

Changes to the Legacies

May 11, 2021

Greetings from the World Service Office (WSO)! Thank you for contacting us about changing the wording of the legacies and other CAL to be gender neutral.

According to our Al-Anon World Service Conference Charter, Article 3-d: "...no changes are to be made in the Traditions, Steps, Concepts of Service, or General Warranties of the Conference Charter (Item 12) without written consent of three quarters of the Al-Anon groups." ([2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual version 2](#) [P-24/27], pg.224. You can view it as a free download. A proposal to poll the groups worldwide on a change to our Legacies would have to be initiated by the World Service Conference (WSC), Al-Anon's largest group conscience. The purpose of the World Service Conference is to create the foundation of unity for Al-Anon as a whole. If the Conference should decide to propose a change to the legacies, a poll would have to be taken of all 24,000+ worldwide groups.

While members are free to interpret the Steps and Traditions according to their own perceptions, Al-Anon's unity is preserved when they are read aloud as written in our meetings. Changing the wording of our Steps and Traditions is very similar to bringing outside literature into our meetings. The consistent use of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) and reading our Three Legacies as they are written assures Al-Anon members that wherever they go throughout the world, Al-Anon's message of help and hope will remain clear and consistent.

This has been a topic of discussion as far back as the earliest days in Al-Anon when our cofounder, Lois W. wrote:

"The A.A. Twelve Steps are a way of life that, over a period of years, have proved their power to help both the alcoholics and the non-alcoholic. They are principles that appeal to people of all religious faiths. If we start to change and elaborate them to suit our particular needs, what is to stop later groups changing them again and again until the Steps become so diluted and watered they lose a great deal of their original strength. Also, there is much help derived from numbers of people using the same word and living by the identical principles." - Many Voices, One Journey (B-31) pages 78-79.

As service tools, guidelines, and policies found in the Service Manual are updated, the language used therein is being changed. If you review the current Service Manual, you

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will see where the text has been changed as it is marked with a vertical black line in the margin. As conceptual approval for new pieces of CAL are approved by the WSC, sharing's solicited and used by the Literature Committee reflect the diversity of our members. For CAL that is already in print, the Conference has made the decision not to change what has been published as it is a reflection of the members who wrote them at the time it was written. Moving forward, member sharing's are from the perspective of the current time and experience.

We hope this information helps. Thank you for all you do to carry the message of help and hope to the families and friends of alcoholics. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance.

Yours in service,

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