



Narcotics Anonymous[®]
World Services

1999 fellowship Literature Survey — Summary of FINAL RESULTS

The World Board would like to extend our thanks to all of you who took the time to complete the 1999 fellowship literature survey. The survey was designed to get an initial general sense of what the fellowship would like to see in the development of and/or changes to our recovery literature. We think you will find the results interesting, and since we distributed the survey in English, French, Spanish, German and Portuguese in the *NA Way*, we wanted to report back here to the many *NA Way* readers who responded.

It is worth saying that numbers alone can never tell the whole story when it comes to group conscience, especially as it relates to NA recovery literature. *This 1999 survey was not intended to be a ballot.* We hope these survey results will be used to further dialogue. The survey and its results represent one way to gather information which will form one basis for discussion and dialogue about fellowship priorities for recovery literature. We suggest that these survey results be considered as a first step in our effort to come together as addicts, crossing all cultural and geopolitical boundaries, in a spirit of goodwill to reach consensus about what literature priorities will best further our common welfare worldwide and our primary purpose.

Between March 1, 1999 and July 15, 1999, we received 2,339 total responses, of which 88% were English language surveys and 12% were all other languages. This is very close to the percentage of meetings in English-speaking regions (89%) versus non-English-speaking regions and countries (11%), according to the breakdown of the 26,148 meetings in over 100 countries worldwide listed in the 1998 Annual Report of NAWS/WSO. 14% of the forms returned came from service committees and NA groups, and 79% came from individual NA members (8% did not specify). We asked about clean time to help us determine if the literature needs of our fellowship vary with length of time clean. We found that individual members who returned the survey had been clean as follows: 16% less than one year; 41% one to five years; 23% six to ten years; 14% eleven to fifteen years; and 4% over fifteen years.

What New Literature Do We Need? (Table One)

The following are issues that have been discussed over the years as things some of our members have wanted to see as (1) new literature, and/or (2) revisions to some of our existing literature. We asked you to give us your opinion of how great our fellowship's need is for the following literature:

| Topic | Very Much Needed (Ranked by %) | Needed, not a top priority | Not Needed | No Opinion | Combined % (and Rank) |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Sponsorship | #1 (69%) | 19% | 6% | 6% | #1 (88%) |
| What is spirituality? | #2 (56%) | 24% | 10% | 10% | #4 (80%) |
| Practicing the principles of our traditions | #3 (54%) | 29% | 8% | 9% | #2 (83%) |
| Service and recovery | #4 (51%) | 32% | 7% | 11% | #3 (83%) |
| A piece discussing how NA is for everyone that will help newcomers focus on our similarities and not our differences. | #5 (50%) | 25% | 11% | 14% | #8 (75%) |
| Youth in recovery | #6 (50%) | 27% | 9% | 14% | #5 (78%) |
| Relationships | #7 (47%) | 29% | 12% | 12% | #7 (76%) |
| Recovery in day to day life | #8 (46%) | 31% | 12% | 11% | #6 (77%) |
| A collection of personal stories that reflect a worldwide fellowship | #9 (32%) | 36% | 14% | 18% | #9 (68%) |
| Racial and cultural diversity | #10 (30%) | 29% | 21% | 21% | #11 (58%) |
| Seniors in recovery | #11 (29%) | 34% | 13% | 23% | #10 (64%) |
| Revisions to the Basic Text | #12 (26%) | 26% | 30% | 18% | #12 (52%) |
| Revisions to the Little White Book <i>Narcotics Anonymous</i> | #13 (15%) | 20% | 44% | 21% | #13 (35%) |

The ranking of the items based on the "very much needed" percentage is somewhat arbitrary because the questionnaire did not explicitly ask respondents to rank these items, which would have been helpful. Also, the difference is within one to five percentage points for several items. Nonetheless, the revisions of the Basic Text and the Little White Book come out 12th and 13th either way. Also, note that only one item (Sponsorship) is considered "very much needed" by more than 2/3rds of all respondents. And, only 6 of the 13 are considered "very much needed" by a majority of all respondents. However, when the items are ranked based on the combined percentage, 9 of 13 items are supported by over 2/3rds of respondents, and 12 of 13 items are supported by a majority. The follow-up questions about the Basic Text suggest that the fellowship is divided about making changes.

| Book One (Chapters 1-10) | Is OK as it is | Needs editing for grammar and consistency | Needs Content Changes | Abstain |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------------------|----------------|
| All Respondents | 44% | 10% | 38% | 10% |

When asked about adding a chapter on sponsorship, however, a slim majority (53%) of all respondents favored this option (compared to the 69% who said something about sponsorship is very much needed). Also, only a large minority (44%) favored adding a chapter about service. Moreover, only 18% of all respondents wanted to revise the existing material, and only 8% wanted other additions to the text.

However, a majority of 51% of all survey respondents favored changing Book Two by keeping some of the existing stories and adding some new stories. Only 13% of all respondents favored all new stories.

| Book Two (stories) | Is OK as is | Needs new stories to replace the old stories | Abstain |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|---|----------------|
| All Respondents | 28% | 58% | 15% |

We asked you how helpful the following types of formats are in carrying our message and you said:

| Very Helpful | Helpful | Not Helpful | No Opinion | Format |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| 53% | 35% | 2% | 11% | Information Pamphlets (IPs) |
| 43% | 38% | 2% | 16% | Booklets |

| | | | | |
|-----|-----|----|-----|--------------------|
| 53% | 22% | 2% | 22% | Workbooks |
| 39% | 25% | 3% | 33% | Book length pieces |

The survey results also indicated large majorities are opposed to changing our literature's appearance (59% against new designs, 61% against new colors, and 61% against new layouts).

This was not a scientific survey and the results have not been analyzed statistically to determine the significance of any differences, so no hard and fast conclusions should be drawn. There were slight differences between English and non-English respondents, among individuals based on length of clean time, and between individuals versus committee/group respondents. But the degree of similarity among all categories of respondents is more remarkable than any of the differences, particularly the ranking of sponsorship and spirituality in the top two items, with the same five items also ranked at the bottom. The responses to the Basic Text follow-up questions were also very consistent. All segments across the board show: (1) divided responses about changing Book One; (2) a bare majority wanting a chapter on sponsorship; (3) only a large minority favoring a chapter on service; and (4) almost no support for revising the existing ten chapters or adding other material.

Although the deadline for this survey has passed, the opportunity for input has not. This survey was designed to get an initial sense of what you wanted to see happen with recovery literature, and your answers have raised more questions. It's clear that future follow-up surveys will be needed. These results are one piece of input the World Board will use in our review of what type of proposals to develop for both new literature, possible revisions to the Basic Text, the Little White Book and other existing recovery literature. A strategic 10 Year Plan for literature development will be presented to the fellowship in the 2000 *Conference Agenda Report* as part of the "Motion 21" Project approved by the 1999 World Service Conference. Any input received between now and early November will be considered in the preparation of the draft plan. The fellowship will then be able to discuss and debate the CAR proposal from January 2000 until the April 2000 WSC. A more detailed analysis of the literature survey results is available at the WSO website (www.na.org) or upon request. Thanks again to all who participated.

1999 fellowship Literature Survey — Analysis and Interpretation of FINAL RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

We suspect most will find the survey results very interesting, and that these results will stimulate much discussion. The remainder of this report consists of some analysis and interpretation of the foregoing summary. This report breaks down the totals and examines the survey design flaws, as well as specific questions which caused confusion or ambiguous results. All areas where further information is needed are also highlighted. In doing this, we have provided a lot of detail, but hopefully we will not get lost in all the detail and analysis. We have done this because we want to anticipate and answer the kinds of questions we would expect members to ask and be interested in about a survey of this kind. We have tried to discuss these design flaw issues honestly. In spite of the survey's limitations, the results contain a great deal of useful information which will be helpful to the Motion

21 Project working group. These results are one piece of information which will be considered as we go about the task the 1999 World Service Conference (WSC) assigned us: to present a strategic 10 Year Plan for fellowship literature development in the 2000 Conference Agenda Report for fellowship approval. As we reported in the last *NAWS News*, our preliminary ideas about this 10 Year Plan will be one of the main topics of discussions at the September 24-26th World Service Meeting in Hollywood, Florida.

FUTURE SURVEYS

This survey was not intended to answer all of the questions and issues relating to the creation of a strategic 10 Year Plan for fellowship literature development. It's clear that there are many issues which will require follow-up, particularly about setting priorities (which this survey was not designed to do). Similarly, many questions have not yet been asked directly about how to proceed with the development of specific items of literature. One important example relates to the issue of sponsorship. While the survey results indicate very strong support for "something more" about sponsorship, they don't clarify precisely what kind of additional material should be created. Should the existing *Sponsorship* IP be left alone and something new developed in addition to the existing IP, or do we need to revise the existing IP and develop something new also? And, if the preference is for a new item, should this be (1) a booklet or (2) a new chapter in the Basic Text or (3) some combination thereof?

Yet another example is the moderate level of support the survey found for developing (at some point in the future) "a collection of personal stories that reflect a worldwide fellowship". The survey does not resolve how this might be related to changing the Basic Text stories section. Is a separate book of new "worldwide" stories something that the fellowship needs and wants in addition to, or instead of, some form of change to the existing stories section in the Basic Text? The survey did not ask this question, and the results do not provide any clear direction.

GENERAL ISSUES ABOUT THE SURVEY'S DESIGN

Although the survey was translated into Spanish, French, German and Portuguese, the actual questions did not make clear which language version of each literature item we were asking about. For example, the Basic Text in English is not the same product as the Basic Text in Spanish. The English language version contains the Book Two stories, but the Spanish, German and Portuguese versions of Book Two do not yet exist. The French first edition of Book Two is expected to be published later this year with all original stories developed by the French-speaking communities. The Swedish first edition which was published earlier this year has translated all of the English language stories. Keeping these differences in mind helps to explain why questions about Book Two can be interpreted differently by different language groups (see discussion of this question below). Moreover, the question about whether the Basic Text needs to be edited for grammar and consistency is specific to each language version. Similar issues arise with the Little White Book, whose story section is now subject to the same translations policy as the Basic Text.

A related issue is that the survey did not solicit demographic information to identify the geographic location of each respondent. Language does not equate to geography, and no assumptions can be made reliably on this basis. For example, the English language survey forms lump together not only English-speaking North Americans, but also those from all other English-speaking countries, plus all those individual members from non-English-speaking countries who answered in English. (Similarly, the Spanish language responses include all those North American respondents whose principle language is Spanish, as well as members from any

other country who answered in Spanish because of the unavailability of the survey form in the native languages of those members.)

SPECIFIC PROBLEM QUESTIONS

In addition to the general design problems discussed above, there are a number of specific problems with various specific questions. The questions in "Table One" present a number of problems. Because the questions in Table One ask about both revision of existing literature and the creation of new literature in the same question, this may have confused people. For example, for certain topics such as "Sponsorship" and "Youth in Recovery" (which happen to have the same title as existing pamphlets), asking about revision and creation in the same question may have confused the results. Some members who indicated that "Sponsorship" is "very much needed" may have intended to say that new literature on this topic is very much needed (such as a new booklet or a new chapter in the Basic Text). Others may have been saying that the existing IP needs to be revised. These are not the same things, and the form of the question makes it impossible to determine which of the two questions members had in mind when answering. For example, it is as if we asked, are you hungry for a sandwich, yes or no? The yes responses tell us you're hungry, but do not tell us precisely what you want to eat.

Also from Table One, the last question on the topic "Revisions to the Basic Text" appears to have been vague. Among all categories of respondents, this topic was ranked 12th out of the 13 items in Table One. This ranking in 12th place holds true regardless of the method used to rank the items. That is, "revising the Basic Text" is ranked as the 12th priority whether one measures by those who said either (1) "very much needed" or (2) the combined percentage who said either "very much needed" or "needed, not a top priority". The reason why the vagueness of this question may have contributed to some understatement of support for some type of change in the Basic Text is shown by the responses to the more specific follow-up questions about Book One and Book Two (the stories section) as discussed below. Only 26% of all survey respondents said "revisions to the Basic Text" were "very much needed", with an additional 26% indicating this was "needed, not a top priority" (together, a bare majority of 52%). However, slightly higher percentages of all survey respondents were in favor of adding a chapter on sponsorship (53%) or indicated Book Two "needs new stories to replace old stories" (58%). Some respondents who said "revisions to the Basic Text" were "not needed" in answering this question in Table One, were nonetheless still in favor of additions to Book One of the Basic Text, or revisions of the stories section (Book Two), or both. This is consistent with the finding that only 18% of all survey respondents were in favor of revising the existing material in Book One (Chapters 1-10), a very small percentage. (This vague way in which most of the potential topics were described in Table One without much explanation may also have contributed to some confusion.)

This ambiguity was also evident in the responses to the specific question about "the first part of the Basic Text (Chapters 1-10)". The directions indicated that one should answer the additional questions about adding a chapter on sponsorship, service, revising the existing material or other additions to the text only if one had said Book One "needs content changes". However, these directions were confusing as a significant number who said Book One (Chapters 1-10) is "OK as it is" went on to express support for adding either or both of these chapters or other material to the text.

The question about information pamphlets (IPs) and how useful various literature formats are to carrying the message was not clear. Some respondents may have thought we were asking about how useful existing items are, whereas others may

have thought this was a question about what would be most useful to develop in the future. No meaningful conclusions can be drawn from this question in this form.

The question about changing the appearance of our literature was intended to be specific to changing the IPs only, not any of our other literature, but the question wasn't specific about this intention. There was no desire or intention to change the color, design or layout of any of our book-length materials.

COMPARISONS

For all of the reasons given above, and because this was not a scientific survey and the results have not been subjected to a statistical analysis to determine the significance of differences in the results, no hard and fast conclusions should be drawn. The final summary figures have been reviewed to determine what variances exist in the data, if any, based upon the following categories: 1) English versus non-English respondents; 2) committees (and NA groups) versus individuals; and 3) length of clean time. There were slight differences between English and non-English respondents, among individuals based on length of clean time, and between individuals versus committee/group respondents. But the degree of similarity among all categories of respondents is more remarkable than any of the differences, particularly the ranking of sponsorship as the top item, with the same five items also ranked at the bottom. The responses to the Basic Text follow-up questions were also very consistent across all categories of respondents. Specifically, all segments across the board show: (1) divided responses about changing Book One; (2) a bare majority wanting a chapter on sponsorship; (3) only a large minority favoring a chapter on service; and (4) almost no support for revising the existing ten chapters or adding other material. For all groups except non-English speaking respondents, there are large majorities in favor of revising Book Two with a combination of old and new stories (and possible reasons for this exception in the non-English responses on this particular issue are discussed below).

COMPARISONS OF ENGLISH VS. NON-ENGLISH RESPONDENTS

Here is a comparison of the responses to the question about "the first part of the Basic Text (Chapters 1-10)":

| | Is OK as it is | Needs editing for grammar and consistency | Needs Content Changes | Abstain |
|-----------------|----------------|---|-----------------------|---------|
| English | 44% | 9% | 39% | 8% |
| Non-English | 42% | 16% | 31% | 13% |
| All Respondents | 44% | 10% | 38% | 10% |

The differences are small. Both are about equally divided over the question, with the non-English-speaking members slightly less likely to support content changes.

Here is a comparison of English versus non-English respondents to the question about "the personal stories section of the Basic Text":

| | Is OK as is | Needs new stories to replace the old stories | Abstain |
|-----------------|-------------|--|---------|
| English | 29% | 60% | 10% |
| Non-English | 15% | 40% | 45% |
| All Respondents | 28% | 58% | 15% |

This is the most important difference between English and non-English respondents. Although it might at first appear surprising that 45% of non-English-speaking respondents would abstain from this question, understanding that the English, French, Spanish, German, Portuguese, Swedish and other editions of the Basic Text are different products helps to explain this result. The World Service Conference policy adopted about 15 years ago allows Book One of the Basic Text to be translated, approved and published on an interim basis, with each language community then having the option later with Book Two to translate all of the existing English language stories, or to create a completely new set of stories in that language, or any combination thereof. This could explain the high rate of abstentions among non-English respondents, and may have created other ambiguous responses because the question was not language specific.

Regarding the Table One questions, there were some differences, but what is more surprising is the extent to which the results are similar. There were differences in the ranking of the top 8 items, with a spread of more than 10 percentage points in a few cases. The bottom five items are the same for both groups, however. Overall, non-English-speaking members were more likely to consider an item very much needed (with 4 of 13 items over 60% for non-English-speaking members versus 1 of 13 over 60% for English-speaking members, or 8 of 13 items over 50% versus 5 of 13). Because non-English-speaking respondents amount to only 12% of all survey respondents, a 10% gap translates to only a 1% difference in the overall results. Again, because the statistical significance of these results was not analyzed, another variable such as length of clean time could account for the differences.

For example, here is a comparison of the responses to the question from Table One about the need for "a collection of personal stories that reflect a worldwide fellowship":

| | Very Much Needed | Needed, not a top priority | Not Needed | No Opinion |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| English | 32% | 36% | 15% | 18% |
| All non-English | 35% | 38% | 10% | 17% |
| All Respondents | 32% | 36% | 14% | 18% |

The differences are small. The non-English-speaking members appear to favor this idea by a slightly higher margin, although the rank for each group puts this item in 9th place for both.

Regarding another Table One example, roughly double (26% vs. 13%) the non-English respondents said revisions to the Little White Book were very much needed (or 50% vs. 33% if based on the combined percentage who say it's needed now or later). Likewise, 47% of English respondents said this was not needed versus only 20% of non-English respondents. One explanation is that the Little White Book stories section is now like the Book Two stories section of the Basic Text, since the 1998 WSC adopted a motion to apply the WSC translation policy to the Little White Book stories section. Now, each language group has the option to translate all or part of the English language stories. Nonetheless, non-English respondents still rank revisions to the Little White Book 12th out of the 13 items.

CONCLUSION

Thanks again to all NA members, committees and groups who took the time to complete this survey.