

2024 ABC Ballot – English

The following 12 Proposals have been submitted to ACA's World Service Organization (WSO) for possible inclusion on the 2024 ABC agenda.

NOTE: Your group is being asked to vote Yes, No, or No Opinion on each Proposal:

- Yes – our group believes this Proposal should be discussed at the ABC
- No – our group does not believe this Proposal needs to be discussed at the ABC
- No Opinion – our group does not have an opinion or cannot reach a decision about this Proposal

Any proposal that receives at least a 66.7% affirmative vote from the groups participating in this voting process will be included as part of the ABC agenda.

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Proposal 1 - The Promises

Submitted by WEB0505

Issue: We propose changing the ACA literature so that The Promises would be printed and presented in the present tense and no longer be presented in the future tense.

Background: Members of our group have had the experience of reading The Promises in the present tense at other meetings and brought it to our group. We find them to be more meaningful as we are currently experiencing the fulfillment of these Promises. The Promises below show the current language in Bold and the proposed language in parentheses.

1. We **will discover** (are discovering) our real identities by loving and accepting ourselves.
2. Our self-esteem **will increase** (is increasing) as we give ourselves approval on a daily basis.
3. Fear of authority figures and the need to “people-please” **will leave** (are leaving) us.
4. Our ability to share intimacy **will grow** (is growing) inside us.
5. As we face our abandonment issues, we **will be attracted** (are attracted) by strengths and **become** (are becoming) more tolerant of weaknesses.
6. We **will enjoy** (are enjoying) feeling stable, peaceful, and financially secure.
7. We **will learn** (are learning) how to play and have fun in my life.
8. We **will choose** (are choosing) to love people who can love and be responsible for themselves.
9. Healthy boundaries and limits **will become** (are becoming) easier for us to set.
10. Fears of failure and success **will leave** (are leaving) us, as we intuitively make healthier choices.
11. With help from our ACA support group, we **will slowly release** (are slowly releasing) our dysfunctional behaviors.
12. Gradually, with our Higher Power’s help, we **will learn** (are learning) to expect the best and get it.

Resources/Implementation: We understand that there may be special guidelines for how a change like this would happen, if the ABC approves this.

WSO Analysis:

Response:

ACA groups can already modify The Promises in the manner this Proposal suggests, for use within their group with group conscience.

Officially changing the way The ACA Promises are written in ACA literature would require every document/publication where it is referenced to be re-printed. Almost all Conference-approved literature contains a copy of the Promises as presently written.

Factors to consider:

- Changing this piece of literature would require broad fellowship input and approval, e.g., surveys, town halls, etc.
- Any changes to our publications should be very well thought out and considered. The costs for changing this text in all our documentation and publications would be very expensive and take time and resources away from other means of carrying the message.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Proposal 2 - Literature Projects

Submitted by MA047, Cambridge, MA, USA

Issue: We propose that all WSO literature projects, new or in development, must pass ABC motions initiated by group ballot proposals to start or continue development (publication not guaranteed). Proposals should detail the unmet need(s) the literature addresses and its synergy with existing ACA literature, and ideally provide all ACAs access to a 25-50 page review draft 20 days before any ABC vote. Exception: literature approved by the Literature Evaluation Subcommittee before 6 October 2023.

Background: Requiring WSO literature projects to undergo an ABC motion vote initiated by a registered group's ballot proposal promotes the efficient use of WSO resources by limiting projects to those with broad fellowship support. Proposals from WSO Committees, the WSO Board of Trustees, Regions, and Intergroups can be perceived as having more authority and weight. To address that perception, this proposal requires that literature proposals start at the group level to ensure more balanced decision-making. It strengthens #1 on the Commitment to Service, "Affirming that the true power of our program rests in the membership of the meetings and is expressed through our Higher Power and through group conscience." (See page 601 of the ACA Fellowship Text).

Reviewing a sample draft, if available, allows the fellowship to check if the proposed literature aligns with ACA principles and 12 Traditions. This proposal does not apply to conference-approved or published fellowship-review mode literature translations. Literature and proposals that do not pass at an ABC can still be developed outside WSO for future ballot submissions. Such literature can be circulated (as long as it respects the existing literature development policy and displays no WSO logos) per WSO's open literature policy.

Resources/Implementation: Our group is prepared to collaborate with the Literature Committee and WSO Board of Trustees to draft language for the Operating Policy and Procedures Manual (OPPM, available at <http://acawso.org>), making the ballot proposal addition to WSO's literature development process clear. We propose that the Literature Committee implement and ensure compliance with these changes while the Board of Trustees provides oversight.

WSO Analysis:

Response:

This proposal would add an additional step to the existing literature evaluation process by requiring delegates to review and approve each suggestion for a new piece of ACA literature prior to its being developed, therefore lengthening the process for approval of new literature.

Currently new ACA literature can be proposed in any one of four ways, as per the Operating Policies and Procedures Manual:

1. By means of a delegate motion at an ABC

2. By any ACA group that develops it
3. As directed by the Board of Trustees
4. As created by the Literature Committee.

Delegates already have the ability to direct the Literature Committee to write new literature at an ABC, as well as the ability to grant final Conference approval for all literature initiated in any of the above four ways.

Factors to consider:

- Adding this additional step
 - Will limit the Literature Committee's ability to produce new literature.
 - May risk losing volunteers and groups who are interested in working on a specific literature project, since they may have to wait up to a year for approval to begin any work on it.
- There are currently numerous pieces of ACA literature in progress to become conference-approved, after fellowship review, that were not initiated by a ballot proposal. One example is *A New Hope*, which was developed and used by a meeting group in Florida before being submitted to the Literature Evaluation team as proposed literature.
- If this proposal is implemented, it will result in additional ballot proposals each year requiring additional time for the:
 - Ballot Proposal Committee
 - ACA meeting groups
 - and at the ABC - to go through these proposals.
- Discussion of alternative solutions to the perceived problems with the current literature development and evaluation process raised in the proposal can be done independently of this proposal by gathering broad fellowship input, e.g., surveys, town halls, etc.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Proposal 3 - Publish Introductory Book

Submitted by FL215, Ormond Beach, FL USA, CA1179, Encino, CA, USA, IA029, Davenport, IA, USA, VA092, Falls Church, VA, USA, PA076, Oaks, PA, USA

Issue: We propose that WSO develop an introductory guidebook (about 200 pages long) that focuses on the essential needs of ACA recovery, including for new ACA members, with a proposed publication date of no later than May 2027. This book would include a gentle framework for working ACA's 12 Steps, discuss how the Steps interact with reparenting, and contain shares and perspectives that reflect ACA's diverse global fellowship.

Background: Existing ACA literature is comprehensive, but the program's essence is scattered over four textbooks totaling more than 1,300 pages. It can be overwhelming for members (especially newcomers) trying to practice the program. Many leave without fully understanding ACA's healing message.

This proposal would create an introductory guidebook that can be understood by ACA members of all languages and cultures in their first two years of recovery. This book would use plain, gentle language. It would introduce the basics of ACA—steps, reparenting and essential recovery skills like boundaries and connecting with others. Practical tools and exercises would aid the reader.

A similar project was promised multiple times at the Annual Business Conference, starting with the 2018 WSO chair report. But it was never put to a Conference vote, and this has caused confusion within the Literature Committee. Approving this ballot proposal would enable delegates to set a clear mandate and publication deadline for ACA world service.

ACA currently has only a trifold and pamphlet for newcomers. Two other projects that originated outside WSO (the Ready Set Go workshop and the New Hope Beginners meeting format) help newcomers in group settings. But these projects cannot replace an introductory guidebook, which all ACA members can use on their own or while working with fellow travelers.

A strong introductory guidebook could literally be lifesaving for ACA members of all languages, backgrounds, and levels of recovery experience. It also could empower sponsors/fellow travelers and therapists to carry the message to those who still suffer.

Implementation/Resources: Numerous volunteers have shown their willingness and ability to develop an introductory guidebook focusing on essential ACA recovery skills, and extensive materials are in development. If WSO commits itself to prioritizing an introductory guidebook, as we hope the Annual Business Conference will support, the proposed literature can be completed on an expedited basis.

There is no significant financial cost associated with developing a specialized introductory guidebook. In fact, such a resource would likely bring new revenue to ACA WSO while better serving the global fellowship.

WSO Analysis:

Response:

We have heard from the fellowship for many years that there is a need for a concise introductory book that includes the ACA Twelve Steps, reparenting, and tools that can be used in working an ACA program and have been working toward that goal.

Factors to consider:

- Such a book would make translation around the world significantly easier and has the opportunity to include more diverse shares and experiences from the lived experience of our fellowship.
- The Literature Committee is currently working on implementing a motion on revising the BRB that was passed at the 2021 ABC: "We move that a new literature subcommittee begin planning a revised edition of the Big Red Book, with new testimonials and updated content, to be more inclusive of all experience of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion/spirituality, and a broader range of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds."
- Additional volunteers will be required for this project if passed, and timelines will be dependent on resources.
- There are some workbooks that are being used for newcomers such as "A New Hope" and "Ready Set Go." These books are scheduled to be published, however these do not provide the full scope this proposal is requesting.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Proposal 4 - Affirm Non-Conference Approved Literature

Submitted by IG729, WeAgnostics Virtual IG

Issue: Change and affirm language in the Operating Policy and Procedures Manual (OPPM) regarding usage of outside literature. OPPM to read: “It has always been accepted that ACA should remain eclectic in choosing literature. That is, ACA meetings may draw from various sources without censorship. Each group is cautioned to be extremely careful in selecting materials, reviewing them against the 12 Traditions that govern our fellowship. This policy is subject to change only per Conference approval.”

Background: The current literature policy in the OPPM (p. 29), only addresses ACA’s open literature policy in passing. This policy has a history in our fellowship that is intimately intertwined with the identity of our fellowship. While both the BRB and the literature trifold provide more information about this policy, the authors of this proposal believe it is expedient to include a clear commitment to ACA’s open literature policy in the OPPM.

Adding the phrase, “without censorship” allows meetings to use their group conscience process in accordance with Tradition 4 and ensures no censorship from outside the meeting regarding the group’s choices. Eclectic means deriving ideas, styles, or choices from a broad and diverse range of sources. This would allow all groups to choose appropriate outside literature based on their individual group’s needs.

Many members and meetings value the literature ACA has produced. Due to the complexity of the ACA condition, this literature will never be able to meet all the needs of every adult child. This proposed open literature policy allows individual members and meetings to choose the resources that best serve their recovery.

Per Concept 6, the “annual business conference... traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy” such as changes to the literature policy. The authors of this proposal believe that making this explicit in the OPPM benefits the fellowship as a whole.

Implementation/Resources:

Implementation: This would be implemented by a well-informed group conscience vote of the Conference with the results of this vote distributed to the fellowship and the proposed changes implemented in the OPPM.

Resources include:

- Big Red Book (BRB) pp. XXXVI, 510, 612
- Tradition 4 - <https://adultchildren.org/literature/traditions/>
- ACA Literature Committee Policies trifold - https://adultchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/Literature/Literature_Policy_EN_US_LTR.pdf

WSO Analysis:

Response:

ACA's Literature policy says groups can use non-conference approved literature if it is in alignment with the Twelve Traditions. Page 612 of the BRB says "Each group is asked to be extremely careful in selecting outside material." It goes on to cite several of the Traditions and questions to consider when making literature choices. There is similar wording in the Literature Policy tri-fold (see link below).

To add the words "without censorship" could suggest a group's autonomy outweighs the needs of the fellowship to ensure a level of consistency in meetings – a consistency that distinguishes an ACA meeting from any other type of meeting.

Factors to consider:

The BRB recognizes that individual members may need literature from other sources to aid their recovery and are free to do so. All meeting groups are autonomous and can already choose eclectic material, as per group conscience. And outside literature should not contradict our foundational literature.

As stated in the BRB on page 612:

- Each group needs to evaluate what effect the use of outside literature might have on the newcomer seeking recovery in ACA.
- ACA members may use various books and literature in aid of their recovery.
- The non-ACA literature also should not promote an atmosphere of therapy in the meeting or promote a given author.

If this proposal is approved for the ABC agenda, the discussion could include consideration for further broad consultation with all meeting groups on this change and its impact.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Proposal 5 - Publishing License

Submitted by IG645, Russian Speaking Regional Service Committee

Issue: We propose returning to the countries the right to serve their needs in published program literature and to manage this process - according to the publishing license from WSO.

Background: According to Tradition Four, countries can take care of their needs using their inner resources. Local service bodies are well informed about local rules and legislation, which can vary from region to region. They also know their inner market and can get better terms from the printer. This can help reduce the price of the books for our local fellow travelers, which will contribute to carrying the message to an adult child who still suffers. E.g., the Russian fellowship has printed more than four editions of the BRB and the YWB along the whole history of printed ACA literature in Russia. We know that other 12 Steps fellowships provide the countries with the right to print their fellowship literature themselves, and the printing experience leads to the explosive growth of the fellowship in the country / region. World Service bodies of these fellowships support and control this process with a publishing license. When the fellow travelers of a country devote their personal efforts in printing the literature they are more inclined to respect the copyright. We believe that our proposal can benefit the global fellowship. In our proposal we rely on the Concepts V, VI and XII and have the purpose of more balanced fellowship. We as adult children have temptation to be co-dependant and to rely on WSO in issues which we are capable of solving ourselves. On the contrary, we would like to grow and become more independent to create more points of support for our global fellowship.

Implementation/Resources: Nothing provided

WSO Analysis:

Response:

Previously Intergroups outside the US had printing licenses that allowed them to print and purchase books locally, and then split the profits with WSO (royalties). This system of local printing resulted in higher costs for the Intergroups, limited availability of translated literature globally, and caused major accounting issues.

To increase accessibility and affordability of ACA literature, a new system was implemented with a worldwide supply chain using global printing hubs. These hubs print and ship the books to where they are most needed in a cost effective manner. As a result, all countries currently have the ability to access published program literature. This new system was presented at the 2022 ABC, the AWC, the European committee, and Intergroups outside the US that were working with WSO on print requests.

Factors to consider:

In the current global system:

- ACA literature is available at lower costs due to increased volume of book orders and centralized storage.
- Intergroups outside the US can focus on growing their fellowship rather than on publishing, similar to the US Intergroups.
- Those living abroad can have access to books in their first language, no matter where they live.
- Centralized translation management allows for faster translations and more translation support.
- The most up-to-date ACA books are available around the world as WSO publishing activities are aligned with ABC motions and consistent with our publishing standards.
- Strengthened copyright and accounting protocols have been implemented as required

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Proposal 6 - Delegate-Driven Conference Committee

Submitted by WEB1019, TEL0341, WEB0609, WEB0616, WEB0841, CA1312. Cottonwood, CA, USA, WEB1169, IG595 Washington State, USA, WA0190, Olympia, WA, USA, Region 5 (NE USA), CA915, Arroyo Grande, CA, USA, CA1006, San Luis Obispo, CA, USA, WEB381, IG76, Central Coast, CA, USA

Issue: The 2024 ABC Delegates authorize creation of an autonomous Conference Coordinating Committee, directly responsible to the Conference of Delegates, to partner with ACA World Service Organization (WSO) in planning, organizing, and implementing ACA's annual and quarterly business meetings (ABC and QDMs).

This committee would initially consist of at least 5-10 delegates. Funding of up to \$500 annually for independent communications platforms would be allocated from WSO's 7th Tradition contributions.

Background: The group conscience process of the ACA fellowship is expressed through delegate voting at the Annual Business Conference and the Quarterly Delegate Meetings. Currently, Trustees of ACA's World Service Organization organize these meetings, aided by committees responsible to the Board, including the ABC Committee and the Ballot Prep Committee.

On p.62 of the 2023 Delegate Binder, the ABC/AWC Study Group recommended that "in order to create a healthy relationship between the Annual Business Conference Delegation and the World Service Organization Board of Trustees, we believe the delegation needs to be empowered to take on more responsibility" (see link below). This aligns with the division of responsibilities between the ABC on the one hand and the WSO Board of Trustees on the other as outlined in Concept VI.

Creating a Conference Coordinating Committee, in accordance with Tradition 9, is seen as a first step in the direction of delegates sharing responsibility with WSO for materializing the fellowship-wide group conscience process.

A number of other 12 step programs use Conference Committees to facilitate the fellowship-wide group conscience process. As with ACA's foundational documents (Steps, Traditions, Concepts), authors of this proposal acknowledge that this works for other programs and look to those programs for inspiration and guidance as we formulate what works for ACA.

Resources and Implementation: Although a number of delegates involved in drafting this proposal are ready to offer service on this committee, the invitation to participate on the committee will be open to all delegates. Upon approval of this proposal, interested delegates will present volunteer bios and statements of interest 30 days before the QDM in August. New

committee members may be added by Delegate vote at any subsequent ABC or QDM, following the same voting procedure.

By suggesting the establishment of independent communications platforms (such as Gmail account/drive, Slack or Discord chat platform, and/or a ZOOM account to facilitate committee meetings), authors of this proposal aim to achieve structural separation from WSO as a foundation for a healthy and balanced partnership, in service to the ACA fellowship as a whole.

Finally, below is a list of links referencing some of the fellowship resources informing this approach, specifically Tradition 9, Concept VI, the 2023 Report from the ABC Study Group, and a Comline Blog post presented by the Ballot Prep Committee in August 2023:

- Tradition 9 (<https://adultchildren.org/literature/traditions/>)
- Concept VI (<https://adultchildren.org/literature/the-twelve-concepts-of-aca/>)
- 2023 Report from the ABC Study Group (2023 ACA WSO Annual Business Conference Delegate Binder -v 1.3
<https://adultchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-ACA-WSO-Annual-Business-Conference-Delegate-Binder-v-1.3.pdf>), pp.59-69
- Transformations - a Comline Blog post presented by the BPC (<https://adultchildren.org/comline/fellowship-news/transformations/>)

WSO Analysis:

Response:

An ABC (planning) Committee already exists. Their statement of purpose is:

- Oversee the planning and implementation of the Annual Business Conference/Quarterly Delegate Meetings.
- Strive to facilitate an effective assembly establishing the collective conscience of our fellowship regarding the maintenance of ACA World Services.
- Support those who serve the ABC/QDM.
- Include Delegate feedback to prepare agendas.

While it is a WSO committee, they are committed to ensuring that the delegates' direction is followed in the planning and the agenda setting of the ABC/QDM. The ABC Committee is composed of former and current delegates, intergroup representatives and WSO volunteers. All delegates are invited to join.

As a result of previous ABC motions, there is also an ABC Study Group tasked with writing a Conference Charter, which would set the stage for Conference-driven Committees. Please see links in the **Resources** section below to previous ABC Motions.

Factors to consider:

- Other major 12 Step World Services that have conference committees first created a Conference Charter and an updated Concepts document before creating the

conference committees. These foundational documents were used to inform the purpose and scope of the committees so their path forward was clear.

- These ACA foundational documents that will inform the work of a future conference-driven committee are currently being developed at the direction of the delegates in the ABC Study Group and the Concept 2 & 6 Study Group.
- When/if a conference-driven committee is created an implementation plan will need to be developed for the delegates' consideration at a future ABC.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Relevant Motions Passed at the 2022 ABC

Motion: To create an ad-hoc committee that will study Concepts II and VI and report to the 2023 ABC on possible revisions. Delegates and the fellowship will be notified of the study and invited to join the ad-hoc committee.

Motion: I move to direct the ABC AWC Committee to coordinate an in-depth and inclusive study regarding possible changes to the ABC and AWC structures. The study will consider all fellowship viewpoints, and all delegates and members of the fellowship will be invited to participate. Findings will be presented to the 2023 ABC, and regular updates will be provided to 2022 ABC delegates and the fellowship.

Relevant Motions Passed at 2023 ABC/QDMs

Motion: To request a six month extension, with a detailed update at the next Quarterly Business Meeting, to complete proposed revisions to Concepts 2 & 6, but to affirm that concept 2 will define the conference as the voice and conscience of the ACA fellowship.

- At the 2023 ABC, 91% of the delegates approved to continue the study and expand its scope to include a conference charter.

Motion: To approve extending the ABC/AWC Study to provide recommendations without limitation, including:

- Drafting a charter for the conference, and
- Recommendations for changes in other areas, depending on availability of adequate resources, and
- Separating the AWC study from the ABC study, creating an additional study as resources permit, and
- that the delegates will receive regular updates until the study is completed.

Proposal 7 - Modify ABC and QDMs

Submitted by the IT Committee and the ABC Committee

Proposal: We propose that ACA hold annually one business conference and one other Delegate meeting. This one other Delegate meeting would replace the three Quarterly Delegate Meetings (QDMs) that are currently being held.

Background: The following was passed at the 2022 ABC: To schedule quarterly delegate meetings of 2-4 hours, in July/August, November, and February. The July/August quarterly meeting will handle spillover business.

The current demand of conducting four meetings a year taxes WSO volunteers in both the IT and ABC committees an unreasonable amount. WSO does not have the volunteer pool to support the pace set by the current schedule. It is our experience that the volunteers that participate have only a few weeks off after the completion of one meeting and the start of planning for another. This has led to volunteer burnout and some members leaving WSO service.

This ballot proposal simply asks to reduce the number of quarterly delegate meetings from three a year to one without introducing additional changes. There is already an ABC Study group that is examining the form and structure of these Delegate meetings.

Resources/Implementation: Work on implementing this change would be done in consultation and coordination between the ABC Committee and the IT Committees.

WSO Analysis:

Response:

While the response to QDMs over the first year has been generally positive, as measured by survey responses, the proposing committees (ABC and IT that do most of the work) would like the delegates to consider discussing the future and format of these additional delegate meetings and whether they are serving the fellowship.

Factors to consider:

- The motion to start quarterly delegate meetings was approved by the delegates at the 2022 ABC as an adaptation of the Board's proposed motion that one additional day be scheduled to complete overflow work from that ABC.
- The amount of time it takes to plan four meetings per year greatly stretches the available resources of both committees. There was hope that more members of the Fellowship would step up to participate on these committees, but that has not happened.
- If there are not enough volunteers to support QDMs, it is possible that some QDMs would not be able to be held.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Motions Background

The motion to start quarterly delegate meetings was approved by the delegates at the 2022 ABC as an adaptation of the Board suggested proposal that one additional day be scheduled to complete overflow work from ABC.

Here is this motion brought forward by the board to the 2022 ABC:

Board Motion passed on January 8, 2022: Authorization of an Overflow Day for ABC To authorize a third or overflow day to the Annual Business Conference (ABC) schedule within two months of the ABC, for any delegate conversation/voting not completed during the regularly scheduled ABC. This additional session will be held if at least 60% of the ABC delegates votes in favor of it.

Background: Some of the complaints of previous ABC include scheduling too much in the time available, agenda items are rushed, there is not enough delegate input, proposals which are referred to the board may not be addressed in a timely fashion. For the 2022 ABC the date of May 21 is suggested as the overflow day.

Based on discussion of the above at the ABC the following motion was passed:

2022 ABC Motion: Motion from discussion of adding additional days to the ABC: To schedule quarterly delegate meetings of 2-4 hours, in July/August, November, and February. The July/August quarterly meeting will handle spillover business.

Based on the vote: I **am in favour of this motion passes with 85.4%** of the vote. 82 votes tallied and 5 abstentions.

Proposal 8 - Ratification of Trustees

Submitted by Region 2 - Greater Western US, CA1006, San Luis Obispo, CA, USA, CA915, Arroyo Grande, CA, USA, CA1064, Fresno, CA, USA, CA1265, Fresno, CA, USA, IG76, Central Coast, CA, USA, WEB0381, IG595, Washington State, USA

Issue: We propose that each year's ballot process include worldwide ratification of each World Service Trustee. For fully informed decision making, Concept XI information (contact information, education, and work and program experience), and each Trustee's understanding of the Traditions and Concepts would be included on the ballot form that is submitted to the fellowship.

Background: Delegates make decisions on behalf of the fellowship and in service thereto. Delegates ratify each of the WSO Trustees at the Annual Business Conferences. The Traditions and Concepts limit the Board's authority in serving the fellowship by: providing information; facilitating ACA communication; complying with corporate regulations; carrying out delegate decisions when feasible; facilitating program access; and hosting the ABC, not governing or controlling it.

As per the fiscal report given at a recent WSO Teleconference, ACA is now the 4th largest 12-Step program in the world based on financials of revenues and sales; total revenues in 2022 were \$1,700,000 and are expected to be over \$2,000,000 by the end of 2023 according to the ACA General Manager. WSO Trustees need to have the education and aptitude to deal with the corporate, custodial, fiduciary, and leadership roles required of the ACA WSO Board. Further, while the WSO Board could be composed of up to 20 members, it currently has only five. These five split their attention between their communities, families, and vocational responsibilities. They do ACA service in other ACA settings as well as work on their own recovery while trying to do Board work and participate in multiple WSO committees. We need more WSO Trustees with the ability to fulfill their fellowship and corporate responsibilities.

Additionally, Concept XI encourages selection of quality trusted servants on our "...service boards, (and) ...the personal qualifications of their members... will always be matters for serious care and concern."

Implementation/Resources: For each ABC, each Trustee applicant may submit an ABC ballot proposal asking worldwide delegates to consider him/her to be on the WSO Board for the following year. These proposals will be due on the same dates as all other proposals.

The "Proposal" section (limited to 75 words) will include: contact information, a request to serve another year as a Trustee, and why.

In order to comply with corporate requirements, transparency, and ACA Concept XI, each proposal will include a "Background" section (limited to 250 words), with personal history,

including: contact information, education and applicable work experience, previous and current ACA program service, and relevant experiences and expertise.

In lieu of the “Resources/Implementation” section of the proposal, a new section (also limited to 300 words), “Traditions and Concepts,” would replace it. All board members would give their interpretation of Tradition 9 and Concepts I, II, VI, XI.

WSO Analysis:

Response:

Currently all trustees are extensively vetted by the Nominating Committee and ratified each year by worldwide voting of our delegates at the ABC (Annual Business Conference).

This proposal would ask for increased disclosure of the personal information of the Trustees being ratified. This could potentially discourage current and future trustees from serving on the board due to additional public disclosures of personal information, especially at a time when we need more Board members.

Currently the Bylaws require that qualified Trustees are added to the ABC agenda for ratification. After worldwide online voting takes place for each Trustee, the opportunity for minority opinion is made available, and a revote is taken if necessary. This proposal would create the possibility that some/all Trustees would not reach the agenda for ratification.

Factors to consider:

- Regarding fiscal matters, WSO employs skilled staff and professionals with strong checks and balances in our system to ensure our finances are protected.
- We need diversity in our Trustee members with good recovery from all walks in life, in both business and fellowship.
- This process would not only duplicate the comprehensive vetting work done by the Nominating Committee, it also could make it more difficult for people who do apply to be ratified due to adding several more steps than currently exist.
- There is no “corporate” or legal requirement to disclose trustee last names and personal information.
- Other 12 Step Programs that we’re aware of do not disclose the last name and personal information of board members nor require approval by groups outside of their Conference.
- This would add additional Ballot proposals each year, one for each Trustee (up to 20 Trustees), expanding the work for:
 - Meeting groups to review additional proposals,
 - The Ballot Prep and ABC Committees,
 - Delegates at the ABC by requiring an extensive amount of valuable ABC time to process the resulting motions for each proposal.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Background Info. from Nominating Committee

The Trustee's bios are posted before the Annual Business Conference (ABC) in the delegate binder for informed decision making.

At the ABC, Trustees speak about their service and their goals. In 2023, they also spoke about their professional experience.

All current trustees have been successfully ratified by worldwide online voting by our delegates. The Nominating Committee thoroughly vets all trustee candidates and presents only qualified candidates for the Board.

The WSO Nominating Committee's primary purpose is to thoroughly vet and then nominate qualified members to the ACA WSO Board of Trustees who have ACA program knowledge, emotional sobriety/good recovery, and can work cooperatively with others as per the OPPM, III WSO BOARD OF TRUSTEES, Section J & K

The Nominating Committee spends approximately 10-12 hours on the vetting process for each Board candidate. The submission requires the candidate's full name, WSO service history, education, training, and work experience.

The Nominating Committee holds 5 – 6 interviews per candidate. This includes the candidate, 3 of their references and at least 2 others who know them in service.

The delegates may send concerns about Board members to the Nominating Committee throughout the year.

Proposal 9 - Meeting Listing/Delisting

Submitted by Region 5 (NE USA); Region 2 (Greater Western USA); Central Coast IG76, CA, USA; Washington State IG595, WA, USA; CA1006, Pismo Beach, CA, USA; CA915, Arroyo Grande, CA, USA; WEB381, Arroyo Grande, CA, USA

Issue: All current and future meeting listing and delisting criteria shall be subject to review and approval of the conference body, as a large matter of Policy (per Concepts I, II, VI). Any current meeting listing criteria shall be brought forth to the 2024 Annual Business Conference (ABC) for that review. WSO shall not institute new or update existing meeting listing criteria without the separate approval of the Conference.

Background: Sometime in 2023, for the first time ever, certain criteria appeared as requirements for registering or updating a meeting (see bottom of <https://adultchildren.org/meeting/meeting-register/>). While some of these criteria appear to have a reasonable, clear basis (such as agreeing to follow the 12 Traditions), others seem puzzling. For instance, “We understand that if our group or its listing are in violation of any California State laws or USA Federal government laws, our meeting may be removed from the WSO website until such time as we move into compliance with those laws.” What if my meeting is in Africa?

Whether the Conference agrees that this a reasonable and fair basis for being considered a true and fully legitimate ACA meeting is currently unclear. It is also unclear from where the full set of criteria originated, and whether it has been reviewed or approved by the WSO Board. Either way, the full set of criteria have not been submitted for approval by the Conference.

Implementation/Resources: In the past year, the WSO Board has created a Service Review Panel (SRP) “of Board and non-Board ACA members to evaluate meetings and event listings and refuse or remove listings that are inconsistent with the ACA Twelve Traditions or the ACA Twelve Concepts, or that violate provisions of the OPPM or the WSO Bylaws.” (see Motions 2022_1210_01 and 2023_0429_12 in the Book of Motions <https://acawso.org/aca-wso-book-of-motions/>)

While Traditions apply to all service entities within ACA, the WSO OPPM and Bylaws are governance documents that pertain and apply to WSO only – not to meetings, the Fellowship, or any Intergroup or Region. (Autonomy, Tradition IV)

The set of requirements for being an ACA meeting beyond following Steps and Traditions is a decision for the Fellowship via the Conference. The WSO Board is meant to act as Trusted Servants of the Conference per Traditions II and IX as well as Concepts I and II. Perhaps a way through this could be to have the Service Review Panel made to be an advisory body that, while accountable to the Executive Committee of the Board of WSO (per Tradition 9), functions only to (1) make recommendations to the Conference for review/approval and (2)

act on violations only of those criteria that the Conference has approved by Substantial Unanimity. In addition, all members of the SRP shall be nominated and elected by the Conference on an annual basis.

WSO Analysis:

Response:

At the 2023 ABC, the Board informed the delegates that meeting listings policies were being reviewed/developed for recommendation to the fellowship and would appreciate an opportunity to discuss these policies at the 2024 ABC.

Concepts VI and VII state that, our Annual Business Conference “traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Annual Business Conference also recognizes that the ... active responsibility in most of these matters would be exercised primarily by the Trustee members of World Service Organization”, and “the Trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all of the world service affairs of existing policies of ACA.”

In 2023, the criteria for registering meetings for the meeting directory was clarified to more clearly detail the criteria as listed in the existing policy in the BRB on page 602.

- The previous criteria was general - “...listing on the WSO website indicates their agreement to abide by the ACA 12 Traditions.”
- The intention of adding a checklist of agreements to register a meeting was to provide more clarity and support for new groups and newcomers.

Factors to consider:

- As per Concept VI and VII, as described above, the Board determined:
 - Because World Services is bound by the laws where it is incorporated, when WSO received notification of a pending lawsuit about a protected class of ACA members being ejected from a registered meeting, there was a need to protect our legal and fiduciary responsibilities. This was done by adding a legal point to the checklist.
 - to add a statement that when meetings register they agree to follow *The Suggested Commitments to Service* as stated in BRB on page 601.
- There will be times when the Board may need to make an immediate decision regarding a meeting listing in order to fulfill their fiduciary and legal responsibilities to the Fellowship.
 - Updates regarding any of these decisions would be provided to the Fellowship at the first possible opportunity.
- The Board created a peer review panel of experienced WSO volunteers to form the first “Service Review Panel” to ensure there was a thorough review of complaints about meetings and when necessary, provide recommendations to the Board.

Requiring nomination and election of those on this panel by the ABC could become problematic, especially when there is a need for mid-year additions/replacements

- To give the responsibility to the conference to manage the day to day administration of the listing directory adds both time and steps to the task of managing and conducting the affairs of ACA.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Motion Passed by Delegates at 2022 ABC: I move that "only" meetings for marginalized or oppressed communities (eg BIPOC, LGBTQ+, women), as well as men's groups, continue to be listed on the WSO website to provide safe spaces in service of carrying the message (Tradition 5); that the fellowship maintain its Tradition 4 option to delist any "only" group that negatively affects ACA as a whole, for example by using offensive language or by alienating marginalized/oppressed adult children, which would violate Tradition 5.

Proposal 10 - Change Tradition 4

Submitted by PA076, Oakes, Pennsylvania, USA

Issue: We propose that the last sentence of the Fourth Tradition be removed, which states: We cooperate with all other Twelve-Step programs.

Background:

- To our knowledge, no other 12 Step program uses this language. It is also unclear what the intent was or why this sentence was added.
- At the time this was written there were only a small handful of 12 Step, 12 Tradition, programs. Today in our research we find well over 50 other 12 Step programs, and more being formed all the time, and it is unclear whether they all follow the Traditions.
- There is no explanation in our BRB or anywhere else of what the limits are of this cooperation with other 12 Steps programs.
- We think this has the potential for being in conflict with Tradition Six about lending our name, as well as Tradition 10 and outside issues.
- It may currently be used to validate questionable meeting resources, such as therapeutic techniques or the use of literature from other fellowships that could dilute the ACA message.

Implementation/Resources: If this proposal becomes a motion that gets passed by ABC Delegates, then Tradition Four will go through a process that includes getting approval by a certain percentage of ACA groups.

WSO Analysis:

Response:

We believe the reason this sentence is part of Tradition Four is so that the possibility is open for groups to cooperate with other Twelve-Step programs, for example at conferences that provide information on multiple 12 step programs. We are not aware of any instances that this last sentence has caused any issues.

Because the Traditions is a foundational document, it is advised that this change not be undertaken without full fellowship support and input, such as surveys, town halls, etc.

Factors to consider:

- A change to this foundational document will require a new ad hoc committee/working group with volunteers to survey and gather input from the fellowship before creating an implementation plan for the next ABC.
- Research and decisions will need to be made regarding the process for changing any foundational documents.
- Need worldwide fellowship approval on significant document change.

- This would require substantial financial costs to change all our literature that contain the Traditions.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Proposal 11 - Create Committee to Identify Discrimination or Bias

Submitted by WEB0150, WEB0384, WEB1061, and the Racial Trauma Service Group

Issue: In order to best serve and retain current ACA members, attract and reach marginalized Adult Children, and to sustain the common welfare and unity of ACA, we call upon the WSO to create a committee, and for ACA members to step forward in service by evaluating and examining the WSO's internal structures and carrying of the ACA Message in order to best serve and reach the still suffering adult child.

Background: ACA's Tradition Five states, "Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the adult child who still suffers."

At this time in ACA, the internet has allowed unprecedented access to ACA recovery for underdeveloped and underserved groups. Yet ACA has not seen a relative increase of diversity in its membership.

The purpose of this committee would be to evaluate and examine current internal policies, outreach strategies, and accessibility to the fellowship/program resources to ensure ACA is effectively able to fulfill its primary purpose.

Implementation/Resources: Possible areas of implementation:

1. Work to ensure equity and fairness in the fellowship's overall message, service structure, and recovery resources by examining current policies and practices that may perpetuate discrimination or bias.
2. Work to ensure that ACA literature and ACA meetings are available and accessible to adult children with disabilities or other challenges to access (such as location or financial).
3. Advocate for diverse representation in service roles, fellowship outreach, and content creation to attract and reach the still suffering adult child.

WSO Analysis:

Response:

At the direction of the 2023 delegates, WSO already has a group called "Racial Trauma Service Group" whose task is to ensure issues of racial equity and racial trauma are

addressed in our literature. At the Quarterly Delegate meeting in August, delegates approved the following to be included in the scope of this group, “advising the ACA WSO Board on current and future projects and policies to ensure racial bias and/or systemic oppression are being considered.”

If this Proposal makes it to the ABC agenda and a Committee is created that has a different focus than the Racial Trauma Service Group, clear boundaries will need to be set to ensure the Fellowship and WSO understand the differences.

Factors to consider:

- The Board is currently in the process of conducting a review of the OPPM and the WSO internal service structure in 2024 with professionals to assess “best practices,” which would include this goal.
- If another committee is created, committee members will have to be recruited, and WSO is already stretched thin in terms of volunteers with the current 18 committees.
- Accessibility of ACA literature is covered under the mandate of the Publishing Committee.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Proposal 12 - Intl Lit Scholarship Fund

Submitted by the Global Members Committee

Issue:

- a. To expand the scope of the International Literature Scholarship Fund to include funding additional publishing activities, such as translating, typesetting, printing and distribution,
- and**
- b. To change the name of the fund to more accurately convey these activities.

Name Suggestions:

- International Literature Equity Fund, or
- International 5th Tradition Assistance Fund.

Background: The current International Literature Scholarship Fund was created by combining two ABC 2021 proposals (from South Africa and the Global Committee) with the purpose of helping to carry the ACA message to developing fellowships in regions around the world dealing with the challenges of financial inequity. It has already been successful in that goal with English literature.

1. However, there are a number of activities that the fund can't currently be used for, due to legal restrictions resulting from how it was initially established.
2. The fund's original intended purpose was to supply ACA Literature to developing regions, the majority of which do not speak English. Translation has shown itself to be the critical first step to meet the needs of these regions.
3. Having Literature available in the mother tongue of new members is very important for effectively carrying the message and the growth of local fellowship.
4. While translating is volunteer-driven, there are still substantial costs involved before a book can be made available: typesetting, printing, distribution and storage. Given the complexity of the many dialects of some languages, it is also sometimes necessary to employ paid professionals to produce a unity version of the translated material.
5. We believe these aspects were not adequately clarified and thus were not provided for when the ILSF was originally established; this amendment is therefore essential to be able to execute the original intention.
6. The change of name is necessary to accurately reflect the purpose of the fund.

Implementation/Resources:

Specific examples for clearer understanding:

- The world's most populated nation is India with 22 official languages, and a Hindi-speaking population of over 500 million. In the past 1½ years, the number of ACA meetings has grown from 3 to 17; including 4 in Hindi and one Nepali but there is no literature to support them. The members are thus not able to fully participate.

- Change the country to South Africa (original proposer), with 11 official languages, and the meeting language to Afrikaans or Zulu, the same issue can be seen.
- Similarly with China and local Chinese languages.

WSO Analysis:

Response:

As background, the Board and the 2021 ABC approved the creation of this fund (see background).

The Publishing Committee has reviewed this proposal and advised the Board that expanding the scope of this fund to include translation and supporting activities is needed. They would like this to be discussed at the ABC, too.

At this time, the Board is not able to confirm the authorization level of these changes without legal counsel. If the groups approve this ballot to be on the 2024 agenda, the Board will seek legal counsel and provide this information at the 2024 ABC, if it is available.

Factors to consider:

- Expanding the scope and any name change will require funds for legal counsel to advise on following the IRS and California state guidelines.
- The word “scholarship” can have a “negative” interpretation and a change to the name of the fund might give a more positive message.
- Additional funds are needed to support translations and supporting activities. Translation work is primarily done by volunteers but funds are still needed to support the translating teams with other supporting activities such as first draft translations when machine translation is not available.
- An example of the success of this fund is that approximately \$4,800 was given to the South Africa and India intergroups for ACA literature and, as a result, their fellowships have grown. In fact, the South Africa intergroup was pleased to have been able to give a 7th tradition contribution to WSO in 2023 as a way of giving back.

Resources (for more background information) <https://acawso.org/bpc/>

Background:

In 2021, the Board passed a motion to approve two proposals. These were reviewed by the delegates at the 2021 ABC and accepted.

- Proposal 2021-11 - We propose that WSO consider setting up an ACA International Literature Scholarship fund for members who cannot afford ACA literature due to the price of the literature in their local currency, the exchange rate for their currency against the dollar, or due to their individual financial constraints.
- Proposal 2021-16 - We propose that WSO create an International Literature Scholarship Fund to help offset literature costs for meetings in emerging countries.

Board Motion 2021_0410_03: Establishment of International Literature Scholarship Fund: To establish an International Literature Scholarship Fund, to which members may make dedicated contributions. Approved unanimously

The background noted the fund would enable ACA members to directly support new international fellowships, by donating money to support literature purchases.

Since that time, the funds have been disbursed for literature purchases by the South Africa intergroup and India intergroup for a total of \$4,865.65. Their fellowships have grown as a result and the South Africa intergroup was pleased to have been able to give a 7th tradition to WSO in 2023 as a way of giving back.

The controller stated this fund has a balance of \$22,566 as of Oct 31, 2023.

Additional funds will be required to support translations and supporting activities. Translation work is primarily done by volunteers, by Adult Children for Adult Children but without additional support it could take 5-10 years to publish translated books.