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To: All Non-US and Canadian Fellowship Customers

From: The WSO Board of Directors

Date: 5 August 1997

Re: The WSO Sales Policy

Overview
The purpose of this memo is threefold: (1) to provide some background regarding the WSO Sales Policy; (2) to update you about the decisions we have made regarding sales and licensing agreements that affect your community; and (3) to solicit your input and assistance regarding the implementation of these changes.

Sales Policy Background
Since its inception, the World Service Office Sales Policy has been founded upon two fundamental principles: (1) equitable literature distribution for our membership, and (2) overall fellowship continuity and growth through a centralized provision of services. The WSO Board of Directors has, through the years, enacted numerous practices and policies in order to achieve these results. In many ways, these decisions have helped fuel the fellowship's growth throughout the world.

Sales and Licensing Agreements
One example of such practical decisions was the creation of sales and licensing agreements for various parts of the world. In those early days of our worldwide development, the decision to allow localized printing of literature, deep fellowship discounts, and reduced shipping fees was one of the practical ways in which to uphold the core principles of our fellowship, as well as the primary mission of our fellowship's primary service center, the WSO. We must recall that, in the early and mid-eighties, our service centers were faced with a very different world than the one we see today: shipping arrangements were cumbersome and often unreliable; taxes, tariffs, and monetary conversions rates were difficult due to our collective inexperience in such matters; global communications were slow and sometimes ineffective. The decision to enact such agreements, at the time and under the circumstances, represented the best way for our fellowship to grow and prosper by allowing for the simplest way for our members outside the US to obtain literature and, thus, recovery.

We believe that, to a great extent, the intent of those arrangements have been very successful: The local NA communities who have enjoyed these arrangements for the past decade or so have flourished to the point that they may now be better able to participate in our worldwide effort to make these same benefits available to our less-developed communities in other parts of the world. If we are truly a worldwide fellowship, sharing the same primary purpose regardless of language, nationality, and geographic location, then the fundamental principle of

"keeping what we have by giving it away" must surely apply to us all, and must include, in addition to our spiritual beliefs, our collective resources as well.

Where We Are Today

When we sat down to revise the WSO Sales Policy, we realized pretty quickly that there really wasn't *a single* policy to deal with. In fact, what we found was a patchwork of different policies and procedures that had arisen over time and as the result of a wide variety of circumstances, each relevant to individual NA communities throughout the world at different times across our fellowships development. Given this confusing variety of different agreements and arrangements, we also realized that our new policy would need to be founded upon a single *philosophy*, regardless of whatever individual arrangements we would eventually make to accommodate all elements of a fellowship with such diverse needs and resources. After some discussion and review of our Sales Policy's history, we developed the following philosophy statement for all future policy decisions:

WSO Sales Policy Philosophy

The Mission of the WSO, Incorporated is to provide services and support which facilitate the continuation and growth of Narcotics Anonymous worldwide. . . .

Since its inception, the WSO Sales Policy has been founded upon two fundamental principles: equitable literature distribution, and overall fellowship continuity and growth through a centralized provision of services. Because of this function as a world level clearinghouse for information and guidance, the WSO provides services in addition to literature distribution. Broadly, these services include:

- Informational support to individuals, groups, areas, and regions, as well as local service committees, and
- Administrative support to Narcotics Anonymous World Services

Such services cost money. Thus, our literature is priced in such a way that the costs associated with providing them are offset, in part, by literature sales proceeds. It is only through members in more developed communities "giving it away" through literature purchases to members in developing communities that our growth and stability have been made possible. Our older members' willingness to shoulder the burden until our newer members are able to become self-supporting makes it possible for our message to be carried to more addicts each year, regardless of their ability to pay today. In this way, "we keep what we have by giving it away" through our sales policy as well as in our program.

As you can see, we have set out very clearly our mission and objectives regarding literature sales and the philosophy that will guide all future decisions regarding the WSO's Sales Policy. Not least among the concepts included here is the clear realization that, though once literature sales funded the lion's share of services at the world level, our experience is increasingly demonstrating that literature sales will no longer be able to meet our fellowship's growing demands for services worldwide. Given our fellowship's limited collective resources, it becomes the responsibility of us all to foster the growth and development of NA by our "older" communities continuing to provide for our newer communities until they can provide for themselves. This approach—our experienced members helping the less experienced—stands as the fundamental, core principle of our way of life.

Licensing Agreements Discontinued
As you know, we have decided to discontinue all licensing/printing agreements as of 30 June, 1998. This decision is the product of much soul-searching discussion over the past seven years, and has not been made frivolously. The objectives of this change are to:

- Increase the retention of income to the WSO while improving services and literature to the fellowship
- Continue and even improve fair and equitable literature availability to our membership
- Enact a simpler, more standardized Sales Policy

Of course, we understand that some NA communities will continue to need reductions in cost in order to be able to obtain literature for their members. We are strongly committed to fulfilling the stated Mission of the WSO, which includes "providing services and support which facilitate the continuation and growth of NA worldwide"—a mission that certainly includes making literature as affordable as possible without jeopardizing the WSO's long-term viability.

We Need Your Help
This is where you come in—why we need your help. Under the new system, the WSO retail price will remain the base price for all literature. Each zone's existing discount provisions will be evaluated to assess their current appropriateness, and will be adjusted accordingly (either "up" or "down"—depending upon the relative financial viability of the zone). All adjustments (based upon community need) will be accomplished through changes in available discount and the establishment of new purchase levels[1] appropriate to each zone. This new schedule will begin in June 1998, and will undergo a further incremental decrease in overall discounts over the following two years (as will the new US and Canadian policy).

Yet how are we to determine what is "fair and equitable" to your local NA community? We have sought your input over the past four years and the direction that we have established is influenced by the information that you have provided. We want to do this thing right, and the only way we can is for you to continue to provide us with your thoughts about how we can keep serving you while remaining mindful of the rest of the world, who also need varying levels of assistance.

In order for us to make informed decisions about these reductions, we need for you to share with us what you believe to be the basis for fair and equitable discounts for members in your zone and why. We understand that no one wants to feel the bite of our increasingly limited resources. Yet the WSO has been the first to feel it—in reduced income, a reduced ability to provide and/or improve services, and even in a 20% reduction in total staff during 1996.

Self-support remains our collective responsibility. We ask that you help us in formulating a new Sales Policy that will be fair to all our members. Please send us your input by 31 October 1997, so that we can create a Sales Policy that better addresses the needs of our entire fellowship. Members of world services will be present at all scheduled zonal forums to discuss this more in depth.

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[1] "Purchase levels" refers to the value of items purchased at which a new level of discount is applied. Where once a community might have had to purchase $500US to obtain a particular discount, their zone's revised thresholds might now be reduced to $200US to receive the same discount.