

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 16, 2010

TO: Officers, Coordinators, Past Delegates, Groups

FROM: Patsy Aldred, Delegate

SUBJECT: Conference Approved Literature – Al-Anon & A.A. Cooperation (Tradition 6)

Below is the answer to a question that comes up from time to time about an Al-Anon pamphlet titled *To the Wives and Family Afterwards*, based on two chapters from the A.A. Big Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, that was reprinted by Al-Anon Family Groups with the permission and cooperation of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Back in the 1950s, even as our cofounders and their committees recognized the inherent conflict with the Al-Anon Traditions in offering A.A. literature, chapters Eight and Nine (“To Wives” and “The Family Afterward”) of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (the “Big Book”), were still desired by many members. Therefore, from 1959 through 1967, the WSO received limited reprint permission from A.A. to print an adaptation of those chapters for its members.

The chapters were reprinted, with adaptations, in a pamphlet titled *To the Wives and Family Afterwards*. It contained a forward written by Lois. (Bill had refused to let Lois write anything for the Big Book, as it was from the viewpoint and experience of the alcoholic.)

Please keep in mind that this reprint was developed before there was such a thing as Conference Approved Literature. Conference Approved Literature did not exist until 1961, when Al-Anon’s first World Service Conference initiated the idea, which was further developed in following Conferences. By this time, the WSO was printing and distributing a handful of pamphlets. Many local groups and service structures, however, were writing and distributing their own literature, which varied widely in quality and content. Other groups were using more and more outside literature, much of which did not reflect Al-Anon philosophy.

The Conference felt that Conference Approved Literature could assure that the Al-Anon message was clear and consistent, providing unity to the entire fellowship. In the following years, the Literature Committee reviewed the existing pieces that the WSO was printing, and recommended that the Conference grandfather in many of them as Conference Approved Literature. Some of these are still in print today.

In October 1967, *To the Wives and Family Afterwards* was discontinued and deleted from the WSO order form upon recommendation of the Literature Committee and approval of the Board of Trustees (of which Lois was a member).

As for the A.A. Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, it is not and never has been Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature. As it states on page 101 of the *2010-2013 Al-Anon/Alateen*

Service Manual, "A.A. literature is not used at Al-Anon meetings because it is written for and from the viewpoint of alcoholics and is not Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature. Reliance on opinions expressed in A.A. and other outside materials can distort the Al-Anon approach."

I hope this information is helpful. Best wishes for continued peace and serenity in the Al-Anon program.