

(1) Submit a clear and concisely worded motion.

We propose the Twelve Steps from the book ***Alcoholics Anonymous*** in the First, Second, Third, and Fourth editions remain as originally written in the First, Second, Third, and Fourth editions; and that the proposed side by side comparison in the *current draft of the Plain and Simple translation of the Twelve Steps* be removed; and that no other translation of the Twelve Steps be written for the proposed Plain and Simple Book.

(2) What problem does this proposed item address?

We are voicing our concern with how the Twelve Steps of A.A. are in the current draft of the Plain & Simple Language Book.

In the 2023 73rd Conference Committee on Literature background information, Item H, Doc.1, "Progress report regarding the translation of the book **Alcoholics Anonymous (Fourth Edition)** into plain and simple language"; it stated:

1. "This is no ordinary translation. The enormity of the task and the importance of getting it right is not lost on the subcommittee."
2. "Article 3 of the Conference Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board make clear that the Steps themselves should not be modified, altered, or extended. The subcommittee expects the final treatment of Chapter 5 to be consistent with that guidance."

In the 2023 73rd Conference Committee on Literature background information, Item H, Doc.2, from the TABB sub-committee report October 2022 it states under the heading, "Other outstanding items": Article 3 of the Conference Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board makes clear that the Steps themselves should not be modified, altered, or extended. The subcommittee expects the final treatment of Chapter 5 to be consistent with that guidance."

When our Area 35 Delegate, who served on the Literature Committee, gave his report back from the 73rd GSC he said he read the draft of **Chapter 5, How It Works** during the allotted reading time at the Conference. He also said that the Twelve Steps were first written by themselves then right after was a side-by-side comparison of the original Steps and a plain and simple modification of the Twelve Steps.

We believe that a side-by-side comparison violates the **Alcoholics Anonymous** Conference Charter. We are requesting the 74th General Service Conference and the TABB Subcommittee to honor the **Alcoholics Anonymous** Conference Charter. We only want the Twelve Steps as they are originally written in the book **Alcoholics Anonymous, First, Second, Third, and Fourth Editions**; and not modified, altered or extended in the Plain and Simple Book. Please remove the translated (modified, altered, and extended) Twelve steps from the draft of the Plain and Simple Book.

This is the wording from the **Alcoholics Anonymous** Conference Charter Article 3:

But no change in Article 12 of the Charter or in the Twelve Traditions of A.A. or in the Twelve Steps of A.A. may be made with less than the written consent of three-quarters of the A.A. groups, as described in the Resolution adopted by the 1955 Conference and Convention. Page 119, THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL 2021-2023 Edition

In Appendix L Resolution Authorizing The General Service Conference it states:

AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD: That neither the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous nor the warranties of Article XII of the Conference Charter shall ever be changed or amended by the General Service Conference except by first asking the consent of the registered A.A. groups of the world. [This would include all A.A. groups known to the general service offices around the world.]³ These groups shall be suitably notified of any proposal for change and shall be allowed no less than six months for consideration thereof. And before any such Conference action can be taken, there must first be received in writing within the time allotted the consent of at least three-quarters of all those registered groups who respond to such proposal.⁴

³ Resolution: It was resolved by the 1976 General Service Conference that those instruments requiring consent of three-quarters of the responding groups for change or amendment would include the Twelve Steps of A.A., should any such change or amendment ever be proposed.

⁴ Bill uses the term "registered." A.A.W.S. neither monitors nor oversees the activities or practices of any A.A. group. Groups are listed solely for purposes of accurate communications. **Page 123, THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL 2021-2023 Edition**

This problem:

It states in **Appendix O : Bylaws of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous Inc.:**
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., now has but one purpose, that of serving the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is in effect an agency created and now designated by the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous to maintain services for those who should be seeking, through Alcoholics Anonymous, the means for arresting the disease of alcoholism through the application to their own lives, in whole or in part, of the Twelve Steps which constitute the recovery program upon which the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is founded. These Twelve Steps are as follows:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. **Page 129, THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL 2021-2023 Edition**

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (hereinafter referred to as either the "General Service Board" or the "Board") claims no proprietary right in the recovery program, for these Twelve Steps, as all spiritual truths, may now be regarded as available to all mankind. However, because these Twelve Steps have proven to constitute an effective spiritual basis for life which, if followed, arrests the disease of alcoholism, the General Service Board asserts the negative right of

preventing, so far as it may be within its power so to do, any modification, alteration, or extension of these Twelve Steps, except at the instance of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in keeping with the Charter of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous as the same may from time to time be amended (hereinafter referred to as the "Charter"). **Page 130, THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL 2021-2023 Edition**

Any modification, alteration, or extension of these Twelve Step threatens our sobriety, our Unity, and our ability to ensure that the service entities remain responsive and responsible. This possible alteration will not only be a violation the Charter of Alcoholics Anonymous, and the Bylaws of A.A., but also Tradition One and Tradition Two of A.A. The Fellowship will no longer be able to harmoniously agree on the same course of action to work the Twelve Steps of recovery from alcoholism.

If the Twelve Steps are translated into plain and simple language, these translations will lose the effective Spiritual Basis for Life. Also, they will not have any effect on arresting the disease of Alcoholism and that means Death for the ones trying to sober up.

(3) What level of group conscience, if any, discussed the proposed agenda item? Make it clear who is submitting the item (an individual, group, district, area, etc.).

Note: While all items are received equally, experience has shown that ideas greatly benefit from the value of a broader group conscience. Consider if and with whom you would like to have a group conscience discussion on the proposed agenda item prior to submitting.

The Group Conscience of the Hibbing Downtown Group Hibbing, Minnesota, Area 35, Northern MN unanimously approved this proposal on June 19, 2023. The Group Conscience of District 9 Area 35 Northern MN unanimously approved this proposal on June 25, 2023.

(4) Provide background information that describes and supports the reasoning for the proposal. List background material(s) included with the proposal.

2023 73rd Conference Committee on Literature background information Item H, Doc.1, and Item H, Doc.2.

THE A.A. SERVICE MANUAL:

APPENDIX K: CURRENT CONFERENCE CHARTER ORIGINAL (United States and Canada)

APPENDIX L: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

APPENDIX O: BYLAWS OF THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, INC.

(5) What are the intended/expected outcomes if this proposed items is approved?

It would protect Bill Wilson's writings of the Twelve Steps as it does in the **Alcoholics Anonymous Current Conference Charter in Article 3, Conference Relations to A.A.:** But no change in Article 12 of the Charter or in the Twelve Traditions of A.A. or in the Twelve Steps of A.A. may be made with less than the written consent of three-quarters of the A.A. groups, as described in the Resolution adopted by the 1955 Conference and Convention.

In **Appendix O: Bylaws of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc.** which states: Because these Twelve Steps have proven to constitute an effective spiritual basis for life which, if followed, arrests the disease of alcoholism.

(6) Provide a primary contract for the submission.

Hibbing Downtown Group
Diane R. 218-929-7846 and Ricco R. 218-262-3565
Email dianer@northlc.com
riccos@northlc.com

(7) Final Comments:

If the words are altered, modified, or extended in the Twelve Steps it violates the Alcoholics Anonymous Charter and it will no longer be the Spiritual Documents Bill Wilson Wrote, "with the guidance of his Higher Power as he wrote them". It therefore would not be the Spiritual Documents that could give the Healing Grace the rest of us get and stay sober with in **Alcoholics Anonymous**.

We hope this proposal makes its way to the 74th Conference and can be voted on.

Progress report regarding the translation of the book
Alcoholics Anonymous (Fourth Edition) in to plain and simple language.

A formal agreement between AAWS and the writer was finalized on May 28, 2022. The writer has submitted chapters to Publishing, as well as the preface, the foreword, and the beginnings of a glossary.

The TABB subcommittee has requested to review final drafts of whatever completed material is available on a quarterly basis, after editorial review and revisions. Each committee member provided feedback including suggested changes, with an expectation of additional rounds of refinements to ensure the tone and tenor of each chapter is faithful to the guidance and suggestions contained in the Big Book.

This is no ordinary translation. The enormity of the task and the importance of getting it right is not lost on the subcommittee.

The Publishing Department has committed to providing the subcommittee with written updates monthly.

The Publishing Department's estimate is for the completion of one chapter a month. The writer has kept to that pace across the year. That would mean a final draft of the project by May/June of 2023.

Given the fellowship's deep and wide interest in this project, the subcommittee has given great consideration to how to balance well-defined delegated authority with unity and transparency. In consultation with the Trustees Literature Committee, we recommend that the Conference Literature Committee be provided with all available chapters that are completed by March 31 for their restricted review during pre-Conference hours.

We also recommend that chapters be made available to all Conference member who may wish to read them. That said, we believe the only way to ensure confidentiality in the process was to have that happen in a highly controlled environment. As in a proctored test, with no cellphones or recording devices. Individuals can sit and read the proposed chapters in a room monitored by members of the Trustees Literature Committee.

While admittedly highly unusual, we felt that this translation merited an unorthodox approach.

CONFIDENTIAL: 73rd General Service Conference Background

A committee member asked for clarity about plain language translation and whether gender changes are part of the inferred scope of the work in the Conference Advisory Action - for example when 'men and women' are changed to 'people'.

At a February 15, 2022, meeting the topic was discussed and the TABB subcommittee noted that plain and simple language does not always lend itself to referring to individuals or groups by gender. It was also noted that using various gender terminology inconsistently throughout the book would be challenging for the reader.

It was emphasized that there is no intent or desire to remove gender from the text. It was agreed that where there is a reference to someone who has a gender in the text the use of gender should be retained (examples included mother and father, reference to males such as Bill, Bob, Jim etc. as he or him).

Article 3 of the Conference Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board make clear that the Steps themselves should not be modified, altered, or extended. The subcommittee expects the final treatment of Chapter 5 to be consistent with that guidance.

We have had only the most preliminary discussions on how to approach coming up with what the translation should be titled. It's a fraught topic and will be given considerable thought in the months to come.

Addendum to TABB Subcommittee Report January 18, 2022

The TABB Subcommittee and members of the GSO Publishing Department met today to discuss the plain language translation samples received from the prospective vendors and consider the selection of a vendor. After comprehensive review and thoughtful consideration, a vendor was selected.

It is requested by the TABB Subcommittee that the Trustees Literature Committee consider making the following examples of plain language translation available to the Conference Committee on Literature. It should be noted that these are only examples, excerpts pulled from the initial submissions of prospective vendors. The process will involve multiple drafts, and ongoing feedback from the GSO Publishing Department and the TABB Subcommittee resulting in editing and revisions. None of this has taken place with the material included here. These are raw samples from a vendor's first attempt to translate this text, without guidance or input.

One could question the decision to share such unrefined material with the Conference Committee on Literature, however the rationale for offering this early material is that the TABB

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CONFIDENTIAL: 73rd General Service Conference Background

Subcommittee knows that there is a high level of interest in the process for the plain and simple language translation; and that there are those with concerns regarding the intent of this project.

It is hoped that this early transparency, and of sharing materials that have yet to even be edited, will serve to provide the Conference Committee on Literature the opportunity to see exactly where this project is at this point in time and offer any early feedback that they may have.

Alcoholics Anonymous (The Big Book)	Excerpt (from unedited raw sample material)
We believe, and so suggested a few years ago, that the action of alcohol on these chronic alcoholics is the manifestation of an allergy; that the phenomenon of craving is limited to this class and never occurs in the average temperate drinker. These allergic types can never safely use alcohol in any form at all; and once having formed the habit and found they cannot break it, once having lost their self-confidence, their reliance upon things human, their problems pile up on them and become astonishingly difficult to solve.	We believe that alcohol affects chronic alcoholics differently than it affects average drinkers. It interacts with their bodies almost like an allergy, forcing them to behave in unusual and unpredictable ways. The intense cravings that chronic alcoholics experience almost never happen for occasional drinkers. For anyone with this alcohol "allergy," though, cravings may be constant and hard to control. This means chronic alcoholics can never safely use alcohol in any form at all. Once they have experienced alcohol's affects, they will form a drinking habit quickly and struggle to stop. They will lose self- confidence, neglect their relationships, and watch their problems pile up, feeling totally unable to solve them.
Frothy emotional appeal seldom suffices.	Begging these people to stop drinking never helps.
And it means, of course, that we are going to talk about God. Here difficulty arises with agnostics,	It also means that we are going to talk about God. If you aren't sure that God exists—in other words, if you are an agnostic— this may worry you.

Alcoholics Anonymous (The Big Book)	Excerpt (from unedited raw sample material)
Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it – then you are ready to take certain steps.	Many of the stories we share in this book describe the experiences that we had as AA's founders. What we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you want what we have— and are willing to work hard to get it—then you are ready to get started.

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CONFIDENTIAL: 73rd General Service Conference Background

<p>Many of us exclaimed, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.</p>	<p>If this is your first time reading through these steps, they may seem difficult ... or even impossible. Do not be discouraged. No one has ever carried out these steps perfectly. We are not saints. We are simply people who are willing to grow, both spiritually and personally. These principles are here to guide our progress. And our shared goal is spiritual progress, not spiritual perfection.</p>
<p>In trying to make these arrangements our actor may sometimes be quite virtuous. He may be kind, considerate, patient, generous; even modest and self-sacrificing. On the other hand, he may be mean egotistical, selfish and dishonest. But as with most humans, he is more likely to have varied traits.</p>	<p>And as they try their best to control all the parts and players, they may seem kind, patient, generous. On the other hand, they may seem mean, selfish, and dishonest. Since they're human, they most likely show a mix of these traits.</p>
<p>We never apologize to anyone for depending upon our Creator. We can laugh at those who think that spirituality is the way of weakness. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage.</p>	<p>And we are not ashamed of relying on God, or of needing God. We know that our faith and trust isn't a sign of weakness, it is a sign of strength. Faith is a kind of courage, just as trusting God is a kind of courage.</p>
<p>With few exceptions, our book thus far has spoken of men. But what we have said applies quite as much to women. Our activities in behalf of women who drink are on the increase. There is every evidence that women regain their health as readily as men if they try our suggestions. But for every man who drinks others are involved – the wife who trembles in fear of the next debauch; the mother and father who see their son wasting away.</p>	<p>So far, this book has spoken only to alcoholics themselves. But every person who drinks involves other people in their alcoholism. There may be a spouse who dreads the next drinking spree, children who fear their drunk parents, or mothers and fathers who see their grown children getting sicker and sicker.</p>

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TABB sub-committee report - October 2022

The current TABB subcommittee was formed after the 72nd General Service Conference. The subcommittee consists of John W., chair, Jimmy D., and Clint M.

The sub-committee met four times (May 27, June 21, August 17, and September 22). David R., Julia D., and Ames S. from the Publishing Department joined our June meeting, as did "the writer". David and Julia joined again for our September meeting.

Progress Report

A formal agreement between AAWS and the writer was finalized on May 28. The writer has submitted five chapters to Publishing, as well as the preface, the foreword, and the beginnings of a glossary.

On August 31, four chapters (*the Doctor's Opinion*, *Bill's Story*, *There is a Solution*, and *More About Alcoholism*) were shared with the TABB subcommittee after editorial review and revisions.

Each committee member provided feedback at the September 22 meeting. We will be submitting further feedback, including suggested changes, with an expectation of additional rounds of refinements to ensure the tone and tenor of each chapter is faithful to the guidance and suggestions contained in the Big Book.

This is no ordinary translation. The enormity of the task and the importance of getting it right is not lost on the subcommittee.

Next Steps

The TABB subcommittee has requested to review final drafts of whatever completed material is available on a quarterly basis, so we can provide timely reports to the Trustees Literature Committee.

Project Completion

The Publishing Department's current estimate is for the completion of one chapter a month. That would mean a final draft of the project by May/June of 2023.

Recommendations

Given the fellowship's deep and wide interest in this project, the subcommittee has given great consideration to how to balance well-defined delegated authority with unity and transparency.

To that end, we recommend that the Conference Literature Committee be provided with any fully edited chapters that are completed by December 31 for their restricted review

and feedback.

We also recommend that Chapters 3 and 5 be made available to any Conference member who may wish to read them. That said, we believe the only way to ensure confidentiality in the process was to have that happen in a highly controlled environment. Basically, as if one was taking a proctored test, with no cellphones or recording devices. Individuals can sign out a chapter and read it in a room monitored by members of the Trustees Literature Committee. We would work with the Trustees Conference Committee to schedule hours and location during Conference week. While admittedly highly unusual, we felt that this translation merited an unorthodox approach.

Gender

A committee member asked for clarity about plain language translation and whether gender changes are part of the inferred scope of the work in the Conference Advisory Action - for example when 'men and women' are changed to 'people'.

At a February 15, 2022 meeting the topic was discussed and the TABB subcommittee noted that plain and simple language does not always lend itself to referring to individuals or groups by gender. It was also noted that using various gender terminology inconsistently throughout the book would be challenging for the reader. It was emphasized that there is no intent or desire to remove gender from the text. It was agreed that where there is a reference to someone who has a gender in the text the use of gender should be retained (examples included mother and father, reference to males such as Bill, Bob, Jim etc as he or him).

Other outstanding items

Article 3 of the Conference Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board make clear that the Steps themselves should not be modified, altered, or extended. The subcommittee expects the final treatment of Chapter 5 to be consistent with that guidance.

We have had only the most preliminary discussions on how to approach coming up with what the translation should be titled. It's a fraught topic and will be given considerable thought in the months to come.

CURRENT CONFERENCE CHARTER (United States and Canada)

1. Purpose: The General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous is the guardian of world services and of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous. The Conference shall be a service body only, never a government for Alcoholics Anonymous.

2. Composition: The Conference (U.S. and Canada) shall be composed of area delegates, the trustees of the General Service Board, directors of A.A. World Services and AA Grapevine, and staff members of the Grapevine and General Service Office.

Other countries have created autonomous General Service Conferences¹ of their own, which rely on the Steps and Traditions that are protected by the United States/Canada Conference. In addition, these other Conferences often turn to the actions of the United States/Canada Conference for guidance.

Consultation between Conferences is encouraged, and a World Service Meeting of delegates from the various Conferences is held once every two years. The United States/Canada delegates to the World Service Meeting are chosen from the General Service Board.

In countries where a General Service Structure exists, the United States/Canada Conference will delegate sole right to publish our Conference-approved literature to the General Service Board of that structure.

Only matters seriously affecting A.A.'s worldwide needs shall be the subject of joint consideration.

3. Conference Relation to A.A.: The Conference will act for A.A. in the perpetuation and guidance of its world services, and it will also be the vehicle by which the A.A. movement can express its view upon all matters of vital A.A. policy and all hazardous deviations from A.A. Tradition. Delegates should be free to vote as their conscience dictates; they should also be free to decide what questions should be taken to the group level, whether for information, discussion, or their own direct instruction.

But no change in Article 12 of the Charter or in the Twelve Traditions of A.A. or in the Twelve Steps of A.A. may be made with less than the written consent of three-quarters of the A.A. groups, as described in the Resolution adopted by the 1955 Conference and Convention.²

4. Conference Relation to the General Service Board and its Corporate Services:

The Conference will replace the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, who formerly functioned as guides and advisers to the General Service Board and its related service corporations. The Conference will be expected to afford a reliable cross section of A.A. opinion for this purpose.

A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of all the Conference members registered.

It will be understood, as a matter of tradition, that a two-thirds vote of Conference members voting shall be considered binding upon the General Service Board and its related corporate services, provided the total vote constitutes at least a Conference quorum. But no such vote ought to impair the legal rights of the General Service Board and the service corporations to conduct routine business and make ordinary contracts relating thereto.

It will be further understood, regardless of the legal prerogatives of the General Service Board, as a matter of tradition, that a three-quarters vote of all Conference members participating in the vote may bring about a reorganization of the General Service Board and the directors and staff members³ of its corporate services, if or when such reorganization is deemed essential.

▼ APPENDIX L:

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

A Resolution

Offered by Bill W. and Adopted at the 20th Anniversary Convention of A.A., in 1955. (*This Resolution Authorizes the General Service Conference to Act for Alcoholics Anonymous and to Become the Successor to Its Co-Founders.*)

We, the members of the Twentieth Anniversary Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous, here assembled at St. Louis in July of the year 1955, declare our belief that our Fellowship has now come of age and is entirely ready to assume full and permanent possession of the Three Legacies of our A.A. Inheritance — the Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.

We believe that the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous, as created in 1951 by our co-founders, Doctor Bob S. and Bill W., and authorized by trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation, has now become entirely capable of assuming the guardianship of A.A.'s Twelve Traditions and of taking over full guidance and control of the world service of our Society, as provided in the "Third Legacy Manual of World Service"¹ recently revised by our surviving co-founder, Bill W.,² and of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

We have also heard with approval Bill W.'s proposal that A.A.'s General Service Conference should now become the permanent successor to the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous, inheriting from them all their former duties and special responsibilities, thus avoiding in future time all possible strivings for individual prestige or personal power, and also providing our Society with the means of functioning on a permanent basis.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED: That the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous should become, as of this date, July 3, 1955, the guardian of the Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, the perpetuators of the world services of our Society, the voice of the group conscience of our entire Fellowship, and the sole successors of its co-founders, Doctor Bob and Bill.

AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD: That neither the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous nor the warranties of Article XII of the Conference Charter shall ever be changed or amended by the General Service Conference except by first asking the consent of the registered A.A. groups of the world. [This would include all A.A. groups known to the general service offices around the world.] These groups shall be suitably notified of any proposal for change and shall be allowed no less than six months for consideration thereof. And before any such Conference action can be taken, there must first be received in writing within the time allotted the consent of at least three-quarters of all those registered groups who respond to such proposal.

¹ Now called *The A.A. Service Manual*.

² Bill died January 24, 1971.

³ Resolution: It was resolved by the 1976 General Service Conference that those instruments requiring consent of three-quarters of the responding groups for change or amendment would include the Twelve Steps of A.A., should any such change or amendment ever be proposed.

⁴ Bill uses the term "registered." A.A.W.S. neither monitors nor oversees the activities or practices of any A.A. group. Groups are listed solely for purposes of accurate communications.

▼ **APPENDIX O:**

BYLAWS OF THE GENERAL SERVICE BOARD OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, INC.

As Bill W. explains in the article “Service — Our Third Legacy” (see Appendix A), the General Service Board (the trustees) was originally known as the Alcoholic Foundation, with bylaws as broad as the continent. When the corporate name was changed to General Service Board of A.A., new bylaws were needed which would reflect more clearly the scope and direction of Alcoholics Anonymous. The new bylaws, adopted in 1957, are the work of the late Bernard B. Smith, noted international lawyer, long a nonalcoholic trustee, chair of the board from 1951 to 1956. “Bern” Smith composed the bylaws out of his great love and respect for our Fellowship. They contain both the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. They are good reading for all A.A.s and friends of A.A.

(Adopted April 22, 1957, by the General Service Board following consideration by the General Service Conference of A.A.; amended 1962, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1978, 1985, 1991, 1992, 1994, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2015 and 2017)

► **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc., now has but one purpose, that of serving the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is in effect an agency created and now designated by the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous to maintain services for those who should be seeking, through Alcoholics Anonymous, the means for arresting the disease of alcoholism through the application to their own lives, in whole or in part, of the Twelve Steps which constitute the recovery program upon which the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous is founded. These Twelve Steps are as follows:

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous (hereinafter referred to as either the "General Service Board" or the "Board") claims no proprietary right in the recovery program, for these Twelve Steps, as all spiritual truths, may now be regarded as available to all mankind. However, because these Twelve Steps have proven to constitute an effective spiritual basis for life which, if followed, arrests the disease of alcoholism, the General Service Board asserts the negative right of preventing, so far as it may be within its power so to do, any modification, alteration, or extension of these Twelve Steps, except at the instance of the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in keeping with the Charter of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous as the same may from time to time be amended (hereinafter referred to as the "Charter").

Members of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous are hereinafter referred to as "Conference delegates."

The General Service Board in its deliberations and decisions shall be guided by the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, hereinafter referred to as the "Traditions," which are as follows:

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The General Service Board shall use its best efforts to insure that these Twelve Traditions are maintained, for it is regarded by the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous as the custodian of these Traditions and, accordingly, it shall not itself nor, so far as it is within its power so to do, permit others to modify, alter, or amplify these Traditions, except in keeping with the provisions of the Charter.

The General Service Board also shall be guided by the spirit of the Twelve Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous, hereinafter referred to as the "Concepts" which, in their short form, are as follows:

1. Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.