

# ANONYMITY



## I CHOOSE ANONYMITY

*We are sure that humility, expressed by anonymity, is the greatest safeguard that Alcoholics Anonymous can ever have,*

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p.187.

Since there are no rules in A.A. I place myself where I want to be, and so I choose anonymity. I want my God to use me, humbly, as one of His tools in this program. Sacrifice is the art of giving of myself freely, allowing humility to replace my ego. With sobriety, I suppress that urge to cry to the world, "I am a member of A.A." and I experience inner joy and peace. I let people see the changes in me and hope they will ask what happened to me. I place the principles of spirituality ahead of judging, fault-finding, and criticism. I want love and caring in my group, so I can grow.

Daily Reflections, p. 250.

### Tradition 12:

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

MAY TO JUNE, 2017

# THE UPDATE



*Don't take yourself too seriously — or anything for that matter.*

GOD GRANT ME THE  
**SERENITY**  
TO ACCEPT THE THINGS  
I CANNOT CHANGE  
**COURAGE**  
TO CHANGE THE  
THE THINGS I CAN AND  
**WISDOM**  
TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

## UNDERSTANDING ANONYMITY

What is the purpose of anonymity in Alcoholics Anonymous? Why is it often referred to as the greatest single protection the Fellowship has to assure its continued existence and growth?

If we look at the history of A.A., from its beginning in 1935 until now, it is clear that anonymity serves two different yet equally vital functions:

- At the personal level, anonymity provides protection for all members from identification as alcoholics, a safeguard often of special importance to newcomers.
- At the public level of press, radio, TV, films, and other media technologies such as the Internet, anonymity stresses the equality in the Fellowship of all members by putting the brake on those who might otherwise exploit their A.A. affiliation to achieve recognition, power, or personal gain.

When using digital media, A.A. members are responsible for their own anonymity and that of others. When we post, text, or blog, we should assume that we are publishing at the public level. When we break our anonymity in these forums, we may inadvertently break the anonymity of others.

### Anonymity at the public level

After its first few years of success, the Fellowship attracted much favorable attention in the press. Articles praising A.A. appeared in magazines and newspapers across the country. With each new article, the ranks of A.A. grew. In those days, everyone still feared the consequences of public disclosure; and so the first press coverage guarded members' anonymity for safety's sake.

As public awareness concerning alcoholism increased, the stigma decreased, and soon some A.A. members began to publicly acknowledge their affiliation in the media. One of the first to do so was a famous ballplayer whose comeback was so spectacular that newspapers lavished attention on his successful struggle against alcohol. Believing that he could help A.A. by revealing his membership, he discussed it openly. Even the founders of A.A. approved his actions simply because they had not yet experienced the costs of such publicity.

Then other members decided to break their anonymity in the media — some motivated by good will, others by personal gain. Some members devised schemes to tie in their A.A. affiliation with all sorts of business enterprises, insurance, sales, places known as “drying-out farms,” even a temperance magazine, to name a few.

It did not take long for those at A.A. headquarters to realize that overzealous and self-serving anonymity breakers could quickly jeopardize that Fellowship's hard-won reputation. And they saw that if one person made an exception, other exceptions would inevitably follow. To assure the unity, effectiveness, and welfare of A.A., anonymity had to be universal. It was the guardian of that A.A. stood for.

More recently, the arrival of new forms of electronic communication such as social networking offers fresh vehicles to carry the A.A. message to the public. Modern communication flows in ways that are high-tech, relatively open ended and evolving quickly. Protecting anonymity, is a major concern for A.A. members who are accessing the Internet in ever-growing numbers.

In stressing the equality of all A.A. members — and unity in the common bond of their recovery from alcoholism — anonymity serves as the spiritual foundation of the Fellowship. Back in 1946, Bill W., our co-founder, wrote: “The word ‘anonymous’ has for us an immense spiritual significance. Subtly but powerfully, it reminds us that we are always to place principles before personalities; that we have renounced personal glorification in public; that our movement not only preaches but actually practices a true humility.”

## Sobriety Calendar

Robin E.	Bridgeview	1. May. 2009
Chantal P.	Hill Street Blues	2. May. 2015
Nathan L.	Forest Lakeside	2. May. 2014
Dave O	Sunday Morning	4. May. 1998
Stu S	Centennial Group	5. May. 1980
Wayne J.	Lambton Central	6. May. 1987
Leon J.	Murphy Road	6. May. 2014
Paul C	Monday Morning	8. May. 1982
Ron B	Thedford	13. May. 1987
Brandon R.	Lambton Central	17. May. 1993
Jane J.	St. Peter's	17. May. 2013
Louise A.	Lake Huron	23. May. 2005

Shelia K.	Watford Group	2. Jul. 2013
Sue V	Sunday Morning	8. Jul. 1979
Al T.	Freedom Group	15. Jul. 1988
Tim C.	St. Peter's	15. Jul. 2000
Nadine M.	Lambton Central	25. Jul. 1981
Ann P	Thedford	26. Jul. 1994
Bruce D.	Lambton Central	26. Jul. 2009
Kyle, A.	Beginner's Reflections	28. Jul. 2007
Eric H.	Serenity	28. Jul. 1988
Kevin W	Sunday Morning	28. Jul. 2012
Eric H.	High Noon	28. Jul. 1988
Pam W.	Hill Street Blues	30. Jul. 1983

Ross C.	St. Peter's	1. Jun. 2012
Jeff G	Monday Morning	5. Jun. 2011
Jeff B.	Lambton Central	6. Jun. 2005
Tom N.	Hub Group	7. Jun. 2015
Denise B	Thedford	12. Jun. 2013
Paul H	Thedford	16. Jun. 1980
Trish L.	Hill Street Blues	18. Jun. 2015
Lindsay M.	Serenity	20. Jun. 2014
Lena L	Thedford	30. Jun. 1980



**It is the responsibility of each group to communicate birthday updates to the Newsletter Chairperson.**

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**A**lcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for A.A. membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. A.A. is not allied with an sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

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**District 14, Sarnia Lambton  
Announcements**



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*This is a member to member publication. The viewpoints expressed here do not represent AA as a whole.*

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**Subscription price: \$7.50 / year for 5 issues.**

Submissions to the newsletter are always welcome. Send ideas to: [newsletter@asarnialambton.com](mailto:newsletter@asarnialambton.com)