

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

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## INTRODUCTION

S.L.A.A. literature helps carry our message to the sex and love addict who still suffers. To carry our message to sex and love addicts, we seek to translate the literature into other languages. The S.L.A.A. 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 and adopted these guidelines to help service bodies wishing to translate our literature. F.W.S. has outlined the process of

translation and approval of translations, explained legal requirements, and offered suggestions that are helpful.

F.W.S. owns the copyright to all S.L.A.A. Conference-Approved literature. Literature property right is an important financial asset of the Fellowship. It may seem complicated to comply with local copyright laws and regulations, and if we do not, the Fellowship may not be able to carry our message efficiently and consistently to the addict that still suffers. You will find helpful information in the Translation Copyright Packet posted on the F.W.S. website<sup>1</sup>.

We hope these guidelines will serve you by providing information on the translation processes.

Thank you in advance for your work to help carry our message to sex and love addicts wherever they may be suffering in the world and whatever language they may speak!

## **PREPARATIONS BEFORE TRANSLATING**

Before you start translating you need to take some decisions and make some preparations. For instance, you need to establish who decides on matters of translation, how to get permission to translate the material, who is to do the translation, and what text should be translated.

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

Before you translate, you need to request permission for translation from The Board of Trustees (BOT). To obtain permission, please fill out the Request for Information form which you will find in the Translation Copyright Packet. Once completed, send this form to the F.W.S. Office<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [Request for the Translation Copyright Packet.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Contact F.W.S.](#)

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

### **Who decides in matters of translations in your country or region?**

We recommend forming a committee 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 limited resources and funds. We must often rely on volunteers among our own members to translate our literature. This service work may be a powerful tool in recovery. S.L.A.A. members may put more “love” into the task than any non-S.L.A.A. translator possibly could, not to mention they would also be more familiar with the vocabulary and spirit of the S.L.A.A. Fellowship. However, you may also hire a professional translator to translate your literature.

To identify a potential translator, you may ask the person to translate a small passage 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 candidate.

We strongly recommend that you choose a translator whose mother tongue is the target language of translation. It is much harder to translate *away* from your mother tongue. Although one may understand the original material correctly, the translator may lack the range of expressions in the use of the target language that someone is capable of who is translating into their own 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 with and carry the message to the addict that still suffers. These documents are free to distribute and are posted online which makes the process of translation and distribution easier.

There are eight (8) Core Documents<sup>3</sup> that include the following:

- *The Twelve Steps of S.L.A.A.*
- *The Twelve Traditions of S.L.A.A.*
- *The Twelve 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 and are found at [slaafws.org](http://slaafws.org) (look at the right sidebar for your language).

Starting with the Core Documents has some extra advantages:

- You do not need permission to translate the Core Documents, although you should notify F.W.S. to avoid ongoing translations by others.
- The Core Documents are part of other S.L.A.A. literature. Once the Core Documents are translated and your group has agreed on them, this material can be used without recurrent discussions when translating other pieces of literature.
- The Core Documents are manageable in size, and their completion will give you a sense of accomplishment.
- The Core Documents can be used to quickly start or support meetings in your language.

You may then want to continue with the Free Pamphlets. They are free to distribute and are posted online. There are three free pamphlets that include the following:

- *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.*
- *Supporting S.L.A.A. the 60/40 Way*

*(12 Recommended Guidelines for Dealing with the Media can be skipped, it is also in the list of the Core Documents.)*

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<sup>3</sup> The Core Documents are found at <https://www.slaafws.org/members>.

The S.L.A.A. Basic Text contains the experience, strength and hope of early members. The Text outlines how to work the steps, and how to start an S.L.A.A. meeting or 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 S.L.A.A. Basic Text. If you start with one or two chapters, you will have parts of the S.L.A.A. Basic Text available to members much sooner than if you attempt to translate the whole book at once.
- In some countries and various Twelve Step Fellowships, the translation of their basic text may not contain all the personal stories from the English original. Instead, they may include only some of these, and add personal stories from members in your own country/region. You may want to look at how A.A. has done this in your language. *If you choose to include local personal stories, it is vital that you make it clear which personal stories are Conference-Approved and which stories are from your own country/region and not Conference-Approved.* We advise you to select these stories by group conscience. These personal stories should say something about the addiction without being triggering, and be examples of how to work one's recovery by the Twelve Steps.

You may then want to proceed with the various other pamphlets and booklets.

Note: When deciding what material to translate, you should look for older versions of Conference-Approved or draft material already available in your language. This might give you a head start with some translations if you decide to use this material.

## THE PROCESS OF TRANSLATION

There are different ways to go about the translation itself. Twelve Step Fellowships usually 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 words or phrases may not be common outside of meetings or may be used differently within our Program than in society as a whole. These words or phrases often appear in

S.L.A.A. literature, and should to be translated in a consistent manner across all texts. A glossary is essential if you hire a professional translator who may not be familiar with these words or phrases and their specific meaning within our Twelve Step Program.

Whether you work with a professional translator or volunteers, the 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 and working with a professional translator, we suggest your service body use a contract before any work begins. A contract helps ensure that both parties understand what is required. A contract should also prevent attempts by the translator to put their own name on the document, or any inclusion of additional text from outside sources.

### **Working with volunteers**

Working with volunteers is different than 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. Timelines might differ from those of a professional translator and more regular follow-ups and support may be necessary. In our experience, if more people are involved, it is more motivating. But too many members may make it difficult to keep the group together and moving forward. Two to four individuals who are committed can achieve much in a short period of time. E-mail correspondence seems to work better than physical meetings. It can also be motivating to set a deadline when to publish newly translated documents, for instance at a convention. Then the volunteers can directly see the result of their work.

### **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, more work is required to edit an older translation than doing a new translation from scratch. Therefore, we suggest that you do a new translation in these cases. You may then want to consult the older version(s) and see which translation corresponds best to the original text.

Some choose a single translator, and then other members review the translated draft for errors, omissions, and improvements. Others choose to appoint a group that works together with the translator from start to finish. Either way should work. Discuss the alternatives in your service group 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 translator(s). This may include what software should be used, how to use it, how to transmit the translations to the reviewer(s), and so on. The purpose is to ensure consistency and legibility of a translated document when transmitted electronically.

## **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, and check that it is both accurate in language and reflects the message of our Fellowship. These three individuals must all be fluent in both English and your own language - the target language.

### **A few words on translation accuracy**

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 content can be transferred into another language. This is why a glossary is crucial. We believe the key is to do a thorough job, and not strive for perfection. When disagreeing on the “correct translation” of a term, we suggest you rely on the group conscience process.

### **Keep the audience 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 had 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. will often have little or no knowledge of your specific language. This is why we have to rely on you: S.L.A.A. members who know the language, translators around the world, to review the accuracy of the translations. Ultimate approval of translations is then carried out 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 how to review and approve translations of S.L.A.A. material. However, we have the following suggestions.

### **Review and approval of translations**

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 within their country or region, to discuss and decide on the basis of group conscience whether to approve a translation. This last option may be particularly suitable for longer texts, such as the S.L.A.A. 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, e.g., the group may read a few paragraphs 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 work with sponsees.

Remember that people other than those with a 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 on approval, carefully consider the following.

- Do not post any material online that has not been group conscience approved!
- Make sure that documents in circulation are 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 translation is three; the translator and two other individuals who must all be fluent in both English and your native language (the target language of the translation).

### **Confirmation of accuracy**

When reaching a final decision on a translation, the designated translation body/committee confirms its accuracy. 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 informs F.W.S. the translated document bears the status of approval in the translated language. You may sign using a pseudonym, if you wish to preserve your anonymity.

## **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 carried out 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 or 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 the following.

- 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 the text.
- You are granted the exclusive right to reproduce and sell the specific piece of material in your country or 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 native language).
- It is also specified how much of the revenues should be paid 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 ten percent (10%) of the proceeds are paid to F.W.S.
- You agree to send three printed, paper copies of the final translation and an Adobe PDF (electronic copy) to F.W.S.

If you are in the process of translating a large portion of Conference-Approved S.L.A.A. texts, you may want to ask F.W.S. to grant a comprehensive Licensing Agreement. This agreement gives your service body the right to reproduce and sell all S.L.A.A. Conference-Approved literature in your language instead of applying for separate licenses for individual literature.

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

It is desirable that translations of S.L.A.A. material match the original in overall appearances, such as layout, graphics, color, and style of binding. F.W.S. can help you with digital files and PMS color codes, if necessary. When we say desirable, we mean that the 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 labor, for instance, folding and stapling?

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 incur higher costs. Therefore, it is better to send royalty fees to F.W.S. in few larger sums rather than frequent smaller transfers.

## **FINALLY**

If you have any questions, please contact the F.W.S. Conference Translation Committee. See below for the e-mail address<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 this vital service work! :)

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<sup>4</sup> E-mail: [Conference Translation Committee](#).

## MORE INFORMATION

- Proper use of S.L.A.A. literature resources  
<https://slaafws.org/files/FinalWhatsinaNameFWS-SLAA-Article.pdf>
- Information about S.L.A.A. copyright and logos  
<https://www.slaafws.org/NEWSLETTERS/2010-06/SLAACopyrightandLogos16May10final.pdf>
- The S.L.A.A. Translation Copyright Packet  
[https://www.slaafws.org/download/translation-request/Translation\\_Copyright\\_Packet\\_FillForm.pdf](https://www.slaafws.org/download/translation-request/Translation_Copyright_Packet_FillForm.pdf)
- Licensing agreement (example)  
<https://www.slaafws.org/download/translation-request/SLAAFWSLicensingAgreement.pdf>
- NA Translation Basics  
[https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/TBasics\\_complete\\_2008.pdf](https://www.na.org/admin/include/spaw2/uploads/pdf/TBasics_complete_2008.pdf)