

# N.A. NEWSLINE

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## TRADITIONS AD HOC COMMITTEE

Beginning in August, monthly meetings of the Traditions Ad Hoc group have been held in Van Nuys, California. Detailed reports of each meeting have been prepared, reviewed, and mailed to all conference participants and registered literature committees. These reports are available to any interested member by asking your RSR, RSR Alternate, or regional literature committee chair. Reports can also be obtained by writing to WSO.

So far, the focus of the committee has been on extensive planning and communication with the fellowship about the project.

Discussions about audience, mood, voice, and tone are contained in the reports. Also, some preliminary discussions about format and stylistic goals have been reported. The possible value of readability formulas and computer software has received extensive discussion and study.

The following statement of purpose for the traditions book has been formulated and will guide future decisions.

"The Traditions section of *It Works: How and Why* shall serve as a resource for N.A. groups and the individual member. The book seeks to:

1. Explore the spiritual principles within the Traditions,
2. Engage members with the spirit—not the law—of the Traditions,
3. Examine the history of the N.A. Traditions, and
4. Provide a basis for thought and discussion about the Traditions."

There have been no decisions made about the actual writing process. It has become clear that several tasks need to be done before writing begins. These

include establishing detailed stylistic goals, reaching firm decisions about general content, and making detailed structure and content outlines. Technical advice will be necessary, and the committee has definitely decided to hire people for some tasks. A paid consultant will soon be asked to provide information about the mechanics of compiling and using a style guide, setting standards, how to review the work of a technical advisor, production management, and prioritizing technical decisions. The advice and opinions of the consultant will be reviewed at the January meeting. Then the committee will make decisions about which tasks can be performed by committee members and which ones require paid professional expertise.

The committee members are unified in their belief that the pre-writing decisions and planning are of paramount importance. Discussions have emphasized the need for any writing process or combination of processes to have "neutralizing" or safety mechanisms which can prevent any one individual from having too much influence on the product. More structure and predetermined criteria will serve to guide and standardize any written material, regardless of who or how many people actually take pen to paper.

In the report of the November meeting, there is considerable discussion about how to encourage more involvement from regions. Another topic was to examine the distinction between a member of the committee with professional expertise and an N.A. member who is hired to provide professional expertise to the committee. Also, the subject of how best to utilize existing and new input for this project was discussed at length.

There was no meeting in December, but monthly meetings will resume in January. The Traditions Ad Hoc group and the Board of Trustees have decided to meet together in March.