

Literature Trust Proposal

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May 14, 1991

Dear Fellow Members:

Here are my ideas of the Literature Trust.

First: that a viewpoint has grown up within World Services that it owns our literature. I can see the natural assumption by people in positions of trust that their service board or committee would be in place at any point in time and therefore the natural and legally correct choice to hold the copyrights. I can feel for these members because I can say with great certainty that I have shared their experience though with more intimacy than has yet been discussed.

In reality, our structure is not a stable thing in terms of personell, policies and orientation. The last few years, there has been such a preoccupation with money that many members make jokes about getting involved with service and make money for N.A. Huh?

Perhaps many in world service cannot conceive of the Fellowship as a potent body capable of action without recourse to the formal service structure. Where the pathways of group conscience become blocked, members find other ways to communicate their ideas and concerns to one another. This effort towards a literature trust agreement would be a waste of time if it were only to formalize or further entrench either of these problems. Open communication is the only way out.

The original trust bonds were made by myself and others to get members of N.A. to come forth and help write the Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous. We assured them that there would be no by line, credit for the work would go to the Fellowship and that proceeds from the sale of the literature would shower down on the Fellowship forever in the form of services. To us, that is what and how world services is non-profit. Not so that N.A. can qualify for government funding or any other reason. We had been given such assurances at the time by the WSO manager and the Board of Trustees Chair. The WSO was not yet in existence. Understanding of the trust was universal: do the work, get your book, help the newcomer, keep the faith. The Basic Text is evidence of the attractiveness of this trust bond.

Looking through the preface and introduction sections of the Gray Form, the Approval Form and the Basic Text might lay out some ideas on the trust. Also, the Handbooks for N.A. Literature Committees might have source materials. I have only thought of this because I was asked to participate in the work towards a

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solution capable of reuniting the Fellowship. I feel that we are dealing with some issues that will continue to divide us until we deal with them. I am also including a print out of a book have written, The Story of the Basic Text. A letter on page 37 and a sentence on page 78 seem to be useful. Also, included is a copy of my affidavit to Judge Pollack. ✓

Creators of a work have the deepest bonding, that is what makes work owned. The creators have the savvy to protect the work and be responsible. We are concerned about the survival and welfare of N.A. If the Fellowship today is not able to write its own literature, has there been so massive a change that we have deteriorated rather than grown more adept? We believe protecting and enhancing the Spirit of N.A. to be ever bit as important as the legal issues of copyrights. Trust is more than law. Evaluation of doubtful benefits to addicts over these issues, we want these surface disputes ended. We want to care enough to be effective. The Fellowship actually exerts a trust towards certain world service bodies that is contingent on performance and revocable. This is so important that our service representatives and officers are called 'trusted servants.'

Origins of the book are in the members of the 1979 to 1982 literature committee. We worked for the common welfare. We prayed to be able to work with no thought of self. We believed and trusted our leadership. Trust was on a human, spiritual basis, not authoritative. ✓

So, coming from a loving, open trust we as servants had the task of looking out for them. We don't like a few people making unauthorized changes, then making out like others are being egotistical to complain of the disorder. Such misdirection is evidence that trust was poorly placed. It is true that human nature is such that wrongdoers can get away with this for a while. It is to be hoped that some perceptive individuals may allow that something more deep and important is going on here now.

It is illogical to construct the basic elements of a trust document from the WSO towards the originating literature committee. WSO is a temporal structure made up for our convenience and replaceable. The first thing the Fellowship did when the Book was done was completely reorganize the WSO. In truth it was the Literature Committee and the Fellowship trusting that WSO would carry out their job of printing and distributing the literature without meddling with the material or the lit process. ✓

It has been WSO who has repeatedly broken trust and needs to be restrained from further disorder. Making WSO responsible to the Fellowship through the WSO is meaningless if the Office controls what the Fellowship reads, what materials can be accessed and what workshop and presentations are scheduled.

Where basic conflicts exist, the Fellowship is forced to extraordinary measures. World Services will utilize Fellowship Report, the WSO Newslines, correspondence and formal presentations

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to get support for their positions. In every case, members who create non-structural newsletters, workshops or other efforts to deal with issues are at a disadvantage. Even the most urbane and conservative may seem radical. To be heard necessitates some ability to make yourself heard in view of these obstacles. When a matter grows in size and complexity the way the literature trust has done, it is enough to warrant a serious evaluation. For the WSO to be nonresponsive to Fellowship concerns is not directly responsible. A response is required.

There are many members who are concerned that a better job could have been done in maintaining the integrity of the form of the literature and the profile of our World Service Office. There have been irritating changes in the Basic Text without the benefit of a Fellowship wide group conscience and the process that created the Text has been shut down. Many believe the literature process as defined in the Handbook for N.A. Literature Committees has been rendered defunct by the shift of emphasis away from enhancing members of the Fellowship and engaging forces capable of replying to our needs for literature within our service structure.

The situation comes to a head where WSO, Inc. takes legal action. I am not exerting an opinion on the court case here. Legalities reduce to human dimensions and this is an unfortunate case in the courtroom and to the Judge. Had this action been directed towards a non-member trying to encroach on our literature, it would make a little more sense. That the action was taken against a member under the notion that all other efforts towards a remedy had been exhausted is not believable. It presumes that an observer cannot discern the basic conceptual issue from the copyright issue. The validity of the version of the Basic Text now in print and the current cost are more important issues than can WSO win an expensive legal battle against an impecunious aids victim who has been printing inexpensive copies and either selling them at cost or giving them away.

That a sizable sum of money was expended to pay for this lawsuit undermines my faith in a world service system that says it must sell a special edition Basic Text to raise monies to pay for translation of our written message into other languages. Without nit picking, this approach relating to copyrights is abrasive and lacks faith in an Ultimate Authority to take care of the business of N.A.

I hope all this gives the other participants something of use and look forward to seeing the results of their efforts. We can solve all this, if we are all willing.

In my experience, you have to be careful to follow a path of love. Others may not be setting such careful standards for themselves. Deep abiding love - kind of love that exists in some families and cultures, the love that does not feel the need to retaliate, even this kind of love can be perceived as only a force, thereby worthy of opposition.

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Some place for the originators needs to be made in the council, board or whatever to administrate the trust documents, intellectual properties and logos. Also, some excellent trusted servants exist like Bob Barrett and Chuck Skinner who might be willing to serve. Some members involved now should be included to complete the array. One way to look at today's problems is as results from uneven information availability and impact from short term committee systems that lack sufficient overview to be competent at tasks beyond their experience or training.

Other constructs diminish Fellowship and lessen spiritual charge on NA as whole - We all know Fellowship can rise or fall to almost any level of expectation. So we set it high. Since we care enough to be effective, we should do our best to set these important matters far from the periodic winds that blow through N.A. yet not so far that the Fellowship as a whole has no say.

I have looked at the documents sent to me and tried to review them as I was working up this input. Though brief, it has taken much time and has been difficult for me to work out exactly what my belief and experience is on this area of trust. After I realized the deadline was approaching, I broke off further scrutiny to write this document.

As I await my comprehensive package, I will go back to reviewing the document prepared by the WSO and its attorneys.

In Loving Service,

Bo Sewell

Article One - Origins of the Literature

The spoken tradition of N.A. recovery was located, collected, reviewed and edited utilizing a technique that maximized Fellowship participation. Located means that there were many coming to our meetings and claiming membership yet carrying a message that had little to do with N.A. On the other hand, there were members and parts of the emerging Fellowship who had no knowledge or experience with other Fellowships and naturally approached all thing from a purely N.A. viewpoint. These members had a lot to offer. They were also capable of a vast commitment to our principles and message.

Article Two - Parties

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Originators from the service periods when the literature was developed with an equal number of non-lit workers and a third equal number of members currently involved and informed on the issues at hand. This would stabilize.

Article Three - Properties

Basic Text, Ip's, logo,

Article Four - Rules

Intent - All own, none sell, like Indian lands.

WSD not to compete with Fellowship literature process. Management of the Fellowship will be left to group conscience processes. No attempts to change or control the literature to take advantages of the marketplace and shift area of concern and concentration off serving the primary needs of the N.A. Fellowship. Items of concerns can be routed to the appropriate service arm or branch, repeatedly if item not being dealt with. WSD should not seek to take over ownership of the copyrights but only hold in trust as was intended. Many witness will support this as it is the original intent and thought. Attempts to reword, rewrite, abridge or otherwise change the Basic Text should stop.

In what ways can WSD be trusted and what remedies are in place if future errors or deliberate acts against the will of the N.A. Fellowship occur. This is an area that needs to be defined, agreed upon and formalized in the Trust document. Specific areas of concern are the disbursement of funds for unapproved projects with consent and approval of Fellowship, signing of contracts which impact on the approved Fellowship processes. We need to follow guidelines or stop working on them! Especially, world servants should support and appear to support approved processes so that members can resume trusting what appears in print!

More is being revealed.