

Ballot - Proposals for ABC 2023

The following 12 Proposals have been submitted to ACA's World Service Organization (WSO). All groups are asked to vote on them in order to determine which ones should be included on the 2023 ABC's agenda.

Proposal 2023 – 1

Submitted on August 8, 2022, by IG727, BIPOC International IG

Issue: We propose that: The newly forming BIPOC intergroup (#0727) follows up the Diversity and Inclusion Motion (2019) with a motion to 1) Continue REA without change for another 12 months; 2) Endorse the training and education workshops with a panel that includes outside experts, and 3) Donate and expend no more than \$500 (unencumbered funds) from WSO to support the workshop for the good of the entire Fellowship.

Background: Proposal Background will be keep updated HERE -

Resources/Implementation: The Intergroup is willing to provide all resources deemed no-cost to make the training / educational successful. However, a special worker is needed to facilitate the "diversity curriculum," which is a train-the-trainer model. All WSO Board members are expected to take the training and become trainers. Any and all other Members of the Fellowship may enroll and train.

WSO Analysis: The entire WSO service structure is strongly committed to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, as outlined in the following diversity statement approved by the 2019 ABC: "ACA is an inclusive organization and open to all affected by family dysfunction. We strive to create an atmosphere that reflects the diverse communities we serve and where everyone feels empowered to be their full, authentic selves." The Board followed this motion by approving a motion in Feb 2020 that WSO create an ad hoc committee to review diversity in the ACA Fellowship and WSO.

This ad hoc committee was called Representation, Equity and Accessibility (REA). Per the WSO Operating Policies and Procedures Manual (OPPM), "Ad Hoc Committees continue until their defined purpose is accomplished." REA's defined purpose was achieved as this Committee did provide their findings and recommendations of the past two years to the Board.

We find this proposal is too narrow as this important topic requires a multi-dimensional approach. This will include working with the Fellowship to determine ways in which to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion effectively and that are in the best interest of the global ACA Fellowship.

In summary, the WSO Board does not favor this proposal as written, but does recognize the importance of the issue and welcomes a broader discussion with the Fellowship on diversity and inclusion in ACA and WSO service.

Proposal 2023 – 2

Submitted on September 24, 2022, by DC008, Washington DC USA, and WEB0616

Issue: To establish a delegate-led committee to draft a conference charter for consideration by the Delegates to the 2024 ABC. To be in accordance with Tradition 9, this committee would be directly responsible to the Conference itself.

Background: Many fellowships (AA, Alanon, MA, CMA) have adopted a Conference Charter. To date, ACA does not have a Conference Charter. At the 2017 ABC, the WSO Service Structure Committee

made ten recommendations for strengthening the service structure of ACA, as seen in their committee report (starting p75) in the 2017 ABC binder (see <https://acawso.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2017-ABC-Delegates-Binder-Final-4-5-17.pdf>) - RECOMMENDATION 5: That the Service Structure Committee and other volunteers develop detailed service documents, such as a Conference Charter and a fellowship Service Manual, for consideration by the ACA fellowship, and eventual review and adoption by the WSO board and ABC. After this recommendation was made, the Service Structure Committee changed its focus, and the committee was disbanded in June 2022. To date, no draft Conference Charter has been shared with the fellowship. In recent years, the fellowship of ACA has been growing exponentially. To support the existing service structure, a stronger Conference would be beneficial. Establishing a Conference Charter would be one cornerstone in that effort. A conference charter would describe and clarify the relationships that exist between the ACA Fellowship, the Conference, and ACA WSO as its service arm – and the rights and responsibilities of each. It would constitute an agreement between the fellowship of ACA (which is represented by the Conference) and ACA WSO. It would clearly define how the Conference and ACA WSO work together on behalf of the ACA Fellowship for the continued maintenance and strategic guidance of world services.

Resources/Implementation: RESOURCES: The proposal is to establish a delegate-led committee directly responsible to the 2024 ABC. This committee would be bound by the principles of ACA recovery and service (Steps, Traditions, Concepts, and Commitment to Service) and its primary reporting requirement would be to submit a draft conference charter for consideration at the 2024 ABC. Should this proposal pass and a committee be established directly responsible to the Conference, authors of this proposal are willing to take the following steps within 60 days of such a motion passing:

- Asking for interested volunteers
- scheduling a first committee meeting and announcing it to delegates;
- facilitating a first committee meeting to include election of committee officers

Once officers have been elected, they will be responsible for meeting the committee goals as defined in this proposal. Should the committee fail to submit a draft document in time, the committee will be disbanded effective immediately.

IMPLEMENTATION: Should this proposal pass, the Conference Charter Committee will deliver a draft Conference Charter to the WSO ABC Committee by a deadline of 1 month prior to the 2024 ABC, to be published in the 2024 delegate binder. This timeline will give delegates ample opportunity to review the draft Conference Charter and discuss it with their groups as appropriate. Discussion of a draft conference charter at the 2024 ABC may lead to one of the following outcomes, in accordance with the voting procedures adopted by the Conference:

- A motion to adopt the conference charter as presented;
- A motion to send the draft document back to committee with comments and requests for revision;
- Any other motion that is in accordance with established voting procedures;
- No motion at all.

WSO Analysis: WSO is already devoting extensive resources to studying the future of ABC meetings, and to the study of Concepts II and VI, as passed by the 2022 ABC in two motions that relate to the role of the Conference (the ABC):

1. Coordinate ". . . an in-depth and inclusive study regarding possible changes to the ABC and AWC structures."
2. To ". . . study Concepts II and VI and report to the 2023 ABC on possible revisions. . . ." These concepts relate to the role of the Conference (the ABC).

This proposal tries to revisit the above decisions. For example, it states that this study would “establish a delegate-led committee directly responsible to the 2024 ABC.” Delegates in 2022 rejected this model for managing the larger study of future annual meetings. Nearly three-quarters of the delegates voted to have the ABC AWC Committee coordinate the study.

In addition to causing confusion and conflict, this Proposal would require organizing a third group of volunteers to study matters that are already being studied in depth.

In summary, the WSO Board does not favor this proposal because it conflicts with the direction of Delegates at the 2022 ABC, duplicates efforts already in progress to support that direction, is more restrictive than that direction, and creates an additional burden on our already challenged service volunteers.

Proposal 2023 – 3

Submitted on September 26, 2022, by TX131, Austin, TX USA

Issue: We propose that safety procedures and actions be developed and implemented to ensure that those doing service in ACA are provided a safe place to work together in all WSO Service meetings, at ABC’s, Committee Meetings, Teleconferences, Chat, and on Slack.

Background: p. 354 BRB. “The essence of service in ACA is action coming from an attitude of love. But before we can serve one another, we must first be willing to love and serve ourselves.”

This group observes that some individuals are not giving service from a place of love as they seem to have difficulty responding respectfully towards others doing service. For some time, there have been some individuals who have made committee work ineffective and uncomfortable for other committee members. Some members have left service due to it. This behavior was particularly on display the first 2 days of the ABC and on Slack, where there were accusatory questions and negative comments directed towards the Board and other Delegates.

These destructive behaviors not only affect the person who is targeted but are retraumatizing to every adult child who is witnessing these abusive behaviors. These behaviors make it emotionally unsafe for adult children to do service.

ACA needs members who can bring their loving parent to do healthy service work. Members need to be able to step back and tend to their inner children until they can respond to others respectfully. ACA cannot thrive if members do not step up to do service due to fear of being targeted negatively or being retraumatized. Just as there are safety protocols at the meeting level for disruptive members, we also need “action and safety protocols” for service meetings. The future of ACA depends on it.

Resources/Implementation:

- Will work with MSSC doing service to develop conflict resolution and safety protocols for disruptive and disrespectful behavior for all members doing WSO service.
- (Protocols are already in place for Board members.)
- Members whose recovery is such that they are not able to speak to others in a respectful way will be encouraged to go back and work on their recovery. This is not punishment, but an opportunity for them to further heal so that they can interact with others in a kind and respectful way thus being better prepared for service at the WSO level in the future.

WSO Analysis: The WSO Board is committed to health and safety in service for all of its Committees. In Concept IX, the Board is directed to ensure the future functioning and safety of its service

committees. As a result, the Board has established a Health and Safety advisory group that will work to develop and recommend steps to create and maintain a healthy and safe WSO service environment as a first step.

The WSO Board does not favor this proposal but supports its intentions. We think the best way forward is for a representative from the proposing group to join and participate in the existing Health and Safety advisory group. Additionally, the Board and advisory group welcome a broader discussion with the Fellowship on safety in service.

Proposal 2023 – 4

Submitted on September 29, 2022, by Region 2

Issue: Move to establish a standing committee of WSO to assist in guiding the development of boundaries to promote functional development of the ACA service structure. The committee will meet monthly, and research, consider, and recommend worldwide Region boundaries using geographical, linguistic, cultural, and grouping patterns of ACA Intergroups and meetings.

Background: There once was a Service Structure Committee that worked on creating a plan for the functional growth of the ACA service structure. We have yet to achieve that functional goal, and that committee no longer exists. Without communication through representation, dysfunction flourishes. WSO established a Regions sub-committee. That sub-committee encouraged creation of a new Region inside of an existing Region. This process has created unnecessary conflict and confusion. If there are identifiable Region boundaries and a process for changing them, such conflicts and confusions would not occur. We need a functional service structure, so we need to establish and enforce the boundaries of ACA Regions.

Resources/Implementation: Resources: Our Region is willing to participate in a WSO virtual standing committee that will make policy recommendations to the annual ABC. We are willing to encourage other Regions and Intergroups to join in defining functional ACA boundaries. Implementation: If approved by delegates, the policy would be entered into the OPPM. WSO officers, committee chairs, and committee members would be made aware of the policy.

WSO Analysis: This proposal addresses an important issue, guiding the future evolution of ACA’s service structure. However, the Board finds this request to create a new committee to be too narrow on multiple levels. Instead, we recommend a much broader study of ACA’s service structure that will involve both delegates and members of the fellowship.

The face of ACA has changed dramatically in recent years. Many more groups are virtual, making them hard to place on a conventional map. Groups are organizing organically by geography, language, culture, virtual communities, time zones, similar interests, etc. Finding a satisfactory definition of Regions in this environment requires the participation of many stakeholders, and must focus on how the relationships between ACA Groups, Intergroups, Regions, and the WSO might be further developed to prepare ACA for immediate and future growth on a global scale.

In summary, the WSO Board does not favor this proposal. However, the Board welcomes a broader discussion with the Fellowship on ACA’s evolving service structure, including the role of Regions and other service bodies.

Proposal 2023 – 5

Submitted on September 30, 2022, by IG76, Arroyo Grande, CA USA

Issue: Move to replace the Nominating Committee guidelines by requiring nominees for the WSO board have a minimum of six years of uninterrupted attendance at ACA meetings and to have been an officer and a committee chair of an ACA Intergroup and/or an ACA Region for at least one year.

Background: While WSO has requirements for nominees, the application form states these are “desired qualifications” that Board candidates “should meet.” The final note on the application states: “The Nominating Committee can ask the Board to consider exceptions to these desired qualifications.” With such suggestions about nominees, it is possible to nominate a candidate to the Board with little or no recovery in ACA, no ACA 12-Step, 12-Tradition leadership skills, and no success in project management and completion. WSO has over \$1,000,000 of income (2022 ABC report), legal requirements to meet, and decisions with worldwide impact that Trustees deliberate upon. We need Trusted Servants with proven judgment, leadership skills, and project management expertise. We need to eliminate amorphous “desires” and “suggestions” and replace them with requirements to ensure the longevity and efficiency of WSO.

Resources/Implementation:

WSO Analysis: This Proposal first suggests changing required ACA attendance from five to six years but gives no specific reasons for this change.

The suggestion of unqualified candidates with little knowledge about ACA being placed on the Board has no foundation. The Nominating Committee (NomCom) has a thorough vetting process, and there is never an exception made for the attributes of Emotional Sobriety, ACA Recovery, or knowledge of Steps, Traditions, and Concepts. Most importantly, the candidate must have demonstrated that they have participated in a group conscience where there were strong emotions and they were able to conduct themselves in a kind and respectful manner, accepting the outcome, even when it didn’t go as they had hoped.

Of the 13 candidates vetted by the NomCom since 2017, only two were granted an exemption to the time-of-service requirement. This was done in recognition of exceptional qualifications in other critical areas.

Regarding the introduction of a new qualification of having been a Region or Intergroup Chair, to date, the NomCom has not found that these ACA members necessarily have better judgment, project management skills, or leadership abilities than other members of the fellowship. Moreover, not all ACAs throughout the global membership have equal access to Regions and Intergroups. This Proposal would exclude those members from meeting the proposed qualifications.

In summary, the WSO Board does not favor this proposal and recognizes the Nominating Committee’s outstanding work and their service to the ACA fellowship.

Proposal 2023 – 6

Submitted on September 30, 2022, by IG76, Arroyo Grande, CA USA

Issue: Move that the WSO service board to become more directly responsive to the fellowship by choosing eligible, elected representatives of Regions and then, where no Regions exist, Intergroups as Trustees on the WSO Board.

Background: In 1983, an ACA group put on an event and owed \$200. Not having the money, they met to solve the problem. They soon received inquiries about meetings, ACA, and available literature. That group became the point of contact for ACA information nationally. This group evolved into ACA World Service. While most 12-Step, 12-Tradition programs have functioning channels of communication by representatives of each tier of the service structure, ACA has never achieved this. The “voice of the fellowship” directing the work of WSO for the next year has become the votes of delegates at the Annual Business Conference (ABC). Since the beginning of ACA, the ABCs have had limited participation by the membership. Even at the virtual 2022 ABC, “the effective voice of the fellowship” was a maximum of 249 worldwide votes for any proposal. With 2,765 meetings, 107 Intergroups, and 2 Regions, this is 11.5% of possible delegate votes. Tradition 9 states, “...we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.” We do not now, nor have ever had, direct representation. If meetings elect representatives to Intergroups, Intergroups elect representatives to Regions, and Regions elect representatives to WSO, then we will have service boards that are directly responsible to those they serve.

Resources/Implementation: Our Intergroup has developed a Regions trifold, as well as a PowerPoint, which addresses the need for Intergroups to elect representatives to Regions. We are willing to distribute or share it on Zoom workshop meetings. The WSO Chair may appoint someone to oversee the dissemination of information encouraging groups to elect representatives to the next tier of the service structure. A trifold may be written to explain the need for elected representatives of groups to serve on their service boards. WSO may institute “Representative Chips” for meetings, Intergroups, and Regions to recognize the service of their Representatives.

WSO Analysis: As a point of clarification, since the Nominating Committee (NomCom) was created in 2017, the WSO Board has not been part of selecting and vetting candidates for the Board.

Under the OPPM, WSO-certified Regions are already entitled to a seat on the Board, and they are specifically invited to submit qualified candidates. The NomCom also encourages Intergroups to recommend that members with service experience apply for the Board.

It would violate Traditions 2 and 4 for the Board to dictate to Regions and Intergroups whether to recommend Board candidates. Regions and Intergroups are already permitted to do so, but it is the decision of the people on the Region or Intergroup, not WSO’s, whether to apply for a Board seat.

It is important to note that a large percentage of our current Intergroups are working to redefine themselves post-pandemic, so using them as one of the two primary sources for Board membership could stress an already stressed system. Additionally, there is not a current definition of suggested requirements for creating an Intergroup, which seems like an important next step in the service structure process.

In summary, the WSO Board does not favor this proposal because it would likely not help to increase global representation on the Board, nor necessarily provide the best candidates.

Proposal 2023 – 7

Submitted on September 28, 2022, by IG667, Bronx, NY USA

Issue: We propose that sales gross revenues (defined as all sales revenue minus the cost of goods replenishment) generated from all sales be devoted 95% to WSO service work and earmarked for service to poor and underserved communities around the world, and 5% to ongoing literature development/deployment. The Board would retain discretion over the use of 7th Tradition Contributions that are about \$300,000/year.

Background: The amount of revenues the WSO generates from literature sales each year, \$1.4 million annually, and 7th Tradition donations, about \$300,000 annually, is being eaten up by increased administrative/overhead costs.

This proposal seeks to impose a spending cap on the growth of administrative/overhead costs and redirect the income to WSO to prioritize outreach service efforts to the adult child that still suffers.

These outreach efforts conforms with WSO's 5th Tradition mandate. With consistent focus, effort and time, this proposal will increase the number of groups, intergroups and regions world wide. These groups will carry the message to those that still suffer and grow the fellowship.

Resources/Implementation: None

WSO Analysis: This Proposal suggests there is a problem with how WSO is serving the worldwide Fellowship, including that the income received is “being eaten up” by additional staff and overhead costs. We believe this is unfounded. As with any organization like ours, in order to reach more people, costs can rise. The global pandemic has also greatly influenced the costs of how WSO does business. To do this work, it has been necessary to invest in additional staff and professional expertise. Changing the funding model as suggested would make it nearly impossible for these individuals to continue to serve the fellowship and its rapidly growing needs.

Our primary goal is, as it has always been, to distribute affordable literature to all ACAs around the world. Our staff and volunteers are doing an outstanding job in making this happen. The 2021 Annual Business Conference (ABC) approved an International literature scholarship fund for economically challenged communities. Additionally, we are continually working with the translation teams to publish more literature in more languages.

Gross sales revenue is not a realistic figure to use for making sound decisions. And the financial numbers cited in this Proposal are fairly meaningless without looking at the full picture.

In summary, the WSO Board does not favor this Proposal for the reasons stated. We regularly discuss and will continue to discuss WSO's financial status at the monthly Board Teleconference (TC), which is open to everyone, and at the ABC and quarterly meetings with delegates.

Proposal 2023 – 8**Submitted on September 28, 2022, by IG667, Bronx, NY USA**

Issue: We propose that the World Service Organization undergo a reorganization to create two subsidiaries/related entities:

- A. ACA Literature Production Organization
- B. ACA Literature Distribution Organization

Background: ACA literature production and distribution have greatly expanded and become more complex taking an inordinate of the WSO's time, effort and resources away from other service efforts. This reorganization will allow the subsidiaries to function solely in their fields of expertise while WSO focuses its energies on direct service to the fellowship per the Traditions. The Trustees of the subsidiaries shall be composed of 70 percent adult children of alcoholics or dysfunctional families and the remaining 30 percent lay experts in literature production and distribution, respectively. ACA WSO has expanded its offerings of literature over the last two decades as well as increased the sales platforms/streams. During this time, the WSO has brought back in-house book distribution work, IT work that had been hired out as well as entered licensing arrangements with various entities. This has increased the Board's oversight responsibility and overhead by, among other things, increasing the size (and rent and cost) of the warehouse for book distribution effort, etc. ACA Literature Production has also increased as more literature is being developed to meet the increasing size of the fellowship. This reorganization would free the WSO Trustees to focus on service work to support the effort of meetings, intergroups and regions to spread the message (5Th Tradition). WSO would also be at liberty to grant literature donations to poor or underserved countries/communities around the world were if it were free to solely focus on this critical fellowship growing work.

Resources/Implementation: None

WSO Analysis: There is already work being done on a long-term strategy to assess a corporate reorganization. Given that, the Board and Finance Committee find this Proposal premature, too narrow in approach and a potential risk to WSO's IRS Code 501(c)(3) charity status if it is not prudently planned.

Preliminary inquiries have been made with tax and business consultants about modifying the corporate structure and cost estimates are approximately US\$140,000 as an initial starting cost.

Even the contemplation of spending such funds will require collaboration and feedback from the Fellowship, Delegates, Committees, staff and professional advisors such as accountants, legal and international consultants as per the Concepts.

In summary, the WSO Board does not favor this proposal as written. However, this is an important topic, and the board looks forward to future discussions at delegate meetings on the dynamics of a future corporate reorganization as per Concept 6 (large matters of general policy and finance).

Note the Board's clarification of some of the Proposal's background points:

- **Proposal:** "ACA literature and productionhave taken an inordinate [amount] of WSO's time, effort and resources away from other service efforts." And "This reorganization would free the WSO Trustees to focus on service work...."

Clarification: The Board is fully engaged with service efforts and WSO has professional staff that are managing the business operations. A reorganization will greatly increase the workload of the Trustees in the near term.

- **Proposal:** “WSO has brought back in-house book distribution work [and] IT work; this has increased the Board's oversight responsibility.”
Clarification: Outsourced distribution in 2016-17 was problematic and resulted in an increased need for oversight. Any current increase in oversight is due to the significant growth of the organization. The Board continues to take steps to help ensure that oversight can be done efficiently.
- **Proposal:** “WSO would also be at liberty to grant literature donations to poor/underserved countries/communities around the world were if it were free to solely focus on this critical fellowship growing work.”
Clarification: The proposed reorganization would not increase the amount of available funds, and in fact they would substantially decrease for some time due to the reorganization costs.

Proposal 2023 – 9

Submitted on September 28, 2022, by IG667, Bronx, NY USA

Issue: We propose that the World Service Organization pay for an Independent Service Audit (ISA) (WSO 4th Step Inventory), and publish the result as an independent Annual State of the Fellowship report at the ABC based on (confirmed by an independent audit) the criteria listed in the Resources/Implementation section below:

Background: Similar to a 4th Step, this WSO inventory would be a tool for redefining priorities and allocating resources.

Resources/Implementation:

- 1) the number of actual groups, intergroups, regions year-to-year, over 10 years
- 2) the number of countries where there are ACA Meetings, year-to-year
- 3) the number of visitors to the website, year-to-year
- 4) the number of participating group at the Annual Business Conference, year-to-year
- 5) the background diversity of members participating in:
 - a) Monthly teleconference meetings;
 - b) Annual Business Conferences
 - c) WSO Committee
 - d) Trustees
- 6) the number of attendees at monthly teleconference meetings, year-to-year
- 7) the number of employees, year-to-year
- 8) the payroll, year-to-year
- 9) overhead including, but not limited to leases, utilities, software, employee benefits, year-to-year
- 10) other ancillary operating costs, year-to-year
- 11) 7th Tradition Contributions, year-to-year
- 12) revenues from sales by item, year to year
- 13) the number of visitors to the website, year-to-year
- 14) the number of attendees at monthly teleconference meetings, year-to-year
- 15) the number of employees, consultants, independent contractors, year-to-year
- 16) Other ancillary operating costs.
- 17) The number of hours the Trustees work directly on service related activities, annually, year to year.
- 18) Other.

WSO Analysis: Much of the information proposed to be obtained from this proposed audit is already available to the fellowship on the acawso.org website in the Treasurer’s and various Committee monthly reports. Also, all ACA WSO financial information is reviewed by professional accounting firms, in compliance with California state law.

An audit of this scope would be very costly, both in terms of money and staff/volunteer time. We do not understand the rationale or benefit of spending limited funds in this manner.

In summary, the WSO Board does not favor this Proposal for the reasons stated, and because the gathering of some of the information requested raises ethical and/or legal considerations.

Proposal 2023 – 10

Submitted on September 28, 2022, by IG667, Bronx, NY USA

Issue: We propose that no Trustee be allowed to be employed or work as an independent contractor for the WSO or any subsidiary/related entity for 5 years following the end of their term.

Background: The “escalator” of board members becoming employed by WSO in jobs they had previously overseen allows board members to create conditions and circumstances (escalate) that only they can resolve given their specialized knowledge of the intricacies of the job. By limiting their ability to be employed by WSO for 5 years, the Board members would be incentivized to find workable solutions as Board members; not create jobs as prospective employees. After the Board member has rotated off, the remaining Board members may reassess the demands of the position and determine the need to either hire or hire out the task.

Resources/Implementation:

WSO Analysis: This Proposal, as presented, is too restrictive and seems to provide a solution to a problem that isn't proven to exist. To our knowledge, only one Trustee has been hired as a special worker and two have been hired as short-term IT consultants. Also, some of the issues presented are addressed through protective policies listed in the Operating Policy and Procedures Manual (OPPM). The Board suggests addressing any related concerns through further updates to the OPPM.

A Trustee with relevant professional experience, and a knowledge of WSO operations, may make them a highly qualified candidate for a special worker position. It is WSO’s policy to hire the best qualified candidate based on merit and through standard human resources processes (e.g., applications, interviews, reference checks, etc.).

In summary, the WSO Board does not favor this Proposal.

Proposal 2023 – 11

Submitted on September 28, 2022, by IG667, Bronx, NY USA

Issue: We propose that all new ACA literature production and all changes to existing literature shall be approved by a super majority of not less than 60% of all registered groups at the concept phase before significant resources are allocated to its development or production. Said approval to be specifically obtained by a Literature Production Survey of all active registered groups.

Background: The Conceptual Phase Proposal Survey to include details concerning the perceived need for the piece versus existing literature, the target audience, the perceived demand, its length, readability, projected cost of production and projected price point.

Other 12 Step programs have set a high standard for changing foundational literature or producing literature as a way of insuring the message is consistent and not blurred.

The flurry of ACA literature production has been largely untamed. Seeking to fill gaps or clear up conceptual conflicts of existing literature, they confuse more than they clarify.

They create an ever expanding continuum spray of questionable conceptual integrity with existing literature.

This gives the impression to the fellowship and the public that ACA has a scattershot approach to recovery. Keep It Simple Conceptually.

Resources/Implementation: None

WSO Analysis: This Proposal raises serious concerns that would affect the ACA fellowship's long-term future. It imposes a standard for new literature ideas that does not exist in any major 12-Step fellowship. As written, it is likely to freeze ACA literature in place, by effectively prohibiting the WSO or the ABC from considering any new literature Proposals.

In practice, requiring advance approval of 60% of registered groups would very likely block any new or changed literature from being produced, especially when one considers that only about 10% of meeting groups voted on ballot Proposals for the 2022 ABC.

ACA's extensive process of fellowship review, followed by Conference debate, ensures that only Proposals supported by the Fellowship will receive final Conference approval.

Finally, the proposers assert that there has been a "flurry" of "untamed" ACA literature of "questionable conceptual integrity" that "confuse more than they clarify", with a "scattershot" approach to recovery.

This is an inaccurate reflection of the pattern of WSO publications. The Big Red Book was published in 2006, the YWB in 2007 followed by Strengthening My Recovery in 2013, and the LLWB in 2014. The Loving Parent Guidebook will be the first new book published since then.

In summary, the WSO Board of Trustees does not favor this proposal.

Proposal 2023 – 12

Submitted on September 28, 2022, by WEB0546

Issue: The "singleness of purpose" of AA's 12 Steps is guiding chronic alcoholics to abstinence with lifestyle stability. The original 12 steps were not designed to carry the heavy burdens of multigenerational, unprocessed grief from trauma resulting from abuse/neglect perpetrated upon adult children victims through family dysfunction. Thus, we propose that "The 12 Steps for Trauma Recovery and Emotional Sobriety" be approved as an alternative set of 12 steps for healing adult child trauma.

Background: AA co-founder Bill Wilson wrote in "Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier" that many AA old timers lacked emotional sobriety. ACA founder Tony A. stated that the 12 Steps need to address trauma recovery in gentler terms. The "singleness of purpose" of the original 12 steps did not address "emotional sobriety" then, and do not address "trauma recovery" now. Seeking more, Bill W. and Tony A. understood this. We are The Next Frontier! "The 12 Steps for Trauma Recovery and Emotional Sobriety" are endorsed in writing by Doctor Charles. L. Whitfield, (Author: "Healing the Child Within" and ACA Big Red Book "Doctor's Opinion"). He describes "The Trauma Steps" as "well written", "wise work", "functional", and "accurate in describing the 3 Stages of Trauma Recovery" in the Doctor's

Opinion. Doctor Whitfield recommends ACA adopt "The Trauma Steps" through the ACA WSO proposal process. Marty S. wrote a significant amount of cornerstone literature for ACA. Marty stated, "The Trauma Steps harmonize The Adapted AA Steps with Tony A's Steps." This is accomplished in the language and concepts from the ACA Big Red Book (BRB). Marty offered input on 3 of these steps. The AA World Services Intellectual Property Administrator respectfully described "The 12 Steps for Trauma Recovery and Emotional Sobriety" as "a sufficient alternative to the original 12 steps , for ACA purposes". We suggest reading the BRB, "Strengthening My Recovery", or the ACA workbooks with these steps in hand so as to see and feel their source of inspiration.

Resources/Implementation: "The 12 Steps for Trauma Recovery and Emotional Sobriety"

- 1) We admitted we were powerless over the effects of alcoholism or other family dysfunction - that our lives had become unmanageable.
 - 2) Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to our true selves.
 - 3) Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the loving guidance of God, as we came to understand God, while learning to love ourselves with compassion.
 - 4) Made a thorough inventory of life long defenses and survival traits employed by our parents and ourselves, so we could understand the multigenerational nature of our post trauma condition.
 - 5) Admitted to God, to ourselves, to an informed other the exact nature of our childhood abuse and neglect, including related PTSD and unresolved grief.
 - 6) Allowed ourselves to be vulnerable under safe conditions, so that our Higher Power could heal the broken heart of our inner child.
 - 7) Humbly asked our Higher Power to assist us with our healing process as we learned to talk, trust, and feel all of our feelings.
 - 8) Made lists of those we harmed and those who harmed us, and became willing to forgive ourselves while praying for others.
 - 9) Worked to repair the damage in our relationships, except when to do so would expose us to unsafe people and situations, or cause harm to others.
 - 10) Continued to take personal inventory and to re-parent ourselves with unconditional love.
 - 11) Sought through prayer and meditation to develop our conscious contact with our Higher Power, praying for knowledge of Its will for us, while seeking clarity, inner peace and emotional sobriety.
 - 12) Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we humbly carried this healing message to adult children still suffering from trauma, and practiced these principles in all of our relationships.
- Copyright 2017

WSO Analysis: The WSO is aware that there is much interest in the development of alternative Steps and appreciates this Proposal's intent. Many sets of alternative Steps are already copyrighted and being used, including Tony A's Steps.

The Literature in Development Subcommittee already has a working group that is developing a second set of Twelve Steps that are loving, gentle, and trauma-informed, and that incorporate reparenting. WSO has suggested that the sponsors of this Proposal join this group and participate in the project.

In summary, the Board does not favor this Proposal.