CONFERENCE-APPROVED LITERATURE

"Conference-approved" — What It Means to You

The term "Conference-approved" describes written or audiovisual material approved by the Conference for publication by G.S.O. This process assures that everything in such literature is in accord with A.A. principles. Conference-approved material always deals with the recovery program of Alcoholics Anonymous or with information about the A.A. Fellowship.

The term has no relation to material not published by G.S.O. It does *not* imply Conference disapproval of other material about A.A. A great deal of literature helpful to alcoholics is published by others, and A.A. does not try to tell any individual member what he or she may or may not read.

Conference approval assures us that a piece of literature represents solid A.A. experience. Any Conference-approved booklet or pamphlet goes through a lengthy and painstaking process, during which a variety of A.A.s from all over the United States and Canada read and express opinions at every stage of production.

How To Tell What Is and What Is Not Conference-Approved

Look for the statement on books, pamphlets and audiovisual materials:

"This is A.A. General Service Conference-approved literature"

Not All "A.A. Literature" Is Conference-Approved

Central offices and intergroups do write and distribute pamphlets or booklets that are not Conference-approved. If such pieces meet the needs of the local membership, they may be legitimately classified as "A.A. literature." There is no conflict between A.A. World Services, Inc. (A.A.W.S. – publishers of Conference-approved literature), and central offices or intergroups – rather they complement each other. The Conference does not *disapprove* of such material.

G.S.O. does develop some literature that does not have to be approved by the Conference, such as Service Material, Guidelines and bulletins.

Available at Most A.A. Groups

Most local A.A. groups purchase and display a representative sampling of Conference-approved pamphlets, and usually carry a supply of hardcover books. Conference-approved literature may be available at central offices and intergroups, or it may be ordered directly from G.S.O. Groups normally offer pamphlets free of charge, and the books at cost.

Grapevine and Conference Approval

An often asked question is whether or not Grapevine magazine is “Conference-approved.” General Service Conference approval is a lengthy review process that can take years for longer projects, with several stages of committee evaluation along the way.

Since Grapevine comes out 12 times a year, and the Conference meets only once a year, the magazine would never come off the press if it had to go through the Conference review process. However, the Conference has always supported the concept of Grapevine and, in 1986, a Conference Advisory Action specifically addressed the issue of Conference approval for the first time with the following statement: “Since each issue of (the) Grapevine cannot go through the Conference approval process, the Conference recognizes (the) Grapevine as the international journal of Alcoholics Anonymous.” By extension La Viña is recognized in the same way.

In addition, the Conference Charter guarantees the right of Grapevine’s editor to accept or reject material for publication; there is a Conference Committee on Grapevine, formed in 1954; and any Grapevine or La Viña matter of importance to the Fellowship as a whole is brought to the Conference through that committee. So, the concept of Grapevine has been endorsed by the Conference as a whole and the use of Grapevine and its publications as recovery tools has been encouraged throughout the Fellowship year after year.

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