

Plain Language Translation
John W. Non-Trustee Director AAWS Presenter
481 members in attendance

August 20, 2023

- 66th GSC in 2016 presented an addition committee consideration to explore the need for a plain language version of the book Alcoholics Anonymous.
- Reaching an audience of low literacy, remote communities and the incarcerated (without the aid of sponsorship)
- Early investigation (RIPTAB I) researched possible tools for accessing the Big Book and developed a video presentation for the fellowship.
- RIPTAB II explored dated language and presented another report at the 2021 GSC
- 71st GSC brought forth an advisory action from the Literature committee to the full conference to develop a draft version that would be accessible and relatable.
- Currently there are 72 language translations, sometimes these have been produced by local committees, sometimes hired professionals.
- Plain language is more of a writing style than a stand-alone language. Involving word choice, sentence structure and layout.
- 2010 Plain Language Act gives some direction for this writing style, no standard vocabulary.
- July of 2021 TABB was formed. (Tool to Access the Bog Book) and a formal request was sent to engage a translator.
- 16 responses were received, some of which were A.A. members
- 6 were given Chapter 5 to translate and then the process began to eliminate the choices until one remained.
- It was agreed that this selection would remain anonymous and a nondisclosure agreement was implemented. The contract was final in May 2022, with an agreed upon cadence of a chapter a month.
- Publishing and TABB reviewed and edited back and forth with the writer.
- April of 2022 the Conference committee on Literature saw samples of the first attempts, the committee recommended that all Conference members be given the opportunity to see these drafts. Unprecedented but warranted considering the fellowship interest and the desire for transparency.
- An estimated completion date of June 2023 was suggested
- Many edits to maintain the tone and tenor faithful to the guidance and suggestions contained in the Big Book
- Chapters 1-6 were made available to the 73rd GSC in a proctored environment.
- A two-hour session was held at the full Conference to provide feedback,
- The project is on track to be presented at the 74th GSC, a similar reading room is likely.
- Clint M. is the new Chair of TABB, title and cover color are still being discussed, Dr. Bob's Nightmare and the appendices are completed.

This is the timeline presented by John, three delegates spoke their experience with the draft, John C A60, Kacie Area 40 and Suzanne A 30. All presenting positive reinforcement of the draft chapters and offering a few personal edit preferences.

Questions were taken, for example:

Is the book still mainly masculine in gender? John advised he counted he, him, his 247 times in the BB while she, her, hers appears only 42 times. The writer has been tasked with evening this count when possible.

Will there be a French and Spanish plain language? This is possible in the future with expressed need from the fellowship but involves translation from the existing French and Spanish volumes.

