

Literature – Fifth Edition Update

For the Fourth Edition there were more than 1,200 stories submitted. For the Fifth Edition there were 2,393 story submissions from A.A. members. Because of the high volume of submissions for the Fifth Edition, in 2023-2024 members of the Fifth Edition Big Book subcommittee engaged additional volunteer readers who, along with the subcommittee, reviewed stories. This facilitated the subcommittee's selection of 159 stories for further consideration.

Emphasis was placed on selecting stories with depth and weight that would help a newcomer identify and find hope. In the end, a final set of 26 new stories were selected. These stories reflect A.A.'s geographic diversity and include stories of those who got sober as young people and those who got sober later in life. The stories also reflect different kinds of lived experiences, including those who identify as being part of remote communities, those who came to the U.S. or Canada as immigrants, members who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community and those who have served in the military. These new stories also include members who got sober during periods of incarceration and some who struggled with the notion of a Higher Power. All found sobriety, hope and a new way of life through the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

After reviewing that feedback, the subcommittee recommended that of the 42 personal stories in the Fourth Edition, **twelve** should be included in the Fifth Edition, including:

• Dr Bob's Nightmare • Alcoholics Anonymous Number Three • Gratitude in Action • Women Suffer Too • The Vicious Cycle • Jim's Story	• The Keys of The Kingdom • Crossing the River of Denial • Winner Takes All • Acceptance Was The Answer • Listening To The Wind • Freedom From Bondage
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Those that were not retained include the following 30 stories:

• Our Southern Friend • The Man Who Mastered Fear • He Sold Himself Short • The Missing Link • Fear of Fear • The Housewife Who Drank at Home • Physician, Heal Thyself! • My Chance to Live • Student of Life • Because I'm an Alcoholic • It Might Have Been Worse • Tighrope • Flooded with Feeling • Me an Alcoholic? • The Perpetual Quest	• A Drunk, Like You • Window of Opportunity • My Bottle, My Resentments, and Me • He Lived Only to Drink • Safe Haven • Twice Gifted • Building a New Life • On The Move • A Vision of Recovery • Gutter Bravado • Empty On the Inside • Grounded • Another Chance • A Late Start • A.A. Taught Him to Handle Sobriety
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As part of a Committee Consideration, the committee discussed the suggestion to publish the personal stories from the Fourth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous not included in the Fifth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous **and suggested that the trustees' Literature Committee:**

- Provide more information on expected costs, potential sales and break-even point.
- Provide more information about whether the proposed book would be more successful as a revised version of Experience, Strength and Hope or as a new standalone volume.
- Consider renaming the book to avoid confusion with the newly approved Part II section of the Fifth Edition of Alcoholics Anonymous, also titled “Experience, Strength and Hope.”

The Fifth Edition is expected to be available before the end of 2026.