“Proposal to change ‘men and women’ to ‘people’ in CAL”

CPA strives to be a fellowship of inclusivity and this proposal follows that principle. As not all our fellowship members (past, present, and future) identify as a ‘man’ or a ‘woman’, we propose that our literature be updated to reflect this reality. This is a three-part proposal to replace the term "men and women" with "people" in CPA’s Conference Approved Literature (CAL).

PART A

This is a proposal to change “men and women” to “people” in the Preamble. The Preamble is located in the Preface of *Stories of Hope* and on the chronicpainanonymous.org website located under Resources, Meeting Materials, Materials for Meetings, CPA Preamble. The website version would change as soon as possible. The Preamble in *Stories of Hope* would change when a 2nd edition of the book is printed.

A “yes” vote also means any new Conference Approved Literature that chooses to include the Preamble would be printed with this updated version of the Preamble.

We are not looking for feedback on any other aspects of the Preamble.

CPA Preamble

CPA is a fellowship of *men and women* people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other, so that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from the disabling effects of chronic pain and chronic illness. We believe that changing attitudes can aid recovery.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to recover from the emotional and spiritual debilitation of chronic pain or chronic illness. There are no dues or fees for CPA membership. We are self-supporting through our own contributions. CPA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to live our lives to the fullest by minimizing the effects of chronic pain and chronic illness in our lives and helping others to do the same. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps, and welcoming and giving comfort and understanding to each other.

PART B

This is a proposal to change “men and women” to “people” in the “All About Service” brochure and in sections of *Recipe for Recovery* and *Stories of Hope*. In the “All About
Service” brochure, this change would happen as soon as possible. In the books, these changes would take place when a 2nd edition of each book is printed and so on.

A “yes” vote would also mean that going forward, the word “people” would be used in new Conference Approved Literature whenever referring to the members of the fellowship as a whole.

A “yes” vote would be approving the change of “men and women” to “people” in the following places (we are not looking for feedback on any other aspects of these texts):

Brochures:
- “All About Service” - introduction

Chronic Pain Anonymous (CPA) is a worldwide fellowship of men and women people from all walks of life who live with chronic pain and chronic illness. Members come together to support each other and learn how to find serenity and a meaningful life while living with the disabling effects of their physical health conditions.

Recipe for Recovery:
- “About Step Study,” “A Note on How the Book is Organized” - 1st paragraph

Each chapter will have a list of “Ingredients,” the psychological, emotional, and spiritual aspects that best go into working that Step; a “Description” of what the Step will help us learn and discover and lead us to on this journey; and “Directions,” which are ways that members have worked on the Step. Feel free to use these Directions exactly as suggested or as jumping-off points and inspiration for you and your sponsor. At the end of each Directions section, you'll find “Working the Step,” a list of questions to help you delve deeper and explore all facets of that Step. The “What It Looks Like” section ends each chapter. These are personal experiences, written by the men and women people of CPA, who describe how they applied a Step when living with chronic pain and chronic illness. They illustrate what the Step looks like when it is applied in one’s daily life.
- “Conclusion,” - 3rd paragraph

With the guidance of our Higher Power, this is a program of new patterns of perception and being—of transformed thoughts and actions. It makes possible what we thought was not: to see ourselves as men and women people deserving of love and kindness and happiness, living expansive, meaningful lives. It is a recipe for renewal, for joy, contentment, and belief in ourselves and others, which many of us had thought was lost forever.

- “Stories of CPA Recovery,” - 1st paragraph

Chronic Pain Anonymous was created in 2004. Since then, many people have benefited from the tools and principles of our program based on the Steps described in this book. In the stories that follow, the men and women people of CPA share their personal journeys on the path to recovery from the hardships of chronic pain and chronic illness. They describe how this simple spiritual program improved their lives, showing them the way to live “peacefully, joyfully and comfortably with ourselves, and others.”
Stories of Hope:

- “Introduction,” - 5th paragraph

CPA is about a different way to live. The Twelve Step-inspired journey of discovery leads us to recognize that while we may not be able to heal our bodies, we can heal our minds and spirits. We develop a new relationship to our pain and illness. In Stories of Hope you will learn how others came to be at peace with their circumstances, expanding their bodies and minds to include joy. The thread of hope is woven throughout these pages, written by men and women people who have been freed of the mental, emotional, and spiritual obstacles that have kept them from full participation in the world. Life may be different than what they had imagined previously, yet as you will see it is rewarding and fulfilling in unexpected and refreshing ways.

PART C

This is a proposal to change “men and women” to “people” in the personal stories in Recipe for Recovery and Stories of Hope. These changes would take place when a 2nd edition of each book is printed and so on.

A “yes” vote would be approving the change of “men and women” to “people” in the following places (we are not looking for feedback on any other aspects of these texts):

Recipe for Recovery:

- “Suffering is a State of Mind” – 14th paragraph

Chronic pain does not discriminate; in our meeting, we have men and women people, young and old, and a diversity of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic statuses. Within this fellowship, we are all able to guide and support each other to live a fulfilling and serene life, despite having chronic pain and illness. We do this by embracing the CPA principles through the literature and by working the Steps.

Stories of Hope:

- “Courage” section, John Coltrane quote - 4th paragraph

Today while at the mechanic’s garage I wheeled my chair outside where some people were taking a smoke break. Our conversation came around to why I was in a wheelchair, as it usually does. How awful it seemed in their minds. I told them it wasn’t that bad if one were able to accept reality. We can’t control the cards we are dealt in life, but we can control how we respond. Well, our group of smokers and nonsmokers started to grow as the conversation moved into being responsible for our lives and accountable to ourselves and others. I don’t think many of these men and women people often engaged in this type of conversation. Before I started talking there was a lot of complaining. After I got involved, that mood changed . . . it was a lot of fun!