



2022 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON LITERATURE ITEM C: PAI #80

**CONSIDER REQUEST THAT ALL PROPOSED CHANGES TO
THE BOOK TWELVE STEPS AND TWELVE TRADITIONS BE
HANDLED IN FOOTNOTES.**

**NOTE: AS A RESULT OF THE EDW PLAN, THIS ITEM IS ON THE
AGENDA OF THE CONFERENCE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Submit a clear and concisely worded motion. → To maintain the integrity and historical accuracy of the publication Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, we move that all proposed changes be handled in footnotes rather than in a revision of the actual text.

What problem does this proposed item address? → This proposed item addresses the issue of keeping our text historically accurate and faithful to the original writer's intention.

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.) → District has discussed this proposal, and it is our group conscience that it be submitted for consideration.

Provide background information that describes and supports the reasoning for the proposal. List background material(s) included with the proposal: → **Many of us were disturbed at the prospect of revisions to our literature, as it has been effective for years at saving the lives of countless alcoholics. The revisions to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions approved at the General Service Conference set a dangerous precedent for changes to what we consider sacred texts in the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. If the proposed changes are handled in footnotes which include the rationale for the change and any supporting evidence, the historically significant text will remain intact. This text is a part of our history, our collective memory. Suppressing its outdated expressions that have only come to be known as such negates the growth that has taken place in us as a fellowship.**

What are the intended/expected outcomes if this proposed item is approved? →

That future publications of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions will include changes only as footnotes.

Additional Information from the Background Material:

Proposed Agenda Items (PAIs) for the 72nd General Service Conference The General Service Office received 40 requests to reverse or rescind one or more of these advisory actions, and/or to preserve, unaltered, the text of the book **Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions**, as originally published. Some PAIs were similar, with some having content that were verbatim duplications. This perhaps reflects some coordination that was taking place in the absence of districts or areas convening prior to the submission deadline, which had moved up due to the piloting of the **Equitable Distribution of Workload** program. This was stated in at least one of the submissions.

It should be noted that some proposed agenda items also included commentary on other items and requests to undo other actions from the 71st GSC. Here we summarize only the sentiments related to the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions advisory actions.

The proposed agenda items, excerpts sampled below, fell broadly into four categories referencing:

- 1. the 1995 advisory action that no changes happen to the Big Book,**
 - 2. the “slippery slope” concern, that these changes could lead to endless future changes**
 - 3. that the COVID pandemic, or other issues, didn’t allow for a fully informed group conscience**
 - 4. that the changes are the result of outside issues and therefore not in keeping with Tradition**
- 10.

Below is a summary of the submitted items, illustrated by a range of PAI examples .

The 1995 Advisory Action: The first 164 pages of the Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous, the Preface, the Forewords, “The Doctor’s Opinion,” “Doctor Bob’s Nightmare,” and the Appendices remain as is.

These proposed agenda items ranged from suggesting additional/new disclaimer text contextualizing the text of the book, handling changes in footnotes, and denying any proposed change to any of Bill’s writings based on the 1995 Advisory Action and the strong sentiment that Bill Wilson’s writings remain unchanged.

PAI-76: That a disclaimer be added to the front of the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, as follows: "While the language in this text may seem dated, please remember that Bill W. wrote in the language and custom of his times. Bill was very tolerant of different individuals and members. All alcoholics were and are now welcomed cordially into AA. Were Bill to write this book today, it may be worded differently in some places. Society may change, but the basic spiritual principles of Alcoholics Anonymous are classic and eternal. We hope that this book continues to broaden and deepen the understanding of the Twelve Steps as written in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*."

Please reach out to your Delegate for the full Background Material on this, or on any other Agenda Item which your Group needs in order to come to a better-informed decision. Email your request to delegate@aaseny.org.

Starting tomorrow (Sunday, March 6th, the Delegate's Questionnaire will be live online at aaseny.org / From The Delegate. Please fill it in *AFTER* your Group has discussed it and reached its Conscience – there's plenty of time!

Thank you for doing your part to help inform your Delegate of Area 49's thoughts around these Items...

Tom B.