

CPA CONFERENCE APPROVED LITERATURE (CAL) PROCESS – 2024

What is CPA “Conference Approved Literature?”

World Service Conference (WSC) approval ensures that a piece of literature represents CPA members’ experience, strength, and hope. These items go through a rigorous review process, with input from the fellowship and professionals. Conference-approved materials, whether written or audiovisual, follow the process below. CAL was created to ensure that CPA literature expresses the CPA perspective. It is written and approved by CPA members, from the CPA point of view, for the CPA fellowship.

What is the process to approve CPA literature?

The process of conference approval indicates that CPA Literature Committee members, fellowship readers, and editors thoroughly review the material before publication. This ensures our literature will be an expression of CPA’s principles, supported by the group conscience of the fellowship.

Any CPA member can bring proposals for the creation of new literature or the broad revision of existing materials to the Literature Committee, and the proposals are submitted to the CPA Service Board for legal and fiscal approval. The material is then developed by members of the Literature Committee. The proposed Pending CAL draft is shared with the fellowship, and a period of time is set for fellowship feedback. Feedback is reviewed and incorporated by the Literature Committee, which creates the final draft. The final draft is presented to CPA Service Board before being made available to all CPA members, to be voted on to become CAL at the next WSC.

What constitutes CAL?

The materials published by CPA include but are not limited to:

- books (print and audio)
- brochures and bookmarks
- suggested member resources and meeting materials
- service handbooks
- public information materials and public service announcements (PSAs)
- CPA’s Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts

CPA owns the copyright to all its publications. All books published by CPA are registered with the Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, USA. To ensure the continued integrity of CPA literature, permission to replicate or translate the books must be obtained from the CPA Service Board.

All CAL can be found on the CPA website (<https://chronicpainanonymous.org/>). Not all materials created within CPA require Conference approval. Materials that do not require WSC approval include information documents, intergroup materials, and materials created by individual meetings.

What literature can be used in meetings?

Tradition One: *Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CPA unity.*

- One of the guiding principles of CPA is that meetings and members practice “obedience to the unenforceable.” That trust is the engine that drives CPA meetings. CAL is suggested because it is written and reviewed by CPA members and reflects our experience, strength, and hope. “By having mutually created and agreed upon literature, CPA ensures that its message of recovery is not diluted or distorted and that it remains clear and consistent.” Shared literature creates unity and carries the CPA message of recovery. (*Our Common Welfare*, page 6)

Tradition Four: *Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CPA as a whole.*

- A meeting’s choice of literature is expressed through the group conscience as guided by a Higher Power. CPA has no authority over meeting affairs. Each meeting can decide for itself what literature to use. However, it is important to be aware of how a choice impacts both CPA as a whole and the newcomer experience. “CAL conforms to the principles of our program, with consistent language and concepts approved by our members... CAL ensures the meetings stay consistent in their message so that anyone who seeks CPA, wherever they may be, will find the program they recognize that supports their recovery.” (*Our Common Welfare*, page 68)

Tradition Five: *Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to people living with chronic pain and chronic illness.*

- The purpose of CAL is to safeguard a consistent message to support our primary purpose.

- “The best way to support the primary purpose of CPA is by taking care of ourselves and working our own program of recovery. Our group can’t carry out its purpose if the members are not willing to commit to their personal program and to serve the group. Our recovery depends on CPA unity, and that unity depends on aligning ourselves with our primary purpose.” (*Our Common Welfare*, page 86)

There are no rules or authority figures in CPA. When we are in doubt or when conflicts arise, we seek guidance from the Traditions. We have seen that if we don’t adhere to the Traditions, it is possible that our groups may no longer function or carry the message effectively. We each make a choice to apply the Traditions as we understand them. The Traditions were created to support unity as we recover together.

What literature may be used by CPA members in their individual recovery?

Non-CAL can be helpful in our individual program of recovery, and CPA does not tell any member what they may or may not read.

Voice of a Member

“Sometimes I find outside literature that helps me, and I think it could help others and consider bringing it to my CPA meeting and sharing it. It could be a self-help book or a book about my illness, or some type of spiritual literature. The question I ask myself is: Will bringing this literature into my group dilute the CPA message, thus reducing the ability for CPA to help in its own unique way? CPA is helpful to so many people, and if members started to change its unique message by bringing in outside literature, the effectiveness of CPA could be diminished. When I thoughtfully consider my desire to share outside literature with my group, it’s clear that ultimately the right decision is to not bring this literature to my meeting. There may be some other ways I can share the material with others on an individual basis, as opportunities come up. This seems to me to be a balanced solution. My love of this literature is not wrong and does not confuse or dilute the CPA message as long as I don’t bring it into a meeting.” (*Our Common Welfare*, pages 75–76)