



Area 15 Sharing Session

Our Founders Writings

**Irma V.. Western Canada Regional Trustee
Trustees' Literature Committee Chair**

The Voice of the Fellowship Is Expressed

1993 Conference Advisory Action:

Because of strong sentiment against any changes in the first 164 pages of the Big Book, the request to rewrite the first three chapters of the Big Book not be implemented.



Sketch of a GSC session in 1993

The Voice of the Fellowship Is Expressed

1995 Conference Advisory Action:

The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewords, “The Doctor’s Opinion,” “Doctor Bob’s Nightmare” and the Appendices remain as is.



Sketch of a GSC session in 1995

Partial list of history and action related to 12x12

1984 Advisory Action

The words “queers” (p. 140) in Twelve and Twelve Traditions not be changed to “homosexuals and lesbians,” **recognizing Fellowship feeling that Bill W.’s textbook writings be retained as originally published.**

2002 Advisory Action

The text in the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions written by Bill W., remain as is, **recognizing the Fellowship’s feeling that Bill W’s writings be retained as originally published.**

2003 Advisory Action

A draft Introduction to be added to the front matter of the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* be developed by the General Service Office's Publications Department and reviewed by the trustees' Literature Committee and brought back to the 2004 Conference Literature Committee for their consideration.

Introduction

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS first published *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* in 1953. Bill W., who along with Dr. Bob S. founded Alcoholics Anonymous in 1935, wrote the book to share 18 years of collective experience within the Fellowship on how A.A. members recover, and how our society functions.

In recent years some members and friends of A.A. have asked if it would be wise to update the language, idioms, and historical references in the book to present a more contemporary image for the Fellowship. However, because the book has helped so many alcoholics find recovery, there exists strong sentiment within the Fellowship against any change to it. In fact, the 2002 General Service Conference discussed this issue and it was unanimously recommended that: "The text in the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, written by Bill W., remain as is, recognizing the Fellowship's feelings that Bill's writing be retained as originally published." However, with a focus on inclusivity, the 2021 General Service Conference updated and footnoted some of the original language for clarity.

We hope that the collective spiritual experience of the A.A. pioneers captured in these pages continues to help alcoholics and friends of A.A. understand the principles of our program.

CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 71st GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE


A revision be made to page 117 in the book, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, replacing the phrase “opposite sex” with the word “partner” as follows, and that a footnote be added to provide context to the change as it relates to inclusivity:

"Nearly every sound human being, experiences at some time in life, a compelling desire to find a **mate of the opposite sex** with whom the fullest possible union can be made – spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical. This mighty urge is the root of great human accomplishments, a creative energy that deeply influences our lives. God fashioned us that way. ..."

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CONFERENCE ADVISORY ACTIONS OF THE 71st GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

The sentence which includes the phrase “lustful enough to rape” in paragraph one on page 66 in the chapter “Step Six” of the book, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, be revised to refer to the Seven Deadly Sins without specific mention of examples that are severe in nature as follows, and that a footnote be added to provide context as to the basis for the change:



"No one wants to
be angry enough to
murder, lustful
enough to rape,
gluttonous enough
to ruin his health."

"No one wants to
commit the deadly
sins of anger, lust
or gluttony."

2022 Conference Literature Committee Consideration

The committee discussed the changes to the text of the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions resulting from advisory actions of the 71st General Service Conference and **took no action**. The committee noted that there **does not appear to be a consensus** on the changes among A.A. members at the local level.





Approx 30 PAI's
for the GSC to
consider

Restore

Never change

12 regarding the
12x12

Use footnotes

5 for the Big
Book

Some were related to
changes approved by the
2021 GSC regarding the
12x12



Proposed Agenda Item

“That the Conference or appropriate body consider creating a mechanism for future AA literature changes, balancing the intentions of individual proposed agenda items with a process to ensure all changes retain the essential message of the original text.”



Agenda items related to changes to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve tradition approved by 2021 GSC

TLC reviewed PAI's noted the **importance and interest** of the Advisory Actions **to the Fellowship**.

Agreed to forward to 2023 Conference Literature Committee **all agenda items related to changes in the 12x12 as one grouped item**.

Suggested CLC consider **forward item to areas for wider discussion**, looking toward setting a policy on how and whether to edit A.A. founder's words in our current literature.

Agenda item would **be discussed by members during 2023-2024** conference year and considered by CLC at 2024 GSC.

What do think?

