

PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2024 AGM

March 2024 | Submitted by Alison E.

This has been a wonderfully active year for the Public Information Committee, as we welcomed a new member and made great progress in our exploration of outreach in digital spaces.

First off, the Committee would like to thank everyone who submitted requests at their local libraries for the e-version of the ABA textbook, in a collective effort to have it added to Libby, the globally-accessible library of e-books and other electronic resources. As of this writing, it does not appear that the book has been added yet, but we acknowledge this undertaking will take time. We hope soon the e-version of our textbook will be more widely accessible to anyone across the world who is suffering with an eating disorder, even if they are unable to purchase it on the ABA website.

Meanwhile, however, we have had several great successes this year in the realm of digital outreach. Most recently, we connected with the producers of the RECO podcast; their host interviewed Joan about our drug — what it is and how we get sober — and the nature of our disease. The interview was on February 2nd and the recording is publicly available to download and listen to from most major podcast apps. This was a big step towards our goal of reaching folks in other fellowships who may also struggle with eating disorders. Huge thanks to Joan for her service!

In service of the same goal, we also created a digital version of the ABA flyer, an image that can be edited to list specific meeting details and posted in channels like WhatsApp groups. This image is saved to our Public Information Committee Google Drive, and access can be requested by anyone wishing to share meeting details in this fashion.

We also explored ways to participate virtually in global events such as World Eating Disorder Awareness Week, particularly using social media. To guide our work, we reviewed AA's *Guidelines for Internet Anonymity* and NA's document, *Social Media and Our Guiding Principles*. We also proposed the formation of a sub-committee to further our goal of reaching those who are suffering (as well as their care providers) over digital channels (such as social media, apps like WhatsApp, email, etc.) in collaboration with other ABA committees.

While we did not participate officially in any World Eating Disorder Awareness Week events as the Fellowship of ABA, our members took note of various opportunities we may want to explore in 2024, and we invited folks to share in the newsletter how they celebrated their recovery in honour of the occasion.

Another success was the completion of our Virtual Welcome Letter, a template to be copied and pasted into the body of an email, containing a brief description of our Fellowship, links to key documents (such as *12 FAQ for Newcomers* and the webpage where the reader can purchase our book, and an invitation to contact the General Services Office with further questions. This is meant to be a response to any requests for information about our Fellowship, forwarded to us by the Office Manager (as per the arrangements we made and continue to refine for coordinating with the GSA).

Finally, our book distribution project has been on pause but Joan has resumed calling the community facilities and treatment centres on our list. We will continue our efforts until all 40 of our allotted ABA textbooks (second edition) have found good homes.