

NHI Guideline: Dealing with Groups that Use, Sell or Promote Non-approved OA Literature (Draft)

OA has two Guidelines regarding the use, sale, or promotion of literature other than OA-approved literature at meetings. These resources are listed below, including a link to the resource at oa.org.

- **OA Guidelines:**
 - **OA Approved Literature List:** In addition to listing the OA and AA approved literature, this guideline also references two OA Statements related to literature.
[link: https://oa.org/files/pdf/OA-Approved-Literature-List_2017.pdf]
 - Statement on Literature that is Not OA-Approved: **(1993 WSBC Amended 2010)**
 - Statement on Approved Literature **(2012 WSBC)**
 - **Guideline on Locally Produced Literature (rev 2010):** This guideline addresses guidelines for literature that a group may create on its own.
[link: <https://www.oa.org/pdfs/localliteratureguidelines-2010.pdf>]

Groups that use, sell or display literature other than OA-approved literature may be unaware of OA's policies and the approach used to deal with the issue should approach it from the perspective of reminding the group about the relevant traditions (Traditions 6 and 4) and OA's Guidelines related to the issue.

- **Traditions**
 - **Tradition 6:** An OA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the OA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose. (Spiritual principle: Solidarity)
 - Selling or displaying literature that is not OA-approved may leave the wrong impression of OA to newcomers. This affects OA as a whole
 - **Tradition 4:** Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole. (Spiritual principle: Autonomy)
 - Groups may use autonomy for any matters that don't affect OA as a whole. The sale or display of literature that is not OA-approved affects OA as a whole.

Suggested approach for handling literature-related issues:

When an OA member reports to NHI an OA Group (meeting) that uses, sells and/or displays literature that is not on the OA-approved literature list, the following actions are suggested:

1. Gather information about the situation from the member:
 - a. What is the literature in question (specific titles, etc.)
 - b. Who is aware of the concern?
 - c. What has already been said or done in an attempt to bring the issue to the attention of the group as a whole?
 - d. Was it discussed at a business meeting of the group or with an individual?
2. Encourage the member to bring the concern to their OA group as a whole, at the next business meeting (or at any other point where the entire group is made aware of the concern, such as during the OA Announcement portion of the meeting), to ensure that the entire group can discuss the issue and use their group conscience to discuss it.

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3. In bringing the concern to the group as a whole, it is suggested that it be approached from an “education” perspective and assume that the meeting has good intentions and may just need more information.
 - a. Bring a copy of the applicable OA Guideline(s) to the meeting. (OA-Approved Literature List or Guidelines for Locally Produced Literature) These Guidelines are available as pdf files from the OA.org website. (See links above)
 - b. Review OA’s policy statements at the top of the guideline. These statements clearly outline OA’s position on OA-approved and non-OA-approved literature.
 - c. Discuss relevant aspects of the traditions out of the OA 12 and 12, or other OA-Approved Literature that provides information about the traditions such as the Twelve Traditions Pocket Guide, or the pamphlet, OA Traditions – all of which are available through OA.org.
 - i. Tradition 6: Selling or displaying literature that is not OA-approved may leave the wrong impression of OA to newcomers. This affects OA as a whole.
 - ii. Tradition 4: Groups can use autonomy and their own group conscience for any matters that don’t affect OA as a whole. The sale or display of literature that is not OA-approved affects OA as a whole.
 - d. Discuss the possibility that the literature in question could be considered Locally Produced Literature. If that’s the case, share the OA Guideline with the group and encourage them to ensure their literature complies with the guideline.
 - e. If the literature is deemed unapproved:
 - i. Make a motion or ask the group to remove the literature in question in accordance with OA’s traditions and policies, or
 - ii. In the case of Locally Produced Literature that doesn’t meet the guidelines, make a motion that the group amend the literature to meet the Locally Produced Literature Guideline.
 - f. If the matter is still unresolved, or if the member is reluctant to take the actions suggested above, the member could ask the group to invite a representative of NHI to attend the next business meeting of the group to discuss the issue.
4. If a NHI Representative is invited to attend the meeting, the following suggestions could be helpful:
 - a. Using the OA-Approved Literature guideline, verify that the literature in question is actually not OA-approved and that it is still being sold or displayed. At the agreed time during the meeting, depending on what actions the member who reported the issue has already taken do the following:
 - i. Introduce yourself, and your service position at NHI, clarifying that your only purpose in being there is to provide additional information in the literature matter. You are not there to tell them what to do or how to make their decision.
 - ii. Ensure the group is familiar with the OA-Approved Literature Guideline (as described above)
 - iii. Discuss the traditions that are being violated and point out that because the literature issue affects OA as a whole, group autonomy is not appropriate.
 - iv. Make the group aware that they have the right to continue to use, sell or display the non-OA-approved literature, but they do that at the risk of not being considered an OA Group and their meeting may be removed from OA meeting lists (NHI and WSO). **[ET: Still need to find out what WSO will do.]**

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- v. Provide a copy of the NHI Guideline on this, if it has not already been provided.
 - vi. Offer to leave once the information they desire has been given so that the group does not feel inhibited in further discussion and has complete autonomy in making their decision.
5. The NHI representative will report the results of the meeting to NHI at the next Intergroup Meeting.
- a. If necessary, NHI will then follow-up with the member who originally reported the issue to determine whether the literature in question has been removed and that the matter has been resolved.
 - i. If so, the matter can be considered closed.
 - ii. If not, NHI will follow up with the meeting contact by sending a letter outlining the next steps to be taken if the literature is not removed.
 - b. If the literature is still not removed, NHI will then bring the issue before NHI for a group conscience discussion and decision. If it is the group conscience of NHI, NHI will remove the meeting from NHI meeting lists, and WSO will be contacted to inform them of the action taken. At that time, NHI will suggest WSO to take whatever action that is appropriate on their part.