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From: World Board

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Re: 2010 CAR Replacement Pages

Attached is a replacement page for the 2010 *CAR* pages 29–30

We offer our sincere apologies for misrepresenting the history of the Basic Text development in the *Conference Agenda Report* (pages 29-30). We made two errors when recounting that history, and one of our long-term members called the mistakes to our attention. First, we were quite wrong when we wrote that “fellowship review” for the Basic Text was “not the same as what we now know as review and input; it was more akin to our current approval-form literature. Input and revision took place among those relatively small groups of members who attended world literature workshops, and the drafts that were available to the fellowship were more or less in their final approval form. Any changes to be made to those drafts had to come in the form of motions on the floor of the conference.” The “Gray Form” of the Basic Text was, in fact, essentially a review draft as we know it today. There was a form for input attached to the “gray form,” and input received was reviewed and responded to in literature workshops. Second, while the body of the *CAR* essay makes clear that the approval period was six months for Chapters One through Ten and three months for the personal stories, the chart accompanying the article does not, and merely says the book had a three-month approval period.

Thank you very much to the member who pointed out our mistakes, and we remain grateful to all of those members who worked on the development of the book. We regret any error, but one concerning the Basic Text grieves us more than most. Again, our apologies.

We are continually challenged to balance the need for involvement with the responsible use of our resources. Any literature project that spans more than one conference cycle is bound to consume a great deal of NAWS' time and energy. With international involvement, a four-year book-length project has direct costs of about \$400,000. To extend the process beyond four years would result not only in increased costs, but also a greater strain on our human resources: Doing so would require that we keep the conference, the World Board, and a workgroup focused on one topic for at least six years. This is especially difficult in a system where trusted servants often turn over every year or every other year. Furthermore, a major project draws resources (money and people) from other possible projects or efforts.

We already have difficulties responding in a timely manner to fellowship requests for literature covering various topics. Some members have expressed that we "already have enough," and we heard that opinion from a few participants at WSC 2008, but it did not seem to be something that had broad support. The fellowship, in general, continues to ask for new pieces, topics, and areas of focus for NA literature. We have enough fellowship-generated ideas and requests for book-length pieces, booklets, and IPs to keep us busy for many years. If we hope to respond to these expressed needs, we need to have a literature development process that is responsive.

A particular difficulty we face in implementing a responsive system of literature development comes in the form of some of the folklore surrounding the way our existing literature was developed. In our earliest days, before the first World Service Conference, NA literature was written by a handful of members, and helped to provide the basis for core NA principles that we continue to hold dear today.

By 1980, the conference was meeting for the fifth time, and a world literature committee existed for the purposes of creating and revising NA literature. At that conference, a motion was made and approved that material for fellowship review be sent out 60 days prior to the conference. It is helpful to keep in mind that what is referred to here as "fellowship review" is akin to our current approval-form literature. Chapters One through Ten of the Basic Text were released earlier for review and input in what we now know as the "gray form." Input received was reviewed and responded to in literature workshops. [Note: This paragraph has been revised since this CAR was first printed. The original text was inaccurate.]

In 1982 and 1983, the fellowship approved not just the Basic Text, but also the most comprehensive NA service handbook that had been developed up to that point, followed by a dozen new IPs. In terms of the Basic Text alone, Chapters One through Ten were released to the fellowship in November 1981, followed by the personal stories in February 1982, and the book in its entirety was approved three months later at our seventh World Service Conference in May 1982. In the decade that followed, our fellowship saw the publication of five editions of the Basic Text, along with ongoing stops and starts with work on a steps and traditions book. Ultimately *It Works: How and Why* was approved nearly unanimously at the 1993 World Service Conference, after a decade of work on the book.

Contrary to NA's apocryphal history, each of NA's books has had a radically different review process and timeline, none of which has been ideal. *It Works: How and Why* was sent out in overlapping stages for six-month review periods. *Just for Today* did not have a general review open to everyone. The text was sent out for a 60-day review to four

different “review panels.” Each review panel received a quarter of the pieces. *The NA Step Working Guides* were sent out in three stages, each of which was around 60 days.

Literature Development Timelines for NA Books				
	Review and Input Process	Input Received	Approval Period	Approved
Basic Text	“Gray Form” was R&I draft.	Records not available.	6 months: chap 1-10 90 days: personal stories	1982
<i>Just for Today</i>	60-day review; four review panels reviewed 90 entries each.	168 pieces from review panel; no open fellowship review.	90 days	1992
<i>It Works: How and Why</i> (current version; prior draft failed at WSC 1987)	Four R&I batches, 6 months each: Steps 1-6 & 7-12; Trads 1-6 & 7-12. (Step and Tradition periods ran concurrently.)	582 pieces total received for four separate R&I batches.	First half mailed Sept 1992 (6 months), 2nd half Dec 1992 (<150 days).	1993
<i>Step Working Guides</i>	Three 60-day review periods, each covering material on four steps.	Records not available.	90 days	1998
<i>Sponsorship</i>	Outline and first chapter sent out for 90-day review.	98 pieces	Policy mandated 150 days; actual approval period: approx. 9 months.	2004
Sixth Edition Basic Text	6 months	350 pieces	Policy mandated 150 days; actual approval period: approx. 6 months.	2008

In short, there was never really a time when NA literature development was fully communal and cooperative with longer periods of time to develop and input pieces. Although we say that our system of literature development is still flawed, we do believe we have come a long way in opening up the process to members who want to participate. With the technological advances that have been made in the last two decades, we have gained the ability to communicate and collaborate much more quickly and effectively. Still, for how time-consuming and labor-intensive our current review and input process is, it doesn’t seem to involve most people, even those who have an interest in literature development. There are nearly 55,000 NA meetings