

# Letter from the Danish Intergroup Board - Re: Invitation to meet with ACA WSO board members

**ACA Danmarks Forretningsudvalg (FU)** <fu@aca-danmark.dk>

12/09/2024 17:07

To: Board Secretary, ACA WSO

Cc: fu@aca-danmark.dk

Dear fellows on the WSO Board.

Thank you so much for meeting with us and for your warm welcome. We really appreciate you taking time to listen to our concerns, and we feel convinced that together our fellowship will find a way forward that will allow for a well rounded decision.

As you asked in your invitation for our 'recommendations' on how to proceed, we will do our best to express the Danish Intergroup Board's view on the matter.\*

Our most important recommendation is to Keep it simple :)

As we shared in the meeting, we are aware that the work on the name change has aimed to follow the approved motion of the 2022 ABC. Our suggestion from knowing some of the debate that went ahead of the 2022 approval is, that perhaps the wording *to explore changing the fellowship's name, logo, acronym, and any other identifying marks to include dysfunctional families* was understood in more than one way by all those who favored the motion. By some, clearly, it has been taken to mean that the resulting name should include the actual words '*dysfunctional families*' - but we know for certain that for others, it was understood to encompass the spirit of intention of the discussion at the 2022 ABC – an understanding and support based on the clear purpose of the motion being to solve the problem of inclusion – the fact that some ACA's, not being children of alcoholics, felt excluded by the name while feeling included by the traits and the solution.

So what we suggest is not, as we see it, deviating from the direction and intention of the approved motion of 2022, even though it may deviate from the applied interpretation of the motion within the Name Study Group.

As you know from our letter, our understanding is that a rather serious error has occurred in handling the results of the first Name Study survey.

We believe that group conscience has fallen victim to the fact that the free suggestions put forward by individual ACA members in survey 1 was wrongly compared with the votes for preprinted options, thus seeming like an insignificant 'minority vote'. (This was the explanation given to us by Brad, chair of Name Study Group, when we first approached him – that the suggestions had 'to few votes')

We, on the other hand, see the suggestions as something completely different than 'votes' – and as suggestions, they ought to be taken into account. And seeing the handling of the results of the first survey, and thus also the content of the second survey, as flawed with respect to group conscience, the resulting conclusion set forth in the Name Change Study Committee 2024 motion is, in our view, flawed as well and ought to be revisited.

We realize, supported by what Rich shared at the meeting, that the name suggestions were also, in part, rejected because it did not meet with the understanding of the 2022 motion held by the Name Study Group. We would suggest, however, as group conscience serve as a living expression of the current need of the fellowship, that although the suggestions can by no mean alter the motion passed in 2022, they should give cause to pause and consider – and to perhaps return the question back to the fellowship: 'Does this mean that we could reach the aspired level of inclusion without having the word 'dysfunctional' in the name?' This 'asking' could have been performed easily, and with no violation of the 2022 motion, by including the suggestions in the second survey, to find if the suggestions were representing a larger, silent group of fellows.

Our program teaches us what to do, when an error occurs - 'to promptly admit when we are wrong' - and then make appropriate amends.

In short - we would propose a 'two steps back' solution to properly include group conscience in the name change process:

- Admit to Global ACA that the 2024 motion ought to be revisited, as it was based on incoming suggestions being omitted in the 'summing up' of the first survey results – 'comparing apples and oranges' – votes and suggestions - thus excluding serious suggestions from being evaluated by the fellowship in the Second Name Study survey.
- Revise (as a minimum) the second Name Study survey - and perhaps even the first Survey also, if our intuition is correct, that an initial bias towards only accepting names including the actual words 'dysfunctional families' existed.
- Make a re-run of (at least) the second Name Study Survey, including the voluntary suggestions from the first survey - or a re-run of both surveys.
- Put forward a new motion for Name Change, that takes into account the feedback from the additional surveys.

As a side note:

We, in ACA Denmark, have sent our international representative to all the 'physical attendance' ABC's - and to our knowledge he even initially participated in the Name Change Committee, as a representative not only of himself, but of the shared understanding of the Danish fellowship. This means that for him to have not been taken seriously is to also have excluded our intergroup's voice from the process.

In fellowship and Service -

the Danish board of Trustees

Annette, Carsten, Joan, Niels and Pia

(Mikkel sadly has excused himself from this debate)