY131	<b>Proposal (2018) in New Format</b> <i>edited and simplified</i>
<p><b>Issue:</b> So that more groups could participate through the delegate voting system we propose that delegates be allowed to vote on proposals, brought to the ABC, using electronic methods (Survey Monkey), in advance of the ABC. An adjustment would need to be made in the final round of nomination procedure so that this can happen. The exact method of adjustment would need to be determined. There will be no change regarding delegates who want to travel to the ABC meeting to vote.</p> <p><b>Argument in Favor:</b> Allowing delegates to vote in advance of the ABC using electronic methods makes it possible to get a broader participation by all groups. Making this voting step available to those who financially or physically cannot travel to ABC locations to vote would be more inclusive of the general fellowship ideas and suggestions. Survey Monkey is now used for the first 2 rounds and authentication is not an issue. So there should not be any issue of authentication or abuse in any additional rounds using Survey Monkey.</p> <p><b>History/ Reasoning:</b> Out of the 1600 meeting numbers less than 30 Delegates go to the ABC This is a small representation of groups, Many persons do not attend the ABC because of financial or physical limitations and the fellowship at large is not represented in the voting process</p>	<p><b>Issue:</b> We propose that the WSO utilize online conferencing and voting technologies to provide remote access to the Annual Business Conference, for those not chairing in the WSO. This is so that phone and cyber meeting groups, geographically distant members, those with limited time availability or childcare obligations, or other restrictions, may attend as delegates or otherwise vote on matters of concern to ACA as a whole.</p> <p><b>Argument in Favor:</b> There are inexpensive means available today to allow adult children to be heard. ACA members are willing, but not able, to participate in the bottom-up structure of the ABC. It is the hope and right of all adult children to be counted and heard.</p> <p><b>History/Reasoning:</b> The ABC is broadcast via audio streaming, however this does not provide interactive remote participation at the conference. The WSO already uses teleconferencing for committee meeting</p>	<p><b>Issue:</b> We propose that the WSO utilize online conferencing and voting technologies to provide remote access to the Annual Business Conference.</p> <p><b>Background:</b> The WSO already uses teleconferencing for their monthly business meeting and the ABC is broadcast via audio streaming. The next step would be to provide interactive remote participation.</p> <p>Distance voting would allow phone and cyber meeting groups, geographically distant members, those with limited time availability, such as work or childcare obligations, or other restrictions, to attend as delegates and to vote on matters of concern to ACA as a whole.</p> <p>This can reasonably be accomplished because there are inexpensive technologies available that would allow more ACA groups to have their voices heard.</p>