

Agenda Item from the 2008 General Service conference:

Consider the request to "Discuss the benefits and liabilities, both spiritual and practical, of funding the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous solely by the voluntary contributions of A.A. members and A.A. groups, that profits from literature sales will no longer be used to fund our General Service Office. Further, consider a procedure for gathering input from the Fellowship as a whole and prepare a report on these discussions for the 2009 Conference."

Alcoholics Anonymous needs your Help!

The unity and spiritual progress of Alcoholics Anonymous is being held captive by the fear of lost profits concerning literature sales. The life saving message of recovery, that was freely given to us by a power greater than ourselves, which a majority of AA's believe is contained in our literature, is still being sold for profit. These book profits, donated to help finance headquarters, now total more than the amount per year that the entire fellowship contributes in self-support of headquarters. Alcoholics Anonymous is nowhere near being fully self –supporting through its own contributions.

If the fellowship as a whole were asked if we believe AA is self supporting through our own contributions, most of us would happily say "Oh, Of course! We pay our own way!". Since 1986 however, The fellowship has been slowly informed of its current conflict with the 7th Tradition. Instead of lowering expense to meet contributions, the solution was to ask the fellowship for more money. Unfortunately, contributions went down and the use of book profits to finance GSO went up. Just this year, GSO has conservatively estimated that 19% of book profits come from outside the fellowship. So it looks like we have crossed another dividing line away from the unifying strength of our Traditions, by accepting outside contributions.

Some Questions:

How low do contributions to headquarters have to go, before we accept the fact that the fellowship does not want to support the current budget of GSO?

Since the Big Book only helps alcoholics, and that's our primary purpose, shouldn't the Big Book be placed in the public domain by now instead of being sold for profit?

Why is headquarters renting offices in one of the most expensive real estate markets in the country?

Some solutions:

Reduce the GSO operating budget equal to anticipated self-support. The local groups , districts and areas in the country seem to have no problem with being self supporting and being there when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help.

Let the Big Book become public domain, or at least sell it at cost.

Utilize some of the \$12million prudent reserve fund to relocate headquarters to middle America so more members can visit. Plus the rent will be a lot less expensive.

A Resolution

Whereas, Alcoholics Anonymous as such should never go into business;

Be it resolved that

We, as members of autonomous group# _____ of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous and the real authority of AA, entreat the trustees of the General Service Board of AA , to direct our service corporation, the publishing company known as AAWS Inc., to begin selling literature at cost. Once this is done, the fear of lost book profits will leave us and disputes over property and prestige will no longer divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Once more, AA can rely on a higher power for its survival and growth and discard those character defects spawned by fear. AA is a fellowship of men and women; Our lives and the lives of those to come depend on each other and on a loving God as we understand Him.