



**Adult Children of Alcoholics®/Dysfunctional Families
World Services Organization**

Guidelines for Translation of ACA Literature and Materials

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Introduction to and Importance of Translation

Translating ACA literature and materials helps:

- Carry the ACA message of recovery.
- Encourage to work of all Twelve Steps of ACA.
- Attract newcomers.
- Retain existing members.

ACA encourages literature translations to help carry our message around the world. This is an important service to our fellow travelers. ACA grows in countries where adult children can read program literature in their own language. As our Inner Child often does not speak English.

If you have questions or need additional support, contact others who have experience with the process of translating ACA literature and recovery materials. You will find a list of suggested contacts at the end of these Guidelines.

Before starting a translation, take these steps:

- Check the ACA Translations Chart on acawso.org under "[Literature Translations](#)".
- Check with the [ACA WSO Translations Coordinator](#) to see if the literature you want to translate has already been or is being translated into your language.
- You can also ask if the literature is scheduled for major revisions soon.

Remember to use ACA Conference-approved literature: Check the ACA Translations Chart on acawso.org under "[Literature Translations](#)". Your Service Body may consider having a selection of ACA literature and

materials available to members in English in limited numbers. ACA members and prospective members may speak English and may be of the opinion that it is better to read the literature and materials in English than having no literature available in their own language.

Accurately Carrying the Message of Recovery through the Twelve Steps of Adult Children of Alcoholics®/Dysfunctional Families

As a Service Body that translates literature, you are trusted by ACA members to translate accurately. This means your translation will meet the requirements of these guidelines:

- Nothing in the original text is left out.
- Nothing is added to the original text.
- As closely as a different language allows, the translation has the same meaning and implication as the original text.

An inaccurate translation may damage a fellow traveler's chance of recovery. For ideas about making and testing accurate translations, refer to the Suggestions for Translations Committees section below.

The Translation Process

Review ACA Literature Translations Licensing Requirements

ACA will soon have a two-step licensing process for translation approval:

- License 1 gives permission to translate a particular piece of literature and to circulate the translation for the purpose of validating its accuracy.
- License 2 gives permission to create the print layout, to print and to distribute the approved translation by your national Service Body.

These licenses are formal, legal agreements between your Service Body and ACA WSO, Inc. They state exactly what ACA and your Service Body have agreed to do. These licenses make it clear that you have permission to translate ACA's copyrighted literature. If you translate and distribute the literature without permission, you are breaking copyright law. Copyright permission requirements are covered in more detail below.

Note: Both License Agreements are currently under development and are subject to approval by ACA WSO.



All registered ACA Groups, Intergroups, and Service Bodies have permission to translate and reprint any ACA print material currently available for [free download](#) on the ACA website without having to submit a written request to the WSO. *This does not include permission to reprint photographs on the ACA website.*

The translated manuscript must include the following in the language of the translation:

"This is a translation of ACA-approved literature.
© [date of translation] Copyright ACA WSO, Inc.
All rights reserved."

Groups, Intergroups, and Service Bodies who translate any ACA material are also required to provide a digital copy of the translated literature to the WSO. The digital copy must be in text format and should include the English-language name of the translated publication, the language of translation, and the Group, Intergroup or Service Body name and registration number.

Create A Translation Committee

In the beginning, it is common for one or more committed ACA members to carry out the service of translating literature. However, the earlier you can form a translation committee with a capable chair, the better. This will avoid overdependence on specific members and will form a structure that allows the process to develop and continue smoothly.

Create A Translation Workflow

Based on our experience, we recommend a 5-level workflow. This workflow ensures that the translations are done as correctly as possible, and then, in level 5, consults the group conscience of the entire national fellowship before the final National Fellowship-approved Word files are submitted to WSO.

Check the Translation Workflow on acawso.org under "[Translation Guidelines](#)".

The associated workflow documents should always be updated to keep track, and so that everyone on the translation team — or ACA members who want to join the translation team — knows exactly what is being worked on (avoiding unnecessary duplication). This workflow documents also serves to keep your Intergroup and ACA WSO up to date on how far the translations have progressed.

Once the members of the Translation Committee have agreed on a workflow, the Translation Committee Chair & Coordinator will present the workflow at the next Intergroup business meeting so that the workflow can be approved by the Intergroup. And once the workflow

is approved, the chair and coordinator of the translation committee and the team members can start working.

Store raw translations in a safe place

It has happened before that a translation team, an Intergroup or a Service Body stopped their translation process and because they didn't handed over the manuscripts, the translations that have been done so far have been lost. To prevent this from happening, we recommend that you set up an account with a file hosting service (e.g. Box.com, Dropbox, GoogleDrive, etc.) right from the start, where all translations are stored.

In addition, we recommend that you send the raw translations to the Translations Coordinator regularly so that they can be archived and, if necessary, sent to newly formed translation teams, Intergroups or Service Bodies, so that new members do not have to start from scratch.

Establish Priorities for The Translation Work

One of the first things your committee will do is establish priorities for the translation work. The committee also needs to decide whether it has bilingual members who can do the translation or whether to hire a professional translator. See also Choosing Translators on page 6.

Suggested Order of Translations

Which literature ought to be translated first? You may begin anywhere, but the following is a successful sequence:

Translate the Translation Guidelines & Workflow

To ensure that everyone involved in the translation process understands what is important and what requirements must be met, it is advisable to translate the translation guidelines and the translation workflow.

Translate an ACA's Special Program Words Glossary

It is helpful to start by compiling a list of program terms in the local language, for example: "Higher Power", "Dysfunctional Family", "Laundry List", "Reparenting", "Loving Parent", "Surrender", "True Self", "False Self", "Hit a Bottom". A list has been compiled in English to assist you; find the ACA Glossary at acawso.org, under "[Translation Guidelines](#)".

These words and terms appear often in ACA literature and need to be translated the same each time. If possible, create the translated glossary with your translation committee or group members so your translator or translation professional or service can begin with a consensus. It can be useful to prepare notes on difficult words and perhaps create a list of idiomatic English phrases. Explain that it is important to translate every word in its proper context.



Translate the Twelve Steps And Twelve Traditions of Adult Children of Alcoholics®/Dysfunctional Families

These lists occur frequently in the literature, and if you translate them at the outset you will not need to translate them each time you translate a new piece of literature.

Translate Basic ACA Materials

The list below gives basic information about the ACA program and how we use the program to recover in ACA. Translating these gives your committee a good grounding in working together while gaining an understanding of the process. Because they are short, you can soon have basic materials and literature available for all who speak your language. This also helps to start new meetings. Choose any of the items below that have not already been translated into your language.

Our recommendation is to start with the materials we read in the meetings:

- Sample Meeting Format
- The Problem
- The Solution
- The Twelve Steps
- The Laundry List
- The Other Laundry List
- The Flip Side of the Laundry List
- The Flip Side of the Other Laundry List
- The Twelve Traditions
- The Promises

Followed by:

- Guidelines for New Meetings
- Issues for Meetings
- To the Beginner in All of Us
- ACA Sponsorship: Fellow Traveler
- The Tool Bag
- ACA Essentials

These materials are required for services:

- The Twelve Concepts and Suggested Commitment to Service
- ACA Literature Policy
- Conducting a Business Meeting
- Suggestions for Hosting an ACA Sponsorship Workshop
- Suggested ACA Banking/Accounting Procedures
- Seventh Tradition Donations - Where does the Money go?
- Public Information
- Hospitals & Institutions Guidelines

From time to time, service-related materials need prompt translation. Service Bodies receive service materials in English that often require a response within a short period of time. The relevance and usefulness of some materials received (in English) may not be clear.

Some issues are not part of our everyday lives. In this instance, the use of footnotes explaining the issues and giving further information regarding the context in which they were raised can be helpful.

If there is not time to translate everything, a suggestion is to highlight the most important information from the material and use that in the local newsletter or other medium of communication. Some Intergroups and Service Boards have special newsletters to summarize the most important information coming from their National Service Board and the WSO.

In order to spread the word about the ACA program, we recommend using information texts for those affected and interested, for professionals and healthcare institutions, or for self-help organizations and other self-help actors:

- ACA is...
- 25 Questions: Am I An Adult Child
- Finding Emotional Sobriety
- ACA Early History
- WSO is...
- FAQ

Translation Resources

Find these items online at acawso.org, under "[Literature Translations](#):

- Glossary Template (Word)
- Translation Workflow (PDF)
- Guidelines for Translations (PDF)
- ACA Translations Chart (PDF)
- ACA Translations Workshop (PDF)

Please also refer to the ACA Translations Chart on acawso.org under "[Literature Translations](#)". These charts are updated frequently.

Translate Booklets

If you start by translating booklets and book, you need to apply for License 1, which allows you to translate and distribute for validation purposes a piece of literature or the whole document. ACA literature that is not downloadable from adultchildren.org, under "[Free Literature](#)", requires License 1.



- **Newcomer Booklet**

The Adult Children of Alcoholics program is often the only program for many adult children recovering from the effects of alcoholism or other family dysfunction. Meetings are intended to be safe places where we can share our experience, strength and hope without judgment or criticism. This booklet introduces the newcomer to ACA, a spiritual program based on action coming from love.

- **Cross Talk Booklet**

In ACA, we create a safe place to open up and share. As part of creating that safety, cross talk is discouraged. Learn the various forms of cross talk and how keeping the cross talk rule helps keep ACA meetings safe. This booklet also offers members' experiences dealing with cross talking.

- **Good Enough Group Booklet**

Wondering if your meeting is hitting the mark? This booklet helps members address group issues or concerns in a potentially positive manner.

- **Identity Papers Booklet**

This important booklet contains the three reports that gave ACA its identity and purpose over 20 years ago during the formative years of our fellowship. The Identity Papers include the foundational language, focus, and method of recovery that sets ACA apart from other Twelve Step fellowships.

Translate The Twelve Steps of Adult Children, Workbook, First Edition

The Workbook "The Twelve Steps of Adult Children", First Edition, is probably the most important ACA book to translate for our recovery.

We've found it helpful to begin by translating one or two chapters. This enables you to see how well things are going and to have part of the book available for members to use much sooner than if you attempt the whole book at once. How you decide to do it depends partly on whether it is being translated by a professional translator or by ACA members. Having the Workbook also helps grow a new fellowship.

Translate other ACA Books

- **Daily Affirmations: Strengthening My Recovery, First Edition**

Strengthening My Recovery is written by and for the Adult Children of Alcoholics/Dysfunctional Families Fellowship. With 365 daily shares, each paired with a meaningful quotation from the ACA Fellowship Text, this meditation book will inspire its readers.

- **The Laundry Lists Workbook**

This Workbook expands the Fellowship Text's brief description of the "Other" or Opposite Laundry List (BRB, p. 8). It contains concise questions to guide the recovering adult child in reliving actual episodes that produced feelings of inferiority, shame, guilt, and anger (emotional intoxication). This workbook outlines a recovery process for healing the injury and conflict caused by childhood trauma and its continued reenactment, and for withdrawing from emotional intoxication. (BRB p. 626).

- **ACA Fellowship Text (BRB)**

The ACA Fellowship Text was written by anonymous ACA members providing guidance on working the 12 Step ACA program leading to recovery from the effects of growing up in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional family. The book is now often referred to as the "Big Red Book", or "BRB".

For other ACA literature and materials to translate, please refer to the ACA Literature Shop at acawso.org, under "Shop", and the ACA Translations Chart at acawso.org, under "Literature Translations".

Selling ACA Literature

ACA group conscience has agreed that we as a Fellowship sell ACA literature. This is normal practice in the English-speaking Fellowship, where books and booklets are sold via the ACA online bookstore and the Distribution Center. This concept ought to be considered by your Service Body as you review the details below regarding copyright, licenses, and your Service Body selling arrangements.

Copyright and Licenses

ACA owns the copyright for all ACA literature and spends considerable time and money to develop the literature.

ACA's licenses are formal agreements permitting you to translate, duplicate, and distribute ACA's copyrighted literature. The ACA World Service Office processes licenses quickly. The licensing process is a necessary logistic. The licenses tell the world that your Service Body has permission to use, translate, produce, print, and distribute ACA texts, which are all copyright-protected. If you do not have ACA's permission, you are breaking copyright law. **This is called copyright infringement.**

Books and booklets belong to the author(s) who create them. This kind of ownership is copyright and allows an author to be paid for writing books. The author owns



the arrangement of words, the text, and the intellectual property. It is normal practice for any entity to protect its intellectual property in this way. ACA owns the text of the ACA literature and materials we as a Fellowship create and in whatever language it is written.

Because ACA holds these Copyrights, it is easier to prevent people and organizations outside ACA from misusing our literature, for example, distorting our message or making profits for themselves. When you as a Service Body print an ACA book in your language, the physical book belongs to your Service Body. The Service Body has paid the printer and can now sell the book. However, the text belongs to ACA WSO, Inc. Revenues from literature sales in English via the ACA online bookstore or the Distribution Center make up a large portion of ACA WSO's turnover. This income is used to pay for related costs such as development of new literature, salaries to staff, warehousing, and more. Royalties payable by Service Bodies from the surplus of their book sales of ACA literature is comparable to the surplus that is created when purchases are made from the acawso.org online bookstore or the Distribution Center. Please refer to the licenses and explanation for deducting other costs before calculating royalties due.

After a license agreement is completed, it must be signed on behalf of your Service Body or group. Your group or Service Body must then email, fax, or mail the license to the WSO. The Translations Coordinator will sign on behalf of ACA WSO, Inc. and the WSO will keep a copy on file. The signed license agreement is returned to you, and you may then begin translating and validating, or producing, printing, distributing, and selling the literature.

License 1: Agreement to Translate and Distribute for Validation ACA Literature

Your Group, Intergroup or Service Body does not need a license to translate and reprint any ACA print material currently on the ACA website that exists in free downloadable PDF files or text format.

ACA literature that is not downloadable requires License 1. Your group or Service Body may not start translating any literature until you complete License 1 and receive an approved, signed copy from the WSO. License 1 grants your group or Service Body these rights:

- to translate a part or the whole of the copyrighted literature named in the license.
- to circulate copies of a translation draft among all members who might be able to help test and validate the translation, with up to six months to complete the validation.

ACA literature is periodically updated, so it's important to be certain that you are working from the most recent version.

Testing and Validation: Why and How to do it

Your goal is to help ACA members who speak your language get exactly the same message from the translation as that given in the English text. When you translate, be careful not to change the meaning of the original text. This text has been approved by the worldwide Fellowship of Adult Children of Alcoholics®/Dysfunctional Families through the service structure that we as a Fellowship have agreed on. Some of the English words may be old English and difficult to understand or translate, we ask you to use the most current word for old English.

During the testing period, you will be actively soliciting feedback on the clarity and accuracy of the translation. The purpose is to allow interested ACA members who are working the program in the language of the translation to comment on the translation. This process may require tough face-to-face discussions about the exact meanings of words. Such discussions can lead to a better translation and a deeper understanding of the program. You are free to organize the testing period in whatever way works in your area.

At the end of the testing period, all comments and suggestions are to be given to the person or committee that made the translation. It is important to trust on the experience of our trusted servants — the translator or translating committee. They will prepare the final draft with the increased understanding they have gained from members' comments and suggestions. We recommend that you make sure all drafts are returned and destroyed. People need to use the final approved version, not the drafts. Having different drafts circulating causes confusion and controversy.

As soon as the final draft is finished, you need to complete License 2.

License 2: Agreement that allows your Service Body to produce, print and distribute ACA Literature

This is the license for ACA Fellowships with an established Service Board, giving your Service Body permission to produce, print and distribute the final version of the translated text. License 2 grants full permission to produce, print and distribute the translation in the way that works best in your area.

At this stage you need to obtain permission to use a customized ACA logo on your printing of the translation



The ACA logo is a registered trademark and may not be used without permission. When you fill in License 2, be sure to complete and sign the final pages, which are your application for permission to use a customized version of the ACA logo.

When you sign License 2, you agree to abide by these terms:

- to make certain that every copy has the precise copyright notice, in your language, as given in the "Markings" section of the license agreement
- to make certain that the printed final copy has the exact form of the ACA logo as agreed
- to send one digital copy and one printed copy of the final, published, translated ACA publication to the WSO
- to send revenues from sales of the literature to the WSO at the royalty rate agreed upon in the license
- to make certain that the remainder of all surplus funds from sales of the translation will be used for ACA purposes
- To add local fellowship information in the first page, so members know how to reach you

As soon as you have printed your translation, send a digital file to the WSO. Send a print hardcopy as soon as possible. The WSO staff labels these copies with the English title of the work, date of the translation, date of the English version that was translated, and translating Service Body information.

The WSO staff also adds your translation to the master list of approved translations. When someone asks the WSO for literature in languages other than English, the WSO can provide the inquirer with a list of approved literature in that language, along with the Service Body contact information.

Note: Both License Agreements and the Permission to Use the ACA Logo form are currently under development and are subject to approval by ACA WSO.

Suggestions for Translation Committees

Choosing Translators

There are pros and cons to using ACA members or professional translators for translation of ACA material and literature.

ACA members working on a translation committee generally understand our literature well. They will put love and effort into the task of translation. On the other hand, an ACA member may start a translation but not finish it. Nevertheless, ACA members are usually the best choice. No professional translator, as good as the person might be, will understand our literature as well as an ACA member (unless he or she is also an ACA member).

Professional translators who are employed to do the work tend to get the job done in a timely manner. If you work with a professional translator, we suggest giving the person your glossary of ACA terms, along with any notes or explanations. Ask him or her to translate a small piece of literature. If you like the result, you can build on that relationship, but if you're not satisfied, you can find another translator. If the translator doesn't want to use your glossary, it may be better to find a different translator.

We suggest that your group or Service Body use a signed contract with the translator right from the start. This makes certain both parties fully understand what is being asked of them. Also, you will be protected from any attempt by the translator to put his or her name on the document or include additional text from an outside source.

Some Service Bodies have found it helpful to do some translation work themselves and employ professionals for other parts of the work.

Editing and Proofreading Translations

Editing and proofreading are two different elements of the revision process and they concentrate on different aspects and use different techniques.

Editing is the process of examining a text with the intention of improving the flow and quality of writing. In other words, the process of checking and improving the copywriting of a document. This process concentrates less on the form and more on the terminology.

Editors check for contextual mistakes and inconsistency and it is the editor's job to verify facts and make sure that the correct terminology was used. This is usually achieved by researching in dictionaries for languages and our glossary. The process of editing is accompanied by recommended corrections.

The normal practice is that when it comes to terminology and factual changes, that editors do not implement the changes themselves, but send their comments and recommended corrections to the translator or translators of the original document and ask the translators to decide on and apply any or all of the recommended changes.

It is typically understood that a document which has been edited still needs to be proofread, as editing and proofreading are truly not the same.

Proofreading is the final stage of the editing process and should start only after all the editing revisions have been completed.

Proofreading implies checking a translated document against the original and making sure that everything is correct.



Proofreading is the process of examining a text and looking for spelling, grammar, syntax and punctuation errors, typos and other unintended mistakes.

The context, terminology and facts are quite irrelevant here, as the job focuses on the correctness of the text.

Though proofreaders may make comments and suggest corrections that refer to the content as well. Or may have questions related to the content. Proofreaders do not apply any such changes but instead return the document to the editor along with their recommendations and questions.

The major difference in proofreading vs. editing is that editing is mainly concerned with contextual and factual changes, all potential style and content questions are flagged and taken care of by editors, while proofreading solely focuses on grammar, style, punctuation and spelling corrections and proofreaders are responsible for a flawless final product.

If you do not have editors and proofreaders with enough program experience in ACA it might be beneficial to ask translators from other 12 step programs to help edit and proofread your draft. The reason why it is important to have an editor or a proofreader from a 12 step program and not a professional editor or proofreader, is because the spirit of the program gets lost. But the spirit of the program is what keeps our recovery process alive.

Testing and Validating Translations: Questions and Answers

The purpose of testing a translation is to highlight lack of clarity and show areas where the translator's understanding of the text varies from the general understanding.

Here are some ways you may test a translation:

- Use the draft in meetings. A group may read a few paragraphs in each meeting and then discuss the clarity of the message.
- Small groups or committees may meet to discuss the translation.
- Sponsors may use the draft in their conversations with see-nees.
- If you have a national ACA website, you can share the drafts online for 90 days to question the group conscience.

Q: How can people who do not speak English play a part in validating a translation?

A good translation is not only accurate but is clear and well-expressed in the language of translation. Someone may make a valid point about the way something is expressed without understanding the English from which it was translated. This may spark a discussion with those who can read English, and from that discussion, a new and better translation may be reached.

Q: How can we address members' comments most effectively?

Probably the simplest method is to use printed copies with a separate sheet for comments. By using printed copies instead of electronic copies, you can avoid the problem of people amending or corrupting the draft. Also, it helps make certain you can take all the draft copies out of circulation at the end of the validation period. Your Service Body may want to number each copy as it is distributed during this validation and testing process; this will assist in being sure that all working draft copies are returned.

Suggestions:

- If you must use electronic copies, it is safest to create a PDF file and ask for comments on a separate sheet.
- Number the lines of text. This can make it easier to relate a comment to the draft.
- Make certain everyone knows how to submit their comments.

Q: Distributing printed copies is a cost to the group or Service Body. How can a Service Body with very little money afford this?

Once your Service Body has published some items, you can set the price of that literature to fund drafts of the next items you translate.

Another idea is to charge members for the draft. When the literature is published, they can receive a discount on the final version when they return the draft to the Service Body. This has the added advantage of encouraging the return of all the drafts. If you do this, you will need to allow for it in the price you set for the final version.

General Comments

Use of former translations as a reference can be very helpful, especially when you find quotes from other pieces of literature. (However, there is a need to be objective as their translation choices are not necessarily the best ones).

Always keep communication lines between translating members open. If possible, promote the translation committee meetings and encourage attendance from guests. Discuss problematic points in committee meetings.

Suggestions for Overcoming Difficulties

Two Service Bodies Want To Translate The Same Literature

If your Service Body discovers that the text you want to translate has already been translated into your language, you can work with the Service Body that has the translated text.



If the text has been translated and drafts are being circulated, perhaps you could circulate drafts in your area too. This can be particularly useful if language usage is slightly different in the two areas.

If the translation has already been validated, you can agree on the best way to share it. Here are two possibilities:

- Ask the other Service Body if it will sell copies to you. Usually the cost of printing each item is reduced when a larger number of booklets or books are printed. Even if you pay shipping costs, it might be less expensive for the other service body to do all the printing.
- Ask the other Service Body if it will send an electronic file you can print from. If it does this, you can print the literature and include contact information for your country.

Remember:

- If you print the translation without changing the text, you need to obtain License 2 from the WSO so your Service Body has permission to print and distribute the literature.
- If you change the text to reflect differences in language, you need to obtain both License 1 and License 2 from the WSO.

When ACA WSO Revises or Updates Literature You Already Have Translated

If you have already translated a piece of ACA literature and still have copies in stock, but find that ACA has updated the item, we recommend that you insert a correction sheet to reflect the changes. If the changes are substantial, it is recommended that you update the literature before the next print run.

Finally...

Remember you can download the following documents at acawso.org; under "[Literature Translations](#):

- Glossary Template (Word)
- Translation Workflow (PDF)
- Guidelines for Translations (PDF)
- ACA Translations Chart (PDF)
- ACA Translations Workshop (PDF)

Thank you for helping to carry the ACA message in translation. You are not alone. These Guidelines try to convey as much information and experience as is possible. But other problems may present themselves. Please reach out and look for fellow members with more experience with translation. This is possible within your area where there are certainly a good number of Intergroups and Service Boards that have faced similar problems.

Communication Channels for Translation Coordinators

- European Committee

If you are interested in building a national Service Body and translating ACA Literature or you want to get in touch with other Service Bodies and/or translation teams/committees, please consider joining the Monthly Telephone Conference of the European Committee on Zoom. The ACA European Committee is currently in the process of establishing a pool of service sponsors. For more information, see [here](#).

The Monthly Telephone Conference takes place every first Saturday of a month. For dial in information see [here](#).

For more assistance with translations, use this list of contacts:

- National Translation Committee
- National Service Board
- [ACA WSO Translations Coordinator](#)
- [ACA EC Service Sponsor Coordinator](#)
- [ACA WSO Chair of the Translations Subcommittee](#)

For queries and requests about translation and licensing; obtaining permissions to translate or retranslate ACA literature, to renew licenses, to post translated literature on websites, etc., please contact the [Translations Coordinator](#).

If you have any further questions, please contact the WSO at information@acawso.org. The WSO, the Translations Subcommittee and the Translations Coordinator will do their best to help you.