

## Issues & Concerns / World Service Conference 2012, Seattle

The Debtors Anonymous World Service Conference (WSC) addresses the issues and concerns of D.A. groups that affect D.A. as a whole. Members, groups and Intergroups have submitted the Issues & Concerns listed below during the past year via the debtorsanonymous.org website or by mailing them to the General Service Office. The receiving and processing of Issues and Concerns (I&C) from the Fellowship of Debtors Anonymous (D.A.) is an important communication vehicle aiding the health, unity and growth of D.A. as a whole.

After the Conference, the committees of the General Service Board (GSB) and the World Service Conference committees and caucuses consider these Issues & Concerns as possible items for motions and recommendations at Convocation or as potential topics to discuss during their service throughout the year. Direct responses to each Issue & Concern are published in the WSC final conference report (if they are submitted at the Conference) or on the D.A. website (if they are submitted by December 1 following the Conference.)

Each Issue & Concern has been assigned a number. Please include this number AND the original text of the Issue & Concern in any response submitted for publication.

*NOTE: Any responses to Issues & Concerns submitted after December 1, 2012 will not be included in the final document posted on the D.A. website by January 1, 2013.*

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***ISSUE #12-01***

***WSC Literature Committee***

**Submitting Issues and Concerns to the World Service Conference**

Submitted by an individual member, not a group.

The closing statement that is frequently read at DA meetings states in part

“The things you have heard here are spoken in confidence and should be treated as confidential. We do not take outside the meeting who and what we hear at the meeting.”

While the intention here is clearly to protect the anonymity of members, the statement is in blatant conflict with both the 12th Step and the 5th Tradition. Indeed we want and encourage members to carry the message to the debtor who still suffers. If we seemingly prohibit members from taking what they have heard at the meeting in a blanket form as

above, which are the Steps, the Traditions, the Tools the Signposts and sometimes readings from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, how are we/they to carry the message?

This may seem like a picky issue, especially to those of us who have been in fellowship for some time.

However, it is potentially confusing to new and potential members. (It was to me when I joined.)

Perhaps greater clarity and specificity in this statement would be appropriate.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, “**12-01: DA’s Closing Statement**”. A sub-committee was formed and the following statement was issued.

“Thank you for your question. You raise an interesting point that has occurred to some of us. The best way to address this dichotomy is to talk only about your own experiences, strengths and hopes. That way, you will not be breaching any confidentiality. Some of us will speak in very vague, totally unidentifiable ways of other people’s experiences, such as saying something like: “A number of times, I’ve seen people come into a Pressure Relief Group in despair and leave with a great sense of hope and a totally new approach.” Such statement is very general and does not identify any individual.

The closing statement you refer to comes out of the AlAnon program, and while many meetings use the statement, it is not a required element of a DA meeting format. Tradition 4 states that each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or DA as a whole. Your meeting is free to close your meeting using any format the group conscious decides to use - as long as it is in keeping with the Steps and the Traditions.

The Literature Committee of the 2012 World Service Conference has decided not to expand the present literature to address this issue.”

Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA’ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,

DonnaAnn W.

2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair

**ISSUE #12-02**

**WSC Literature Committee**

CITY: Mountain View, CA GROUP NAME: Serenity Sunday GROUP NUMBER: 157

1. Gender neutral language for Higher Power

**RESPONSE:** Gender neutral language was approved for new literature at the 2007 WSC and is being applied.

2. Anonymity in emails (People mass emailing people on phone lists) Anonymous emails should be used instead of first name, last name, and sometimes even employer.

**RESPONSE:**

**ISSUE #12-03**

**WSC Hospitals, Institutions, and Prisons**

CITY: **Lusk, Wyoming**  
GROUP NAME: **Wyoming Women's Center (Prison)**  
GROUP NUMBER: 1341

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Concern: Group 1341 can not participate at the Conference level. Prison groups do not have 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition or GSRs. I am the group sponsor. There are meetings for minimum, medium security and for ITU (Intensive Treatment Unit). Retired from the GSB, I have been told I can not attend WSC. I am the only person that can be group GSR. With my experience as a D.A. sponsor in this prison and 14-1/2 years sponsoring a meeting in a pre-release/work-release facility in Seattle, I have brought my ESH to the HIP committee. In 2009, 2010 and up to WSC in 2011, I was an active member of the HIP Committee attending the phone meetings and fully participating. This year, I was told by the group GSB liaison that I can not be a Committee member, only a "friend" of the committee, could attend the meetings, but unable to make motions or vote. Please understand that I was on the GSB when rotation of service was first introduced. I do believe in this practice as intended, but all "rules" should be open to exception. In my 6 years on the GSB, we never turned away willingness of a GSR, unable to attend WSC, to actively participate on a committee. Our group here in Wyoming is being denied an opportunity to participate. My 18-1/2 years experience in starting and sponsoring prison meeting(s) would be an asset to the HIP Committee but the GSB has denied this meeting this opportunity to serve at the Conference level because I am a retired GSB member. I am requesting Conference to address this GSB decision, and our group concern, of not allowing participating. Thank you.

Yours in D.A. service,

Carolyn H.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for submitting your concern about the DA group at the Wyoming Women's Center, and its lack of representation at the WSC. The guiding spiritual principal for the 2012-2013 HIP committee is to

humanize and bring dignity to each debtor, no matter their circumstances. Your letter highlights this very issue.

We do not have the authority to change the guidelines which restrict the participation of GSBs whose term has expired. However, we will forward this issue to the Board.

Other 12-step fellowships approach HIP in different ways. This year, as a committee, we want to research ways in which people who are confined can be better served at the world service level. To this end, we are recommending to the WSC that this population be better represented in several ways. If possible, we encourage **all members** of DA Group I341 to contact the DA General Service Office directly to communicate their concerns.

#### **ISSUE #12-04**

#### **GSB Conference Support Committee**

CITY: Dallas GROUP NAME: Prosperity GROUP NUMBER: 364

#### **Keep the WSC Fellowship day workshop topics 12 step, tradition and tools related**

Because of the chronic problem of WSC Host Committees coming up with dreamy, visionary outside-issue stuff about every other year for many years, always leading to conflict with the DA primary purpose, please support the proposal that the CSC adopt a permanent policy of creating a standard list of Tradition-oriented, step based, literature-based topics. WSC host committees would pick from that list.only. Please, trustees of the Board, vote to adopt this policy for the 2013 and subsequent Conferences. Insist that the traditions be observed in the fellowship day workshops.

Historically, although many fellowship day speakers repeatedly get on these tapes with confusing non-DA material, I thought we as a DA fellowship had ALREADY adopted guidelines that those kinds of things were to be avoided.

For this year's conference, (2012) specifically the topics that do not sit well are:

-Different Ways to work the Twelve Steps (What?) Hey, we have one set of directions, the AA basic text!

-Using the Twelve Steps and the D.A. Tools to overcome underearning (we voted in Denver to decline the underearning caucus; Underearners Anonymous is now its own fellowship and I understood that outside issues were being systematically edited from the DA literature) This is clearly an outside issue and DA has no opinion on it as such.

-The whole entire vision track, in that our primary purpose is **not to debt**. (I understand...Debtors need goodies... but I think we need to keep our emphasis on our main thing - not debting)

Many members world wide who do (and do not) attend fellowship day buy the tapes of these sessions. Our traditions allow for autonomy excepting in matters affecting DA AS A WHOLE. It is important, I believe, that we *not* distribute, from events at the DA WSC, material that is too far away from our basic message, to stop debting one day at a time by means of a spiritual experience obtained by taking the DA 12 steps.

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for raising concerns regarding D.A.'s Primary Purpose as it relates to the selection of topics for Fellowship Day held during our annual World Service Conference.

Historically, the overall theme and workshop topics for Fellowship Day have been selected by the Host Committee members, and then submitted for preliminary review by the General Service Board Conference Support Committee (CSC). Once vetted by the CSC, the recommended theme and topics are submitted to the full General Service Board (GSB) for final approval. In some instances, the initial proposals have been clearly stated and well representative of our Primary Purpose, therefore passing through the approval process quickly. In other instances, the theme and topics have volleyed among the Host Committee, CSC and GSB several times before settling on a final slate of topics.

The program of Debtors Anonymous embodied in the Steps, Traditions and Concepts is exactly the same in all geographic locations. However, the focus and experience of recovery communities can vary greatly across the continent and the world. A host community may have a strong presence of BDA meetings, or Visions meetings, or Step meetings. The themes and topics they suggest are sometimes a reflection of the local community rather than a reflection of the fellowship as a whole.

Members of the CSC and GSB share many of the concerns you stated so well. CSC has taken on the task of developing a set of standard topics. Once developed, this list will be included in the Host Committee Handbook. The plan is to have this list completed well ahead of the 2013 WSC.

We know that Fellowship Day is often the first event of its kind for many of our attendees. We hope that providing consistent topics will solve a couple of issues. First, that the primary purpose of DA will be at the heart of all of the presentations. Second, that there will be a broad appeal to the full fellowship, regardless of local leanings.

Additionally, the Host Committee will be spared the time, energy and focus needed to develop ideas from scratch. Instead, they can direct these energies to other aspects of conference planning.

CITY: Dallas GROUP NAME: Prosperity

GROUP NUMBER: 364

**Mandate that the DA General Service Board fill all board positions in 3 years**

Propose that the DA World Service Conference issue a mandate to the Board that by 2015 the DA General Service Board fill 100% of all board positions and go to extraordinary measures to do additional outreach, change the voting criteria or go to any other lengths necessary to make sure that happens. Do what ever it takes. No more excuses.

**RESPONSE:**

***ISSUE #12-06***

***WSC Literature Committee***

CITY: Dallas GROUP NAME: Prosperity

GROUP NUMBER: 364

**Revisit the vote: Change the shape of the small daily record keeper booklet to the shape of a standard bank card.**

At conference 2011 the vote to change the shape of the small daily record keeper booklet to the shape of a standard bank card received a majority vote but fell just a few votes shy of substantial unanimity.

The one we have now is shaped like a paper checkbook. It does not easily fit in a hip pocket wallet. As the times change and even more members pay with debit/ bank cards, a wallet sized booklet is simply more current & user friendly. In our experience, having the record keeper in the wallet with the method of payment really makes a difference in remembering to record spending as we conduct the transactions. Please reconsider this proposal.

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, “ **12-06: Daily Record Keeper**”.

The motion to adopt this item did not pass, therefore the Literature Committee is unable to take any action on it.

Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA'ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,  
DonnaAnn W.  
2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair  
[RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com](mailto:RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com)  
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**ISSUE #12-07**  
**GSB Literature Publications**

CITY: Dallas GROUP NAME: Prosperity GROUP NUMBER: 364

Reconsider the tabling of the publishing of the 12 step study guide until after the publication of the DA 12 & 12. Test-publish a revisable electronic DA step study guide *now*.

It is the experience strength and hope of many DA trusted servants who are trying to take members through the DA 12 steps that a study guide is essential to connect the dots between the 12 step directions in the AA Big Book and the DA tools pamphlets. Without it, many members mistakenly just work the pamphlet program, treat DA like a budget club, and completely miss the spiritual experience.

In conference 2009 a sub committee took over 600 DA members through the 12 steps. Many had been in DA for decades and had not taken the steps. Our conclusion was that even a flawed study guide was better than none. With a guide we had greater participation and exponentially more willingness to do service and sponsor. With a high level of participation came a higher level of recovery experience and a byproduct, high levels of 7<sup>th</sup> tradition donation.

The Dallas GSR has brought a simple prototype study guide that we have been using for 3 years on the phone groups and face to face groups with great success. Please review for consideration the 2012 edition of the:

**“Greenback Book” Suggested Step Study Guide To Existing Debtors Anonymous Literature**

We are suggesting testing this guide, DA fellowship wide, for the years until the 12 & 12 is published with revisions to be made upon the 12x12 publication.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your suggestion. We are aware of the fellowship’s desire for a Step Study guide, however, Literature Publications wishes to focus its energy on the Step book. Once published, they will work with WSC Literature Committee to complete an outline and hire a writer to create a Step Study guide that will reference the 12 Step book.

**ISSUE #12-08**

**WSC Literature Committee**

CITY: Dallas GROUP NAME: Prosperity GROUP NUMBER: 364

Stop publishing DA literature containing outside issues.

Do this several ways:

Edit existing DA literature to reflect DA's Primary purpose and refrain from voting in new literature regarding outside issues.

At Conference 2009 I was made aware of a project to read/ review all DA literature to assure all pieces were relevant to DA's primary purpose. I understood that project was initiated with the intention to edit out all confusing references to outside issues and other treatment models.

In D.A.'s history there have been many pieces of literature that diluted our message. Time, underearning, clutter and other problems can all prove to be a distraction that can result in a financial consequence. (Even the AA Big Book, in the amends section, says that 'most alcoholics owe money.')

Any outside addiction or situation can get expensive and result in the circumstance of indebtedness. *This program is not about the circumstances.*

In DA our primary purpose is to stop debting (a behavior) one day at a time by means of a spiritual experience obtained by taking the 12 steps.

Once again at conference 2011 DA voted to devote time and resources to literature regarding a circumstance common to *some but not common to all* DA members. (Debting & Health issues) WHERE was the board member assigned to this committee, that this even got to the conference floor? *Please stop this practice as it breaches our tradition on outside issues and does not support our primary purpose.*

Please also *keep* whatever review committee is in place editing our existing literature and removing outside issues, especially underearning.

Last, to end confusion once and for all, please, DA, cease publication of the Underearning pamphlet.

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, " **12-08: DA Publishing Literature Containing Outside Issues**".

The 2012/2013 Literature Committee has put this Issue and Concern onto our yearly agenda. We are making recommendations for a pamphlet and/or chapter in the DA Basic Text that will clearly define the causes and conditions that, in our members' direct experience, lead to debting, as well as define the language of our disease and recovery more clearly. We hope this will clear up what are DA issues and what are not as well as create a more definitive definition of what debting is.



Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA'ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,

DonnaAnn W.

2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair

[RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com](mailto:RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com)

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**ISSUE #12-09**  
**WSC Literature Committee**

CITY: Dallas GROUP NAME: Prosperity GROUP NUMBER: 364

**Retracting The Proposed Pamphlet on Debting and Health issues**

Please retract the approval to publish a pamphlet on Debting and Health issues

In D.A.'s history there have been many pieces of literature that diluted our message. Time, underearning, clutter and other problems can all prove to be a distraction that can result in a financial consequence. Even the AA Big Book, in the amends section, says that 'most alcoholics owe money.' Any **outside** addiction or situation (i.e. health problems) can get expensive and result in the circumstance of indebtedness. This program is not about the circumstances. Those are outside issues. DA has no opinion on outside issues.

In DA our primary purpose is to solve our *common* problem and stop debting (a behavior) one day at a time by means of a spiritual experience obtained by taking the 12 steps.

Once again DA voted to devote time and resources to literature regarding a circumstance common to *some but not common to all* DA members. *Please* retract the approval for this piece. Stop this practice as it breaches the tradition on outside issues and does not support our primary purpose.

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, "12-09: Proposed Pamphlet On Debting and Health Care".

The 2011/2012 Literature Committee created a survey to be sent to all members to determine the causes and conditions of debting and/or retaining solvency as relates to health care costs. We hope to have a clear picture of how and why members are struggling to retain solvency or losing solvency when faced with health care costs. Once this survey is returned, we hope to be able to create a piece of literature that speaks directly to the problem with a solid set of solutions. Therefore, the 2012/2013 Literature Committee will await the results of the Health Care Survey before moving forward on this issue. Should the survey not be returned in a timely enough fashion for this committee to create a piece of literature, we will make the strong recommendation that the next year's Literature Committee do so.

Please contact me after January 15th, 2013 for the date the survey is due to be distributed to the Fellowship.

Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA'ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,

DonnaAnn W. 2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair [RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com](mailto:RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com) 323/394-7146

**ISSUE #12-10**

**WSC Conference Committee**

CITY: Dallas GROUP NAME: Prosperity GROUP NUMBER: 364

**GSR abstinence**

Certain new emerging DA communities may want to send a General Service representative to the WSC to gain experience strength and hope and,

These emerging communities may not have a member to send to WSC who has a year of abstinence,

If that is the case:

Please issue a guideline that any GSR who does not have a year of abstinence may not write, edit or review for publication any material slated for conference approved literature.

Also any GSR who does not have a year of abstinence may not vote in committee, caucus or at convocation.

If a group does not have an abstinent member to send, a group may send a non voting pro tem representative for the purposes of expanding their knowledge of the DA fellowship, reporting on the DA resources available to their group from the WSO, and may only serve in a non literature, non voting capacity on a committee.

Also issue a reminder to conference committee chairs to remind non abstinent members not to vote on committee matters during the year.

**RESPONSE:** According to the Manual For Service, page 69, the suggested requirement to be a General Service Representative is one year solvency and two PRGs. Page 69 of the Manual For Service also states that it is the responsibility of the group to send the best qualified delegates to ensure spiritual decision making and good policies for DA's future.

**ISSUE #12-11**

**WSC BDA**

CITY: Dallas GROUP NAME: Prosperity

GROUP NUMBER: 364

**CHANGING THE BDA COMMITTEE to a DVI or Debtors with Variable Income committee.**

With the changes in the economy, more and more HUMAN people as well as debtor people find themselves self employed, in small side businesses, doing contract work, or doing varied multiple activities to make ends meet. There are many more employed members experiencing involuntary furloughs and other variables to their resources. The challenges to constructing and following a spending plan in this climate can be daunting. This affects many more suffering debtors in our general DA population that the few BDA's who are intentional full time freelancers or CEO's.

In the time since the BDA moved from a caucus to a committee, it has influenced the whole DA agenda in an unbalanced way. BDA is only less than 8% or so of the whole DA population, yet the BDA committee tends to contain about a fourth of the GSR's at the World Service Conference. There is BDA literature in the pipeline with excessive emphasis on business advice (like writing a business plan) over spiritual 12 step recovery. In addition, DA has committed resources to BDA literature that would only be purchased by a small percentage of our overall membership.

In order to serve more debtors in a way that is more reflective of the DA population as a whole, it would be best for the committee formerly known as BDA to refocus its efforts on the primary issue affecting more debtors; *record keeping and planning when income streams, resources and benefits vary month to month.*

***In that vein, it is suggested that BDA change its name and focus to DVI, Debtors with Variable Income.***

**RESPONSE:**

The BDA Committee would like to express its empathy for the Debtor who still suffers. As business owners, we have experienced and continue to experience our own challenges of variable or diminished income in starting, maintaining, and growing our businesses.

The BDA (Business Debtors Anonymous) Committee's purpose is to carry the message to the still suffering debtor and help them apply the Steps and Traditions to all their affairs and not debt one day at a time. The BDA Committee focuses on issues specific to the needs of D.A. members who own or operate businesses, are self-employed or have a desire to own or operate businesses or be self-employed.\* This singleness of purpose addresses the needs of these members including debtors with variable incomes.

\*Debtors Anonymous Manual of Service, p. 75.

Based on our experience, the BDA Committee respectfully encourages those sharing the views expressed in Issue #12-11 to consider forming a new caucus or committee that addresses the issue of Debtors with variable incomes.

**ISSUE #12-12**

**GSB Literature Publications**

Group name: Prosperity Cyber-Chat Group number: 232

Please make the Currency of Hope 2nd Edition available for Kindle or E-readers.

Thank you,

Deb

grateful debtor

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your request. If Debtors Anonymous were to publish in this way, it would be violating Tradition Six, which recommends that the D.A. name never be associated with any “outside enterprise.” However, we expect that booksellers will carry the second edition of *A Currency of Hope*, just as they carry the first edition, and of course they’re free to publish in any commercial medium.

**ISSUE #12-13**

**GSB Finance Committee**

When will DA join the 21st century and enable electronic processing of contributions?

Group # 1283 Lansing Michigan

**RESPONSE:**

The General Service Board, the General Service Office, and the World Service Conference Technology Committee are continuing to research electronic and online alternatives for contributions and literature purchases. We will advise the fellowship when conclusions have been reached.

**ISSUE #12-14**

**GSB Finance Committee**

Is there any ESH in the fellowship that would help phone meetings to establish treasuries that would enable two different members in two different states to make deposits, or write checks or otherwise deal with interstate banking issues? Is there a way to make electronic contributions possible to phone meetings?

**RESPONSE:**

The General Service Board, the General Service Office, and the World Service Conference Technology Committee are continuing to research electronic and online alternatives for contributions and literature purchases. We will advise the fellowship when conclusions have been reached.

**ISSUE #12-15**

***GSB Literature Publications***

I am writing to propose that the GSB update the wording of the 12 steps and 12 traditions to make the meaning consistent with today's grammar rules.

In the 1930s through the 1960s the gendered pronouns he his and him were considered gender-neutral. Now it is grammatically correct to say "He or she" or "his or her" or simply "they" when gender is unspecified. I therefore propose we substitute the phrase Higher Power whenever the old version refers to God as "He" or "Him."

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting your issue. This is not the kind of change the Literature Publications Committee or any committee of the General Service Board or World Service Conference is authorized to make. The Conference Charter of Debtors Anonymous gives very specific guidelines for changing the wording of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. There have been motions along the lines you propose; you may want to see the reports of past World Service Conferences.



**ISSUE #12-16****GSB Literature Publications**

That the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions be revised to substitute the phrase Higher Power for the word God. Rationale: many religions either recognize no specific deity (e.g. Taoism and Confucianism); or give the same Creator a different name (e.g. Islam which refers to "Allah") or consider it blasphemous to speak or read the Name of the deity out loud, (e.g. Orthodox Jews who prefer to refer to "Hashem" meaning only "The Name"). This change would be consistent with the invitation offered by the Steps for each member to define or comprehend their Higher Power to the best of their own lights and consistent with their own religious traditions. For the same reason, gendered pronouns that predetermine people's image of HP as male should not be used in the Steps and Traditions but rather only the phrase ""Higher Power."

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting your issue. This is not the kind of change the Literature Publications Committee or any committee of the General Service Board or World Service Conference is authorized to make. The Conference Charter of Debtors Anonymous gives very specific guidelines for changing the wording of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. There have been motions along the lines you propose; you may want to see the reports of past World Service Conferences.

**ISSUE #12-17**

**WSC Conference Committee**

SpendersDA Group 450

Group 450 asks that JH Scholarship funds be reserved for the GSR/ISR applicants who meet the suggested qualifications outlined in our GSR pamphlet; that the application contain: A line asking how the GSR meets the suggested qualifications:

specifically

abstinence/solvency date

how many PRMs applicant has received

previous to service given on personal, group, intergroup level

85% voted in favor of this Issue/Concern. We believe in Tradition 4. (Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or D.A. as a whole.) We also believe D.A.'s WSC and Primary Purpose are best served by reserving JH Scholarship Funds for those who meet the suggested qualifications in the GSR pamphlet, which resulted from D.A.'s World Group Conscience.

**RESPONSE:** There is a new documented formal policy for awarding John H. WSC Scholarships that has been approved by the WS 2012 convocation\* and will be used by future Host Committees to make the scholarship awards. This policy can be requested from the GSO. (\*pending motion carries WSC 2012)

**ISSUE #12-18**

**GSB Conference Support Committee**

SpendersDA Group #450

Issue/Concern: Who has the right to Serve on WSC Committees

The Board remind the Fellowship that only GSRs/ISRs attending the World Service Conference have the right to serve on WSC committee thru the Conference Year and why. That these reminders

1. appear in the WSC Registration packet prominently
  2. are addressed in all the GSB,s Phone Training Forums for the WSC
  3. are addressed in the Welcoming/Orientation/Opening Session at the WSC
  4. are given a special flyers to all Committee Chairs and Committee Members at the start of the Committee work at the WSC
- and restated at the end of the WSC

**RESPONSE:**

**ISSUE #12-19**

**WSC Literature Committee**

SpendersDA Group 450

Issue/Concern: Pamphlet Holders.

That the pamphlet holder pages, as researched\*, be brought up by the GSR at the WSC.

Research:. The page holds four standard pamphlets- 2 on each side and upright. The problem is there is a minimum order of 100 and that costs \$72.00.

Contact info

\* Brittany Hayden

RaBco Products, Inc.

[brittany@rabcoproducts.com](mailto:brittany@rabcoproducts.com)

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, "**12-19: Pamphlet Holders**".

The Issue and Concern as written was not clear to us. We were unable to understand how the Literature Committee could move forward on this issue.

Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA'ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,

DonnaAnn W.

2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair

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**12-20**

***GSB Communications***

SpendersDA Group 450

Issue/Concern: Need Recovery Stories on our D.A. Website re paying for college without debting.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your suggestion. Communications Committee feels the Ways & Means would be a more appropriate medium. We will issue a call for stories in Ways & Means.

**ISSUE #12-21**  
**WSC Literature Committee**

SpendersDA Group 450

Issue/ Concern : That DA create a pamphlet about student loan debt and paying for college.

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, **“12-21: Create A Pamphlet Addressing Student Loan and Secondary Education Debt”**.

The 2012/2013 Literature Committee has put this Issue and Concern on our yearly agenda. We are making recommendations for a pamphlet and/or chapter in the DA Basic Text that will clearly define the causes and conditions that, in our members' direct experience, lead to debting, as well as define the language of our disease and recovery more clearly. We hope this will clear up what are DA issues and what are not as well as create a more definitive definition of what debting is. Student loan debt and paying for secondary education will be among those issues.

Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA'ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,  
DonnaAnn W.  
2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair  
[RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com](mailto:RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com)  
323/394-7146

**ISSUE #12-22**

**GSB Conference Support Committee**

The following Issues/Concerns were presented to the 2010 LitCom

It was noted by the LitCom Chair at the 2011 WSC they were missing from the report. At that point the liaison printed out the answers and distributed them to the WSC.

LitCon had answered them in detail, yet the answers did not appear in any D.A. records: Not the minutes, not the Focus Issue, tho the answers were sent repeatedly to the correct liaison.

I ask that this situation be corrected immediatly, that the Issues/Concerns/Answers be made available immediatly, as they are already over one year behind being recognized.

Gratefully in service,

~Sharon S, Former LitCom Chair 2010-2011

**RESPONSE:** See following item, #12-23

**ISSUE #12-23**

**GSB Conference Support Committee**

Issue/Concern: Organization/Missing Reports/etc

I felt great concern and disillusionment last year when several Issues/Concerns reports from WSC committees were missing from the Report we got at the beginning of the conference. I felt great concern that LitCom's remained missing tho I had resubmitted it several times and brought it up thru the year. While it was printed out and distributed at the WSC, it never made it in to D.A.'s records, I feel great concern that the Committee Reports at the beginning of the WSC are not part of the WSC Minutes. This seems to disregard the work the Committees do throughout the Conference Year. I feel great concern over organization and coordination of work.

Sharon S GSR Group 450

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting Items 12-22 and 12-23, both dealing with responses to previous Issues and Concerns not being recognized or distributed at future world service conferences.

On a general level, the General Service Board has seen the fundamental problem that could allow responses to Issues and Concerns either not be created at all (i.e. no response) or misplaced after they have been created. In response, the Board has instituted and documented a procedure for Issues and Concerns (and for convocation recommendations as well) that ensures that all items will be recorded and responded to, and that such responses will be distributed to the fellowship in a timely manner.

On a specific level, pertaining to the responses created by the 2010 Literature Committee, it is recommended that those responses be provided to the current Literature Communications Committee, with a request that the committee review them. If, in their judgment, the issues and the responses are deemed to be still relevant, they can then include them in their current report, identifying them as Issues and Concerns from 2010.



**ISSUE #12-24**

**GSB Conference Support Committee**

*Optional information:* CITY: Seattle

I am concerned about the lack of trust between the Debtors Anonymous Board and the World Service Conference host committees.

I respectfully request the board conduct a 4th step inventory, complete with outside facilitator, on issues that have arisen in the past between the board and WSC host committees. In addition to the standard resentment list, I offer Concept related questions such as:

“Do I ever ask someone to do a task and then try to direct the details of how it should be done? If so, how can I change this pattern?”

“In what ways am I willing to delegate enough authority to carry out a job?”

“Am I involved in any double-headed management?”

“Am I involved in any situations where one person has the responsibility while a different person has the authority?”

And finally, what may be the most important question of all, “Is a community that hosts a WSC strengthened or weakened as a result of hosting a World Service Conference?”

Thank you for being of service.

With love & gratitude,

Terrell L.

\*Concept related questions taken from *Al-Anon Paths to Recovery*, p.269, 315.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for expressing your concerns regarding the relationship and communication between WSC Host Committee's and the General Service Board.

**History:** During DA's first 15 years or so of existence (1976-early 1990s) there were enormous regional jealousies and animosities that threatened to tear the Fellowship apart. The Trustees dealt with this regional issue in two ways: by ensuring that the GSB had representation from several different regions of the country, and by deciding NOT to follow the AA model when they created the World Service Conference in 1987. Instead of having the Conference in New York every year (like AA), the GSB decided to rotate it around the country. This required tremendous effort and expense in holding it in places like Los Angeles, Boston, Washington DC, Dallas, San Francisco, etc., but they saw this as a way of dampening the regional animosities, building a truly national fellowship, and building DA in cities where there were very few DA meetings. This rotation of the Conference required the creation of Host Committees in each city, which would function for one year and then fold; thus the creation of the Host Committee system.

The World Service Conference was created by the General Service Board in 1987 (the first one was held that year in NYC), but did not have a permanent Conference Charter until 1994. Thus, most of the committees from 1987 until 1994 were joint committees composed of Trustees and GSRs. The Conference Committee was one of the original committees created in '87 and has existed since then, although like the others, it was composed both of Trustees and GSRs until 1994.

Once the permanent Conference Charter was adopted in '94, the current system of GSB Committees separate from WSC Committees was adopted, although for many years the GSB had fewer board committees and did not have "counterpart committees" for many of the WSC committees.

For many years, the Executive Committee of the GSB played a major role in making the arrangements for, and signing contracts for, the WSC. In fact, we did not have any counterpart committee to the WSC Conference Committee until early 2006, when the GSB created an ad hoc World Service Conference Support Committee.

Later in 2006, this morphed into a new permanent committee called the Policy & Delegate Support Committee. That committee took a year or more trying to define its mission. Finally, the GSB got some clarity on the role of a counterpart committee to the WSC CC and morphed the PDSC into the CSC, which was created in 2007. The CSC has existed continuously ever since, and has progressively defined its role and activities year by year.

During the 1990s (after the adoption of the Conference Charter in 1994), the GSB ceded a great deal of authority to the Host Committees, largely because the GSB itself was very small (only 5 or 6 members for some years) and unstable (frequent rotation and burnout), and because DA was basically broke with very little money. Trustees actually had to pay their own way to go the Conference until the later 1990s!

In the late 1990s, two things happened that led to a gradual increase in oversight by the GSB:

--The GSB began to grow (into the range of 8 to 12 members at any given time), and attract members with more professional skills and expertise)

--Conferences began to get more unruly and poorly organized, including some near disasters. Two or three Conferences in a row were so contentious that the GSB had to hire a professional parliamentarian in order for them to function at all. On a couple of occasions (late '90s/early 2000s) Host Committee treasurers did not return money from the Conference for at least two years and almost resulted in court action. Other Conferences almost didn't happen at all--the year 2000 Host Committee resigned en masse a month before the Conference. We flew in two trustees to work around the clock for a couple of weeks to make the Conference happen at all. Another Host Committee also pulled out very late in the game, and we made an abrupt last-minute transition from Pittsburgh to Minneapolis.

In addition to these there were a number of other lesser issues, from adorning the conference binders with religious symbols, to "co-branding" all of the Conference materials (identification badges, binders, etc.) with the names of a local business association. On several occasions, Host Committees proposed Fellowship Day topics and activities that were gross violations of the traditions. It was this erratic record that caused the GSB to become more involved.

Keep in mind that DA did not have even a single full-time employee until 2001, so we did not have the capacity for the office to do any of the Conference work. A few years after a full time manager was hired, we began slowly transitioning some of the WSC work to him.

The GSB realized that the Host Committees in general had been doing some things well, but other things poorly. And so year by year, since approximately 2006, the GSB has been increasingly transitioning certain tasks to itself and to the GSO, with the idea of trying to find the perfect balance (Host Committee doing things it does well/GSB and GSO doing things they do well).

## **Current Practices**

In 2001 the GSB began studying the Concepts for the first time and adopted the practice of having one Concept discussed on each board call, a practice which continues to this day. Also around 2001, the General

Service Board adopted the practice of doing a Board inventory. For many years it was done once a year. And for many years it was conducted by the Chair. Around 2008 the vice chair was asked to do the inventory, and was granted autonomy in deciding what the questions would be. In 2010, the board inventories were increased from once a year to twice a year (during the WSC F2F and the Mid-Year F2F). This practice has continued through 2012, and will likely continue unless future boards decide differently.

In 2012, a newly revised Host Committee Manual was developed with the intent to add greater clarification of the roles, responsibilities, division of labor, accountability and flow of communication among the Host Committee, GSB liaison to the Host Committee, GSB CSC, and the full board. This is a living document and will be updated to reflect changes in these roles and responsibilities as the needs of the fellowship change and as more experience is gained. Feedback from each Host Committee will be included in future editions of the Manual. As with many facets of our recovery we continue to seek greater clarity.

Your Issue & Concern has been submitted to the Vice-Chairperson to be considered as an inventory topic for full Board consideration. Even if the Vice-Chairperson does not opt to include this in the Board inventory, the relationship between the GSB and the Fellowship is an ongoing discussion and concern in much of the work performed by the board members.

### **Summary**

As our history shows, the relationship between WSC Host Committees and the General Service Board has transitioned over time as experience deemed changes to be necessary. We anticipate that these relationships will continue to change, hopefully for the better, as more experience is gained and more feedback is received and captured in the Host Committee Handbook.

**ISSUE #12-25**

**WSC Literature Committee**

I am very concerned that the overt patriarchal Christian terminology for Higher Power in the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions is a roadblock for many suffering debtors who need help.

Perhaps the biggest complaint there is against 12-Step programs is the "God" talk. There are professionals who make it their business to condemn 12-Step recovery -- I have to deal with such people on a regular basis in my work at a treatment center. These professionals all falsely cite religious indoctrination as one of the central problems with 12-Step recovery.

We know this isn't true yet our most basic literature - the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions - go against what we know is true by referring only to a male God.

In most international countries, the term God ONLY refers to the male Christian God. Imagine if the third Step read that we turn over to Christ, Krishna or Allah. That is what the language reads like to most international members due to the singularity of the term 'God'. Is that the message we want to share?

DA recovery is about clarity. To expect members and the public to understand that we mean any higher power when we say 'Male Christian God' goes against clarity.

Also the term God and designation of God as a male deity goes against the 12 Traditions. The term God goes against the unity of Tradition 1 -- members of DA do have *many different* concepts of Higher Power. The term God goes against Tradition 3 because it requires members who wish to work the program to give voice to a Christian version of God, and there is clearly no such requirement in our Traditions. Finally the term God goes against Tradition 10 as religious preference is definitely an outside issue.

My home meeting in DA (with an LGBT focus) voted two years ago to excise reference to a male God from the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions at our meeting. The world did not end. People are recovering. Our unity is healthy. Most newer fellowships do not use the language of patriarchal Christianity in their literature. AA has approved this language for newer fellowships. These fellowships function well. Recovery is great. DA can thrive just fine without limiting and proselytizing terminology. And we will reach more members, especially in other countries.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for expressing your concerns and interest about Christian and/or patriarchal language with 12 Step literature as used by Debtors Anonymous (Issue and Concern #12-25). To address your question, it is essential to begin with a discussion of Alcoholics Anonymous, which is the fellowship from which D.A. has been adapted. In doing so, Debtors Anonymous a legal obligation to respect A.A.'s protected intellectual property, freedom to make certain changes, and its own guidance & requirements through adherence to the 12 Steps of recovery, the 12 Traditions of group unity, and the 12 Concept of service.

At the time of its founding, Alcoholics Anonymous was comprised primarily of white American Protestant businessmen. The language of the Twelve Steps reflects this. The use of the phrase "... God as we understood him" was controversial among the authors of "Alcoholics Anonymous" (the Big Book), but was collectively accepted in order to provide indication of an open mind beyond a singularly identified concept of a power greater than oneself, which remains a bedrock principle common to all recovery programs. It is nonetheless true that in Alcoholics Anonymous this higher power is specifically named ("God") and referred to by the male pronoun, in addition to other referential language.

The Prefaces to each successive edition of the Big Book, now at the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, always make clear that the recovery stories section has continually evolved in order to ever more widely welcome people of all backgrounds, faiths, races, socioeconomic classes, sexual orientations, nationalities, or any other potential categorization that could – if not addressed -- result in a person feeling excluded from the life-saving gift made available through the 12 Steps. The "first 164 pages" of the Big Book have never been altered, and A.A. requests that all programs making use of A.A. literature not make any published substitutions. Use of A.A. literature is part of D.A.'s 8<sup>th</sup> Tool.

Debtors Anonymous has adapted the 12 Steps and Traditions of A.A. with great fidelity to the original language. Additionally, D.A.'s World Service Conference is controlled by Article 3 of the Conference Charter of Debtors Anonymous, which reads in relevant part "No change in . . . the Twelve Traditions of Debtors Anonymous or in the Twelve Steps of Debtors Anonymous made be made with less than the written consent of three-quarters (3/4) of Debtors Anonymous groups." This language serves to place barrier against hasty actions and to ensure that the concept of "substantial unanimity" would guide any changes to the Steps or the Traditions. Most recently, in 2010, a Motion to amend Tradition 11 failed to pass, and this was widely seen to be less controversial as proposed changes to the Twelve Steps contemplated by the question here presented. In 2007, a motion was approved at convocation that all future D.A. literature would be gender neutral and less specific about naming a "power greater than ourselves." This has guided all literature currently in the creation process. In addition, the Literature Committee of the World Service Conference has set as one of its tasks the review of all currently printed literature, with the goal of rewriting publications in accordance with this policy and having such changes incorporated into any subsequent reprinting. Current inventory of already-published literature will not be destroyed, but will be sold as currently worded.

In the spirit of A.A.'s successive editions of the Big Book, D.A. seeks to broaden its reach by expressing an intentional sensitivity to and welcome toward groups and individuals that may feel marginalized or excluded by language from undeniably historic sources. Individual D.A. meetings have also felt it helpful to include language in their formats that meets these needs but also respects A.A.'s copyrights and D.A.'s charter. Such actions are guided by Tradition 4, which states, "Each D.A. Group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or D.A. as a whole."

**ISSUE #12-26**

**WSC Conference Committee**

name: Tom K. city: Minneapolis, MN Group # 1101

Would the DA World Service Conference consider meeting alternate years, or every 3rd year, instead of meeting annually? Some members are concerned that annual conferences may not be the best use of our financial resources.

**RESPONSE:** We are required by law to have an annual business meeting. The WSC is our annual business meeting. The continuity of our new and growing fellowship require us to meet every year to keep up with the business at hand, as well as to provide support at the World Service level to our GSRs and ISRs.

**ISSUE #12-27**

**WSC Literature Committee**

name: Tom K. city: Minneapolis, MN Group # 1101

Why doesn't Debtors Anonymous address Student Loan Debt? It's an enormous problem and is barely even mentioned in DA literature?

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, "**12-27: Why Doesn't DA Address Student Loan Debt?**".

The 2012/2013 Literature Committee has put this Issue and Concern on our yearly agenda. We are making recommendations for a pamphlet and/or chapter in the DA Basic Text that will clearly define the causes and conditions that, in our members' direct experience, lead to debting, as well as define the language of our disease and recovery more clearly. We hope this will clear up what are DA issues and what are not as well as create a more definitive definition of what debting is. Student loan debt and paying for secondary education will be among those issues.

Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA'ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,

DonnaAnn W.

2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair

[RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com](mailto:RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com)

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**ISSUE #12-28**

**WSC International Caucus**

*CITY: TARRAGONA – SPAIN GROUP NAME: DA GRUPO VILA-SECA GROUP NUMBER: # 1546*

We are a small group that works in Spanish since January 2012 on line to Skype. How long DA-GSB US, someone with more experience and speak our language, can offer support help with suggestions to improve our performance, participating in one of our meetings? Our meetings are every Friday at 22:30 (Spain time). To contact da\_solvensia\_skype@hotmail.es Thanks.

**RESPONSE:** Greetings, Fellow D.A. Members from Spain!

Thank you very much for your inquiry. It is one of the goals of the newly formed D.A. World Service Conference (WSC) International Caucus to listen carefully to the needs of D.A. members outside of the US and Canada. The International Caucus then, when possible, hopes to directly address those needs.

We would like to happily inform your group that we have found a Spanish-speaking D.A. member who is willing to share his experience, strength, and hope with your group. His contact information is below.

- Gene
- [genoworld@comcast.net](mailto:genoworld@comcast.net)
- 1 (505) 980-6435

In Love and Service,

The D.A. WSC International Caucus



**ISSUE #12-29**

**GSB Literature Publications**

CITY: TARRAGONA – SPAIN GROUP NAME: DA GRUPO VILA-SECA GROUP NUMBER: # 1546

Currently, Is there literature in Spanish Officially Approved?

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting your question. The basic pamphlet, *Deudores Anónimos*, is available for purchase from the General Service Office. Please ask the Office for the Spanish-language stickers updating the pamphlet. Also, thanks in part to the service of Spanish groups, you'll find, under the "En Español" tab at [www.debtorsanonymous.org](http://www.debtorsanonymous.org), the A.A.-approved translations of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions adapted for Debtors Anonymous, as well as the General Service Board–approved translations of The Tools, The Promises, and The Signs of Compulsive Debting. Other texts will follow. And many D.A. groups read *Alcoholics Anonymous* (the "Big Book") and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, replacing "alcohol" and "alcoholic" with "debt" and "debtor."

**ISSUE #12-30**

**GSB Finance**

CITY: TARRAGONA – SPAIN GROUP NAME: DA GRUPO VILA-SECA GROUP NUMBER: # 1546

To order literature in English. (empezaria asl reves) What is the payment system used in Spain to order literature in English? Can we send a check from a Spanish bank in U.S. dollars payable to DA-GSB? We have an American bank near or have the possibility to purchase traveler's checks (currently not used).

**RESPONSE:**

Currently, for 7th tradition contributions and literature orders from groups outside the United States, we require payment through: a) check in U.S. dollars drawn on a US bank; or b) an international money order or bank draft. In many countries the national post office/service sells international money orders, as do various commercial services.

Shipping costs for orders to Canada and other non-U.S. countries depend upon the total weight of the literature order and the country to which it will be shipped. Please send an email to the General Service Office ([office@debtorsanonymous.org](mailto:office@debtorsanonymous.org)) indicating the specific items and quantities you wish to order. The office will respond within three business days with details on shipping options and costs.

**ISSUE #12-31**

***GSB Literature Publications***

A DA group sponsored a fundraiser. In this fundraising event the group used outside literature handouts. One of the group's event planners said the following:

"I would like to say that under DA fundraising, it clearly states that for fundraising, non DA literature can be used. Please reference this as part of this discussion, as our workshop is a fundraiser to send our GSR to world conference."

The event planner was asked several times to identify the document which apparently clearly states non DA literature can be used, however no reply was ever forthcoming.

Would the committee please identify where in DA, under fundraising, it says that outside literature can be used.

**RESPONSE:**

The "Guide to Special Events" is available for reference when planning fundraisers following our Twelve Traditions. This document does not condone the use of outside literature.

**ISSUE #12-32**

**WSC Resource Development**

We have a relative new comer as chairperson of our intergroup. A long timer informed this chairperson that intergroup monies cannot be held in an interest bearing bank account as this would be considered as accepting outside contributions. Is this true or false

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your question. Interest paid on a bank account represents compensation by the financial institution for its use of the money and is therefore not a contribution. The General Service Board of D.A. maintains funds in interest-bearing accounts. Furthermore, in the spirit of the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition, we see no risk of a financial institution influencing a D.A. group by virtue of its paying interest on that group's funds. Information on opening group accounts can be found in the D.A. Manual for Service (DAMS) in Chapter 2, Section C.

**ISSUE #12-33**

***GSB Literature Publications***

A DA Board Liaison on a WSC committee said that non-conference approved literature is called "service literature" and that the Board has no "jurisdiction" and apparently no opinion over whether a DA group uses it in workshops, fundraisers or advertise them on the website. That it is an autonomous decision that the community decides.

Is the liaison correct on this issue?

**RESPONSE:**

Service Literature is created through the shared experience, strength and hope of the General Service Board, the World Service Conference Committees, and the General Service Office. These are usually updated regularly and therefore do not go through the Conference Literature Approval Process. Some examples are: D.A. Manual for Service, D.A. Treasurer's Manual, and the Public Information Manual. Most, but not all, can be downloaded for free from [Debtorsanonymous.org](http://Debtorsanonymous.org). Any member or group can use them as a basis for a workshop.

**ISSUE #12-34**

**WSC Literature Committee**

I am informed that DA meetings in Los Angeles sponsors workshops and fundraisers using non conference approved literature. Does the DA GSB realize that this is weakening the unity of DA as a whole, that this is a crack in the very foundation of DA, that this is in violation of our righteous principles--our Traditions. And if the GSB realizes this, what is going to be done about it?

**RESPONSE:**

The Forth Tradition tells us that each group is autonomous. The General Service Board has no authority to tell any member or group what they can or cannot do when putting on a fundraiser or workshop. "A Guide to Special Events" can be downloaded for free from [Debtorsanonymous.org](http://Debtorsanonymous.org) and is a valuable resource.

**ISSUE #12-35**

**WSC Literature Committee**

Woodstock NY New Visions Group #317

*We would like a definition or clarification of where late payments fall in terms of solvency.*

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, "**12-35: Clarification Of Where Late Payments Fall In Terms Of Solvency**".

The 2012/2013 Literature Committee has reviewed your Issue and Concern and has found that it has been addressed previously in the Dealing With Creditors pamphlet. Please contact the GSB in Needham, MA to obtain a copy of the pamphlet.

Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA'ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,

DonnaAnn W.

2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair

[RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com](mailto:RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com)

323/394-7146

**ISSUE #12-36**

**WSC Resource Development**

Woodstock NY New Visions Group #317

We are concerned that subgroups of DA i.e. Underearners Anonymous, Clutterers Anonymous are drawing resources away from DA including but not limited to financial contributions.

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your question. Underearners Anonymous and Clutterers Anonymous are not sub-groups of D.A.; they are separate fellowships. Because these groups are separate fellowships, we respectfully refer to our 10<sup>th</sup> Tradition which states, "D.A. has no opinion on outside issues," and as our Promises affirm, we "recognize that there is enough..." Although individuals at D.A. meetings may identify as underearners or clutterers, their 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions are being made to D.A.



**ISSUE #12-37**

**WSC Resource Development**

Woodstock NY New Visions Group #317

Are we continuing to encourage increased donations?

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your question. The RDC continues to encourage increased donations following that part of our mission statement that requires us to not only increase 7th Tradition contributions and clarify the use of 7th Tradition funds, but also increase awareness about the concept of self support at the group, Intergroup and world service level. To that end, we have made a suggestion for revision to the Treasurer's Manual for groups to include a line item for contributions, distributed fundraising fliers for World Service Month, and are supporting translation of our literature to reach a broader spectrum of D.A. members and groups. Positive results of these activities are that, in the period from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012, group contributions increased 7% and individual contributions increased 53% versus the previous year.

We are continuing to develop new initiatives for increasing contributions

**ISSUE #12-38**  
**GSB Finance**

*Woodstock NY New Visions Group #317*

*Are phone meetings contributing to DA World Services?*

**RESPONSE:**

**ISSUE #12-39**

**GSB Long Range Planning**

Why in this economy does it feel like our membership isn't growing?

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your concern regarding the vitality of the D.A. fellowship. In Step One of *The Twelve Steps of Debtors Anonymous* pamphlet, it reminds us that the disease is not caused by external factors, "we may have told ourselves the problem was the economy, or our boss, or a stroke of bad luck."; The state of the economy and its impact, if any, on the number of D.A. members is an outside issue for which D.A. has no opinion (Tradition 10). Our primary purpose is to stop incurring unsecured debt one day at a time and to help other compulsive debtors to stop incurring unsecured debt.

D.A. does not take a yearly census, so we have no accurate way of measuring growth in membership numbers. However, since April 2009, over 229 new groups have registered with the General Service Office (GSO). Also, D.A. is spreading overseas – this we know, because groups are contacting the GSO and registering. Jan S., past GSB Chair mentioned at the 2011 WSC that D.A. meetings can be found on six continents for the first time in our history.

**ISSUE #12-40**

***GSB Communications***

Speakers to download and use in meetings or as resource.

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your suggestion. At present there are recovery stories available on the website that can be downloaded and read at meetings

**ISSUE #12-41**

**GSB International Committee**

*Montreal Nouveau Depart Group # 1204*

*Need French Canadian Translation (not from France) of Conference Approved Literature i.e. A Currency of Hope. The group is presently using the book "Money Drunk" as its main literature in the meeting. This book is not conference approved.*

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your concern. We appreciate your desire to use only DA conference-approved materials. We are in the process of preparing French translations, and will address other translation needs as we are able. We strongly encourage you to utilize the French translations of *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the *12 Steps and 12 Traditions*, and replace the words "debt" for "alcohol," as many English-speaking groups have been doing. A second edition of *A Currency of Hope* will be published by 2013 and translations of that volume will follow.

**ISSUE #12-42**

**WSC Conference Committee**

*Frustrating to not receive a John H. Scholarship award two years in a row and not know what criteria was used in choosing the recipients. No one in our area received funding even though it was said the scholarships would go to as many areas (especially remote ones) as possible. Please try to let applicants know ahead of time what criteria will be used in deciding who is chosen. Thank you!*

**RESPONSE:**

There is a new documented formal policy for awarding John H. WSC Scholarships that has been approved by the WS 2012 convocation\* and will be used by future Host Committees to make the scholarship awards. This policy can be requested from the GSO. The revised scholarship application will include a question about prior years' requests and awards and will allow the scholarship committee to make more informed decisions.

(\*pending motion carries WSC 2012)

**ISSUE #12-43**

**WSC Literature Committee**

*Please get your own 12 and 12/ Big Book. The AA material/wording is being bastardized and changed inappropriately. Thank you. They should be extrapolating and they can't seem to do it.*

**RESPONSE:** The 2012/2103 Literature Committee of Debtors Anonymous received and reviewed your Issue and Concern, #12-43: "Please get your own 12 and 12/ Big Book. The AA material/ wording is being bastardized and changed inappropriately. Thank you. They should be extrapolating and they can't seem to do it."

Regarding the 12 and 12, we are happy to report that the hired writer is on schedule and has written and revised, based on re-write notes from our General Service Board, all of the 12 Steps and Traditions 1 - 3. This is current as of November, 2012.

The Literature Committee is the "last stop" on DA's publication train. Once the required three branches of service (the GSB, Literature Publications and Literature Services) have performed their due diligence and read, recommended changes, read revisions and deemed the 12 and 12 completed and ready for publication, Lit Com, a non-Board "second set of eyes" will read it and offer our Higher Power guided insight based on our experience, strength and hope. Once Lit Com deems the book completed and ready for publication, the Convocation votes to accept our recommendation for approval at our annual World Service Conference held in August every year. Upon passage of the motion to approve the 12 and 12, a final publication process begins: final formatting, grammar and syntax check, cover selection and a three (3) bid submission for cost of publishing.

As such, I am unable to provide you with a definite time for publication, but Lit Com is hoping to have the final draft read and ready for voting on at the 2013 WSC.

The DA 12 and 12 is a fully funded project, as required by our by-laws. The as yet unnamed DA Basic Text, which you refer to as a Big Book, was accepted as the number one new literature priority by the Fellowship in 2012 and as such will supersede any other proposed publication. The GSB will begin work on the Basic Text once the 12 and 12 is published. The Basic Text was proposed, voted on and accepted after the 12 and 12 project was well under way, thus the somewhat odd order of events.

Thank you for your inquiry. We are very happy to connect with any recovering member interested in the literature of Debtors Anonymous. Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions, suggestions or concerns.

Best personal regards,  
DonnaAnn W.  
Literature Committee Chair  
RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com

**ISSUE #12-44**

**GSB Literature Publications**

*Stroudsburg, PA Investors in Recovery Group 575*

*A book on daily meditations has not yet been completed. I had sent in a submission years ago...so I am wondering when can we expect a printing?*

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your question. The daily meditations project has been tabled for several reasons. Poor record-keeping resulted in submissions without accompanying authors' releases, and many submissions were drawn from non-Conference-approved sources. We hope to revive the project following publication of the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Debtors Anonymous*.



**ISSUE #12-45**

**WSC Literature Committee**

Laguna Beach, CA Laguna Beach BDA Group # 466

Could we get an Excel or Quicken version on CD (to purchase) with DA Spending Plan Categories and Instructions?

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your suggestion. Members are encouraged to use whatever tools are available when creating their spending plans. However, creating a CD as suggested would imply affiliation and go against the Sixth Tradition, stating we do not affiliate ourselves with any outside enterprise.

**ISSUE #12-46**

***GSB Conference Support Committee***

Lynnwood, WA SHiP Group # 1297

The basic cost of the WSC appears to be \$475 for registration and meals. What is the actual breakdown of this \$475.00?

**RESPONSE:**

**ISSUE #12-47**

***GSB Literature Publication***

Lynnwood, WA SHIP Group # 1297

The use of outside literature at DA meetings, special events and fundraisers causes great harm to DA's unity and singleness of purpose, and keeps many newcomers in confusion over what our Fellowship is and does.

Although our service manuals do state that outside literature is not appropriate at a DA event, this information is often deep inside service materials in a place many members do not see, or choose not to see.

To address this problem, we need to have an unequivocal, concise statement in all DA media and all publications making clear the simple principle that ONLY Debtors Anonymous Conference –approved literature and General Service Board approved service material be used at DA meetings, DA sponsored special events and fundraisers, and that there are no exceptions to our Fellowship's group conscience on this.

**RESPONSE:**

"A Guide to Special Events" is available as a free download from Debtorsanonymous.org and is a valuable resource for those wishing to put on a workshop and/or fundraiser within the guidelines of our Traditions. According to Tradition Four, all groups are autonomous. Neither the General Service Board nor the General Service Office can tell any group how to run their events. Perhaps attending the planning of these events and an open discussion of the Traditions will help to encourage planners to use Conference Approved Literature.

**ISSUE #12-48**

***GSB Literature Publications***

London Intergroup UK No 1269

How can members not on conference committees contribute with writing literature to help speed up the long process? We are particularly interested in BDA literature.

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your concern. We recommend signing up for the eNews announcements. Call for resumes for writers are sent out via the eNews. Also you can check the website, [debtorsanonymous.org](http://debtorsanonymous.org) under the Writing/Editing tab to see what open positions are available. Finally, in 2011 a motion was approved for Literature Publications to collect resumes to establish a writer's pool. Resumes can be sent to [DALitPub@yahoo.com](mailto:DALitPub@yahoo.com)

**ISSUE #12-49**

**GSB Finance Committee**

London Intergroup UK No 1269

The process for buying literature and paying for attendance at conference could be sent direct for free from UK DA bank account to DA USA bank account instantly without debt as it is not a personal bank account. The following is the process and opinions that are frustrations, which have been held for several years.

1. The literature secretary sends me an order for US literature, which shows the total price - including postage - in dollars.
2. I take this form to our bank and fill in a form to order a US draft for this amount: the charge for this service is £19 and the bank account is also debited at this point for the draft.
3. The form is sent to the bank's head office and a U S draft is issued and sent to me: this takes up to ten days - although the most recent one arrived within a week.
4. I send the draft, plus the literature order form to the States.
5. On receipt of draft and lit form, the literature is dispatched to the literature secretary. UK Intergroup treasurer.

As a recent Literature Secretary for Intergroup the purchase of literature for the UK, I have found the implacability of those at the WSO over payment for Literature orders extremely frustrating: it slowed up orders hugely from our end and seemed short-sighted to me in terms of there being no need to debt if money was sent via Pay pal using a debit card...or even wiring money from account to account. I don't see how either process could be thought of as debting especially if the money is coming straight out of DA UK account and not a personal account!

**RESPONSE:** Refer to Issue 12-30 for the current method for receiving international payment for literature orders, contributions, and conference registration.

Regarding alternatives for electronic contributions and payments, from both U.S. and non-U.S. locations, the General Service Board, the General Service Office, and the World Service Conference Technology Committee are continuing to do research in this area, and will advise the fellowship when conclusions have been reached.

In the meantime, regarding direct wire transfers, the Board has concluded that it is not a sound financial management practice to release our bank account information to people or organizations beyond those directly involved with our banking and financial management.

**ISSUE #12-50**

**WSC Conference Committee**

*Stroudsburg, PA Visions at Noon Group # 750*

*Please consider the challenges facing John H. scholarship applicants and move the application/award process to an earlier date. The late June notification date leaves GSR's facing higher airfares (due to the short time between booking and the conference). August, when the WSC typically occurs, is a peak vacation time for many companies, often requiring that employees request time off well in advance. Delegates with children or other family-related responsibilities need substantial lead time to make alternative arrangements.*

*Thank you for your consideration of this matter.*

**RESPONSE:**

We agree with your statement that the John H. Scholarship application and award dates puts a cost and planning burden on our delegates. Therefore, we are recommending that the conference change the date of application to May 1<sup>st</sup> and awards to May 15<sup>th</sup>, dependent upon the timely completion of the Registration Packet for each World Service Conference.

**ISSUE #12-51**

**WSC Literature Committee**

Create a literature piece defining “debt”, “solvency”, and “secured and unsecured debt.”

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, “**12-51: Create A Piece Of Literature Defining Debt, Solvency and Secured and Unsecured Debt**”.

The 2012/2013 Literature Committee has put this Issue and Concern on our yearly agenda. We are making recommendations for a pamphlet and/or chapter in the DA Basic Text that will clearly define the causes and conditions that in our members’ direct experience lead to debting, as well as define the language of our disease and recovery more clearly. We hope this will clear up what are DA issues and what are not as well as create a more definitive definition of what debting is.

Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA’ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,

DonnaAnn W.

2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair

[RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com](mailto:RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com)

**ISSUE #12-52**

**WSC Literature Committee**

Create a literature piece on ‘the history of DA’ and solicit input from old-timers who attended the first DA meetings, perhaps with memories/recollections of John H.

**RESPONSE:** . The 2012/2103 Literature Committee of Debtors Anonymous received and reviewed your Issue and Concern, #12-52: “Create a piece of literature on “the history of DA” and solicit input from old timers who attended the first DA meeting, perhaps with memories/recollections of John H.

We are happy to report that the 2nd Edition A Currency Of Hope has been written with a greatly expanded history of the DA program, including its founding. ACOH, 2nd Edition is in the final phases of publication and it is the hope of the GSB and the Literature Committee that it will be available around April of 2013.

Additionally, the 2011 WSC attendees voted to approve the format for the as yet unnamed DA Basic Text, sometimes called the DA Big Book, to follow that of the AA Big Book: history, symptoms, how the DA program works, growth of the program, etc. in the front, personal stories in the back. Naturally, this would mean telling in-depth the stories of John H. as well as old timers who were involved in the early days of DA.

While we have no set date for the publication of the DA Basic Text, it was approved at the 2011 WSC Convocation as the next new literature priority, so once the DA 12 and 12 is published, which was well underway when the Basic Text motion passed, it will become a front burner issue.

Thank you for your inquiry. We are very happy to connect with any recovering member interested in the literature of Debtors Anonymous. Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions, suggestions or concerns.

Best personal regards,  
DonnaAnn W.  
Literature Committee Chair  
RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com

**ISSUE #12-53**

**WSC Public Information**

Follow the example of AA and put DA news articles in national and international media. See “AA Twelve and Twelve” Tradition 11, page 180.

**RESPONSE:** The PI Committee will continue to respond to requests for news stories that mention and feature DA, such as the recent 2012 issue of Men’s Health, as long as the requests keep our traditions.



**ISSUE #12-54**

**WSC Fellowship Communications**

To increase Fellowship Communication across regions, please reconsider the current policy and allow the posting of local and regional events on the DA International Web site. Any such event, to be listed, would need to be organized by or under the auspices of a registered DA Intergroup. To hopefully alleviate the past problems of Traditions violations, we suggest creating a 'Memorandum of Understanding' to be signed by the Intergroup/event organizers that might include agreements to:

- a) only display and/or sell DA conference approved literature
- b) no outside sponsorship or advertising
- c) no solicitation of business or services by DA members
- d) make workshops open to all regardless of ability to pay

**RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your concern. The Fellowship Communications Committee of the World Service Conference is committed to increasing fellowship communication across regions. We support your suggestion of posting regional events on the D.A. website while respecting our D.A. traditions. This is an important policy decision; therefore, we have forwarded your suggestion to the Communications Committee of the General Service Board.

**Communications Committee Response:** Thank you for your suggestion. The GSB does not regulate the various events put on by the members of D.A. Therefore, even with the disclaimers you propose, we cannot post them on the Debtors Anonymous web site, in case they do not follow the Traditions. However, as a result of your submission, the Communications Committee will be listing upcoming GSB-sponsored conference calls on the web site's "Events" page, as well as directing members to Intergroup links where local events will be posted.

**ISSUE #12-55**

**GSB Information Technology**

Use technology to build a reliable network of registered active DA groups and eliminate from the web site groups that have not re-registered in the current or prior year.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for expressing your concern. The trustees' Information Technology and WSC Technology Committee share your concern. Currently, we are working with the Office Manager to outline the current process of "scrubbing" the group database on a yearly basis. The committees hope to make some useful suggestions and help the Office Manager develop protocols to maintain a reliable listing of registered active DA groups. As you may be aware, your D.A. GSO doesn't follow up with each group every year to update their information - it depends on the groups to maintain regular contact with your GSO. When groups update their contact information in a timely fashion this assists the still suffering debtor whose first contact with our Fellowship may be through the website.

**ISSUE #12-56**

**GSB Communications**

Upgrade the literature pages on the DA web site by adding photographs or illustrations of each pamphlet, service piece, audio visual, etc.

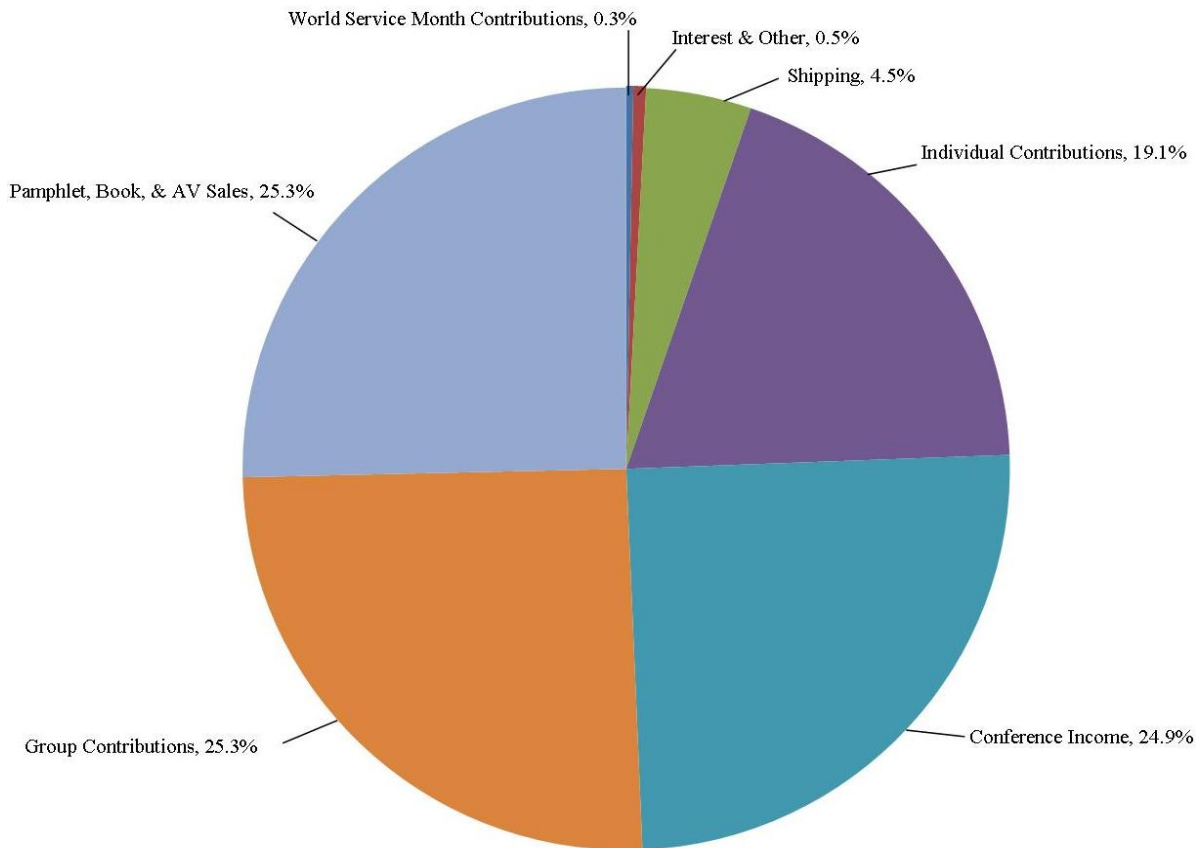
**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your suggestion. It is a very good idea. We will take it under advisement.

**ISSUE #12-57**

**GSB Long Range Planning**

Make the DA Manual for Service a free download. The cost to purchase by mail (\$13.00 with postage inside the US) is prohibitive...for groups in Canada, Europe, etc. it is even more costly. It is too important and useful a document to be so expensive!

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your concern. The GSB welcomes input from all groups and members of our Beloved Fellowship. As with the first and second editions of *A Currency of Hope*, and the soon-to-be-finished "12&12", many hours of labor went into the original writing, re-writing, and editing of our D.A. Manual for Service (DAMS). Many parts of the DAMS can be found on the D.A. website – the hardcopy volume offers all these and much more in a portable format. Electronic copy may be useful to some, but may not be accessible in many situations. The hardcopy is portable, always accessible, and provided to the Fellowship at the lowest cost possible.



As illustrated in the graphic above, less than 50% of the revenue needed to fund D.A.'s worldwide operation results from individual and group contributions. Literature sales account for more than 25% of D.A.'s revenue. If literature is given away for free, vital services provided by the Office and the GSB would have to be curtailed by a like amount. We risk turning away one in four still-suffering debtors from recovery and our life-saving message. So, our fellowship still depends heavily on literature sales. Other 12-Step fellowships share our dilemma, so it's not like DA is doing something unusual or punitive to our members.

We hope that with continued growth of the fellowship and increased contributions, literature prices can be lowered in the future. At present our press runs don't qualify for volume discounts like larger fellowships enjoy.

You stated *"It is too important and useful a document to be so expensive!"* The Board wholeheartedly agrees with you that the *Debtors Anonymous Manual for Service* is an important and useful document. Every member of DA should have one for ready reference. Groups can certainly purchase one or more for group use. Maybe someday soon we'll see groups study the DAMS like some groups study the Steps or Traditions. But let's be clear about value – the old adage *"You get what you pay for"* applies in this instance. Bill W., founder of AA, once commented about the cost of service work; it requires *"a little bit of money and a lot of time."*

**ISSUE #12-58**

**WSC Literature Committee**

Regarding Sponsorship in DA....almost all other 12 step programs suggest that we use a person for a sponsor who is our same gender or someone we are highly unlikely to be attracted to. Why doesn't DA? There is a person in my area who took advantage of this and I'm sure there are others. I'd like to see different wording in our Sponsorship pamphlet.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for submitting an Issue and Concern to the 2012/2013 Literature Committee. We are honored to do the work of the DA Fellowship and take our responsibility seriously. It is our duty to inform you in a timely manner of any and all action taken or not taken on your submission.

Your Issue and Concern was given the number and heading, "**12-58: Same Gender Sponsorship In DA**".

Lit Com has put this issue on our yearly agenda. A sub-committee has been formed and will issue a statement before the 2013 WSC.

Please feel free to contact me, any sub-committee or the Literature Committee at large should you have any questions, concerns, feedback or needs you feel we can address. We love hearing from fellow DA'ers. We wish you the best in your recovery and we hope for you a long, happy solvency.

In loving service,

DonnaAnn W.

2012/2013 Literature Committee Chair

[RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com](mailto:RedDonnaAnn@gmail.com)

323/394-7146

**ISSUE #12-59**

***GSB Communications***

Re-start the policy of mailing the DA Focus to every registered group. It contains vital information about the workings of DA that is seen and heard by way too few members. Also, include a print copy of Ways and Means with every mailing. Finally, include a cover letter encouraging the group contact or GSR who receives the mailing to share it with his/her group.

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your suggestion. We have reinstated the policy of mailing the D.A. Focus. We will take the remainder under advisement. A recommendation has been sent to the GSB Office Committee.