

# Translation Guidelines for S.L.A.A. Literature

*There are more guidelines than rules*

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## INTRODUCTION

S.L.A.A. literature helps carry our message to the sex and love addict who still suffers. In order to carry the message to as many sex and love addicts as possible, it is important to translate the literature into other languages. The Fellowship is deeply grateful for the service that you (as individuals, groups, and intergroups) carry out to translate our literature into your language.

*Fellowship-Wide Services (F.W.S.)* has developed these guidelines to help service bodies that wish to translate S.L.A.A. literature. They outline the process of translation and approval of translations, explain F.W.S.'s legal requirements and offer

suggestions that may be helpful.

F.W.S. owns the Copyright to all S.L.A.A. Conference-Approved literature. This property right is the most important financial asset of the whole Fellowship. At first, it may seem complicated to comply with copyright laws and regulations, but if we do not, the Fellowship as a whole may not be able to carry our message efficiently. You will find fully comprehensive information in the Translation Copyright Packet posted on the F.W.S. website<sup>1</sup>.

We hope that the guidelines give you easy access to information on the process of translation

Again, thank you for your important work to help carry S.L.A.A.'s message to sex and love addicts wherever they are in the world!

## **PREPARATIONS BEFORE TRANSLATING**

Before you start translating you need to make some decisions and preparations. For instance, you need to establish who decides in matters of translation, who is to do the translation, what texts should be translated, and get permission to translate these texts.

Who decides in matters of translations in your country/region? We recommend that a committee be formed, including people from the region where your language is spoken. The region may be a country. It may also require international cooperation (for instance, Spanish and French are spoken in many countries). This committee may discuss important questions relating to translations, and make group conscience decisions.

Who should do the translation? Twelve-step fellowships often have little money. We must often rely on volunteers among our own members to translate our literature. This service work may be a powerful tool of recovery. S.L.A.A. members also put more love into the task than any non-S.L.A.A. translator possibly could, and would also be more familiar with the vocabulary and spirit of the S.L.A.A. Fellowship. However, we may also hire a professional translator to translate our literature.

To identify a potential translator, you may ask the person to translate a small piece of the literature. If you like the result you can build on that relationship, but if you are not satisfied you may look for another translator. You may also submit a trial piece for translation to several candidates and then compare them to select the best one.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.slaafws.org/download/translation-request/Translation\\_Copyright\\_Packet\\_FillForm.pdf](http://www.slaafws.org/download/translation-request/Translation_Copyright_Packet_FillForm.pdf).

We strongly recommend that you choose a translator whose mother tongue is the target language of translation. It is much more demanding to translate *away* from your mother tongue, because although you may understand the original perfectly, you may lack the range of expressions in the use of the target language that someone is capable of who translates into her/his mother tongue.

### **What texts do you want to translate?**

- We recommend that the first texts you translate are the Core Documents. These texts are vital for any group to work on and carry the message to the addict that still suffers. They are free to distribute and post online, which makes the process of translation and distribution much easier. There are eight Core Documents<sup>2</sup>:
  - The 12 Steps of S.L.A.A.
  - The 12 Traditions of S.L.A.A.
  - The 12 Concepts for World Service of S.L.A.A.
  - The S.L.A.A. Preamble
  - Characteristics of Sex and Love Addiction
  - 40 Questions for Self-Diagnosis
  - Signs of Recovery
  - Recommended Guidelines for Dealing with the Media.

The Core Documents have already been translated into many languages. You can find them at <http://www.slaafws.org/#>. (look at the right sidebar for your language!).

Starting with the Core Documents has some extra advantages:

1. You do not need permission to translate them, although it is a good idea to notify F.W.S. to avoid simultaneous translations by two different groups
  2. The Core Documents are a part of many other pieces of S.L.A.A. literature. Once they are translated and your group has agreed on them, they can be used without recurrent discussions in other pieces of literature
  3. They are manageable in size and their completion will give you a sense of accomplishment
  4. They can be used to quickly start or support meetings in your language.
- You may then want to continue with the Free Pamphlets. They are also free to distribute and post online. There are four free pamphlets:
    - *Addicted to Sex? Addicted to Love? Information about S.L.A.A. for You or someone You know*
    - *For the Professional: Information about S.L.A.A.*
    - *12 Recommended Guidelines for Dealing with the Media*

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<sup>2</sup> The Core Documents can be found at <http://www.slaafws.org/members>.

- *Supporting S.L.A.A. the 60/40 Way.*
- The Basic Text contains the experience, strength and hope from early members, outlines how to work the steps and how to start an S.L.A.A. Group.
  - We recommend that you first translate Chapter 4 (*The Twelve Step Program*) and Chapter 5 (*The Withdrawal Experience*), and then continue with the rest of The Basic Text. If you start with one or two chapters you will have parts of the Basic Text available to members much sooner than if you attempt to translate the whole book at once.
- You may then want to continue with the various other pamphlets and booklets.
- Note: When deciding what to translate, you might want to look for older versions of Conference-Approved or draft material already available in your own language. This might give you a head start with some translations, if you decide to use them.

### **Do you have permission to translate?**

Before you translate, you need to request permission for translation from The Board of Trustees (B.O.T.). To do this, you fill out the Request for Information form, which you will find in the Translation Copyright Packet. You send this form to the F.W.S. Office<sup>3</sup>.

When you request permission you may receive important information about the literature, which may impact how you plan your work with translation and distribution of S.L.A.A. literature. For instance, is the English version scheduled for major revision? Has anyone else asked permission to translate this literature? Has it already been translated and approved, without you knowing it?

## **THE PROCESS OF TRANSLATION**

There are different ways to go about the translation itself. 12-Step Fellowships want to rely on group conscience for important decisions. Regarding translations, this means that your work is not finished when only one person has translated a text.

We suggest that you start by putting together *a glossary*, a list of terms that are specific to the program and the Fellowship. Some examples are: *Higher power, surrender, sponsor, qualifier, acting out, withdrawal, bottom line, inventory, and recovery*. These are words that may not be common outside of meetings, or may be used slightly differently within the program than they are in society at large. They appear often in S.L.A.A. literature, and should to be translated in a consistent way in all our texts. This is especially important if you hire a professional translator, who

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<sup>3</sup> E-mail: <http://www.slaafws.org/contact/literatureuse>.

may not be familiar with these words or their specific meaning within the 12-step program.

Whether you work with a professional translator or volunteers this glossary of S.L.A.A. terms, along with notes and explanations, is crucial. The original text is written in American English, using American idioms. Explanations on the spirit of a term or idiom will be useful to clarify the meaning and allow for appropriate and culturally adapted translations.

### *Working with a professional*

When hiring a professional translator, it is suggested that your service body use a contract from the very start. This will ensure that both parties fully understand what is asked of them. This contract should also prevent attempts by the translator to put her/his own name on the document, or inclusion of additional text from outside sources.

### *Working with volunteers*

Working with volunteers is different from working with professionals. We no longer talk about contracted work. However, translation assignments can be based on a realistic working plan, taking into consideration the available time and skills of the volunteers. Time lines might differ from those of a professional translator and more regular follow-ups and support may be necessary.

### *When you translate*

Perhaps there is an older version (Conference Approved or not) of the text you want to translate. Do you want to include this version or not? In our experience it requires a lot more work to edit an older translation than doing a new one from scratch. We therefore suggest that you do a whole new translation in these cases. You may then want to consult the older version, to see which translation corresponds best to the original text.

Some choose a single translator, and then other members review this draft for errors and improvements. Others choose to appoint a group that works together from start to finish. Either way is fine. Discuss the alternatives in your committee, and decide which is best for you.

We recommend that you specify the technical aspects of the translation, and make these specifications available to the translators. This may include what software should be used, how to use it, how to transmit the translations to the reviewing committee, and so on. The purpose of this is to ensure legibility of the translated documents when transmitted electronically.

Perhaps there is an older version (group conscience approved or not) of the text you want to translate. Do you want to include this version or not? In our experience it requires a lot more work to edit an older version of a text than doing a new one from scratch. We therefore suggest that you do a whole new translation in these cases. You may then want to consult the older version, to see which translation corresponds best to the original text.

## WHEN YOU ARE DONE TRANSLATING

### *Final review*

After the draft translation is completed, at least two individuals (other than the translator) must review the translation (either done by a volunteer or a professional), and check that it is both accurate in language and reflects the message of our Fellowship. All of these three individuals must be fluent in both English and your own language.

A few words on accuracy of translations. All S.L.A.A. literature should reflect the message we want to carry to the addict that still suffers. As far as possible, we should not take away anything or add anything to the text when we translate it into another language. This may sometimes be difficult, because not all things can be transferred into another language. [This is why a glossary is so important](#). We believe that the key here is to do a thorough job, but not strive for perfection. When disagreeing on the correct translation of a certain term, we suggest that you rely on the group conscience process.

Keep in mind: Who do you want to receive the message, and how can you accomplish that to the best of your ability?

## THE PROCESS OF APPROVING A TRANSLATION

There is a specific terminology for the process of translation. Here, we use the term Conference-Approved only for documents approved by the Conference (representing the entire Fellowship). When you approve a translation into a language other than English, please do not use the term Conference-Approved! We recommend that you use another terminology for these translations, for instance “translation into [your language] reviewed and approved by the [group/Intergroup/committee] on [date of decision]”. You may of course use another phrase, as long as it clearly specifies who has decided that the translation is good enough and reflects the message of recovery of S.L.A.A. We also suggest that you add the date when the decision of approval was made.

F.W.S. most often will have little or no knowledge of your specific language. This is



why we have to rely on you who know the language, translators around the world, to review the accuracy of the translations. Ultimate approval of translations is then done by F.W.S., based on the information that you give to F.W.S. After that, you may be granted a license agreement for printing and distribution of the literature for your language. This license may be for the specific text only, or a general license for all S.L.A.A. Copyrighted texts.

According to the 4th tradition of S.L.A.A., all groups are self-governing. The group or intergroup in the region where your language is spoken may decide itself how to review and approve translations S.L.A.A. texts. However, we have some suggestions that follow here.

Approval of translations may be done in several ways. Some choose to make these decisions in the *committee* designated to deal with translation matters. Some bring the question up for discussion in their *intergroup*. Others choose to summon a convention for their country/region, to discuss and decide in group conscience whether to approve a translation. This last option may be particularly suitable for longer texts, such as the Basic Text.

It is often a good idea to test or validate a translation before approving it. Here are some ways to do this:

- You may use the draft in meetings. The group may read a few paragraphs and then discuss the clarity of the message
- Small groups or committees may meet specifically to discuss the translation
- Sponsors may use the draft in their work with sponsees.

Remember that other people than those with thorough knowledge of the English language may contribute to these discussions. If a translation is not accurate or clear someone who speaks little or no English may point it out, and this may spark a discussion that leads to a new and better translation.

If you chose to circulate translated drafts of S.L.A.A. literature before you have reached a decision of approval, carefully consider the following:

- Do not post any material online that has not been group conscience approved!
- Make sure that documents in circulation is clearly marked “draft” on each page
- Include the S.L.A.A. copyright notice, in English and the language of translation, on every copy of the document
- Provide information on whom to contact about comments and feedback.

No matter how you design the translation process, remember the minimum number of people who must confirm the accuracy of a translation is three; the translator and two other individuals, who must all be fluent in both English and your own language.

### *Confirmation of accuracy*

When reaching a final decision on a translation, the designated translation body/committee confirms its accuracy. In order to do this you complete and sign the “Confirmation of Accuracy” form, which you will find in the Copyright Translation Packet. When signing this form the translator and the other two individuals are confirming that the translation “is accurate in all material respects” and inform F.W.S. that the translated document bears the status of approval in the language of translation.

## **APPROVAL OF TRANSLATIONS & LICENSING AGREEMENTS**

The overall approval of translations follows a certain procedure. As stated earlier, this is done by F.W.S., based on the information that you give.

Requests for approval of a translation must be made by a service body (group or intergroup) that represents a significant portion of S.L.A.A. members who speak the language in question. Individual members cannot make such a request, and F.W.S. will not grant licenses to individuals, only to groups/intergroups representing the language in question. The Confirmation of Accuracy form, as mentioned above, should accompany these requests. These are sent to F.W.S.

F.W.S. reviews the request, and if it is approved, the submitting group can sign a licensing agreement with F.W.S., for production and sale of that literature. In this agreement, you agree to several things:

- F.W.S. owns the formal copyright to all S.L.A.A. Conference-Approved texts, in whatever language it is written. However, once you have paid the printer *the physical book/pamphlet belongs to your service body*, and you are free to sell it.
- You are granted the exclusive right to reproduce and sell the specific piece of literature in your country/region, but *only there*.
- All printed material must include the trademarked *S.L.A.A. logo* as well as a specified copyright notice (both in English and in your own language).
- It is also specified how much of the revenues you should pay to F.W.S. (the owner of the text) as a royalty fee. Most often, you will not pay anything until you have covered all costs for printing, storage and distribution of the literature. When costs have been covered, typically 10 % of the proceeds is paid to the F.W.S.<sup>[4]</sup>
- You also agree to send three copies of the final, printed translation and a .pdf file to the F.W.S. Office.

## **A FEW WORDS ON PRINTING & DISTRIBUTION**



It is desirable that translations of S.L.A.A. literature match the original in overall appearance, such as layout, graphics, color and style of binding. F.W.S. can help you with digital files, if necessary. When we say desirable, we mean that layout should match the original whenever possible. However, if you have little money it might not be possible to match the original version exactly. Also, you may not be able to print large quantities of the literature.

The most important thing is to make our literature available. This will help S.L.A.A. grow in your country/region, and you will soon be able to print larger quantities of the literature, with better quality.

When there are only a few members you may not be able to use a professional printer. Instead, you can print material from your own computer when people wish to buy literature.

If you use a professional printer, consider ways to keep your costs as low as possible. For instance, it is usually less expensive to print literature in just one color. Can you save money by having S.L.A.A. members do some of the work? Folding and stapling, for instance.

We recommend that you set the price for the literature to accommodate for all costs of producing the literature. This includes printing, visits and phone calls to the printer, and costs for storage and distribution.

The sale of S.L.A.A. literature should produce a surplus that you can use for service work in your country/region. One example of such service would be anticipated costs for the next piece of S.L.A.A. literature you want to translate and sell.

You also need to allow for royalty fees when you set the price of the literature. International bank transfers often cost a lot of money. Therefore, it is better to send royalty fees to F.W.S. in a few larger sums rather than frequent smaller ones.

## **FINALLY**

If you have any questions please contact the F.W.S. Conference Translation Committee. See below for e-mail<sup>4</sup>!

Remember, you are not alone. We will do our best to help you.

Last but not least: Do not forget to have fun while doing the job! :)

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<sup>4</sup> E-mail: <http://www.slaafws.org/contact/Conference+Translation+Committee>.

## MORE INFORMATION

- Proper use of S.L.A.A. literature resources:

<http://www.slaafws.org/BOT/FinalWhatsinaNameFWS-SLAA-Article.pdf>.

- Information about S.L.A.A. copyright and logos:

<http://www.slaafws.org/NEWSLETTERS/2010-06/SLAACopyrightandLogos16May10final.pdf>.

- The S.L.A.A. Translation Copyright Packet:

[http://www.slaafws.org/download/translation-request/Translation\\_Copyright\\_Packet\\_FillForm.pdf](http://www.slaafws.org/download/translation-request/Translation_Copyright_Packet_FillForm.pdf).

- Licensing agreement (example):

<http://www.slaafws.org/download/translation-request/SLAAFWSLicensingAgreement.pdf>.

- NA Translation Basics:

[http://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/TBasics\\_complete\\_2008.pdf](http://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/TBasics_complete_2008.pdf)

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