

# Tradition 11 – Anonymity at the level of Press, Radio, Film *(and Social Media)*

**Tradition 11: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.**

I attended the National Technology Workshop in Round Rock, Texas in September 2018. My main take away involved Tradition 11 as it relates to social media. **In an advisory action in 2014, the General Service Conference determined that anonymity at the level of Press, Radio and Film includes social media.**

## FACEBOOK

OMG! I love Facebook. I was one of those people who would “LIKE” your share that you were “celebrating 10 years of sobriety thanks to God and AA.” I would even post a photo of my medallion on my own timeline, but I felt good about never posting a photo of your medallion on your timeline. Sitting in that workshop in 2018, I had a rude awakening that what I was doing was not good enough in light of the advisory action.

I might as well have gone on the 10 o'clock news in February of 2018 and announced that “thanks to God and AA I have been sober for 33 years.” When I was getting sober in the mid-1980's, the National Inquirer would announce on alternate weeks “Liza's Drinking Again” or “Liza's Back in AA”. It gave the casual observer the impression that AA doesn't work very well. While I have a long history of staying sober and I have a life that supports staying sober, I am not guaranteed to remain sober until I die, in spite of my good intentions.

The facilitator of the workshop said “Announcing your AA birthday to an audience that includes nonmembers is about ego.” While I was thinking about how wrong he was, it occurred to me that many (*maybe most*) of the people who LIKED such posts on my timeline were non-alcoholics and probably had no idea how I had stayed sober (*White knuckle sobriety - fighting a compulsion to drink for 33 years by heroic will power? Hardly my experience. A triumph of brains and personality? I think not.*).

Fortunately, AA gives me the wherewithal to transform rude awakenings into spiritual awakenings. Maya Angelou once said, “Now that you know better, you can do better.” For the past year I have tried to make my Facebook postings more consistent with the advisory action.

- I no longer mention my AA birthday (*sobriety date*) on my timeline.
- I no longer LIKE a posting about your AA Birthday (*sobriety date*) on your timeline.

*NOTE: I might congratulate you in a private message or email, but not on your timeline.*

- I have un-joined AA-oriented 'PRIVATE' groups. Membership in these groups is not secret.

*NOTE: I might someday join an AA-oriented 'SECRET' group.*

- No photographs of people at AA meetings or AA events

## ZOOM MEETINGS

There is another article on our website under News and Events then Newsletter about **Anonymity on Zoom** which is for the host setting up a Zoom meeting to make the settings consistent with AA Traditions. This article is for a participant attending a Zoom meeting.

### ZOOM DEFAULTS

- **MUTE / UNMUTE** – when you join a meeting the default is for your microphone to be UNMUTED. In general, everyone should be muted unless they are hosting or they have the floor. My dog likes to share and if I'm not muted, not only will everyone hear her, but we may take the focus (yellow border) away from the speaker and everyone will know where the sound is coming from.
- **DISPLAY** – Know that the default is to turn on your web cam and show you as you are, doing what you're doing. That could be embarrassing. On an iPhone or iPad, you have to turn on the camera to be seen.
- **PRIVACY** – Some of us have dogs or cats wandering around. Some of us have infants. That is probably not an anonymity issue. A non-alcoholic co-worker, a roommate, a neighbor, a spouse or other relative is more of an issue. Some of us wear headsets so people nearby don't overhear.
- **LAST NAME?** – The ID you enter when you join zoom will display in your "Hollywood Square" under your web cam view if on. Some of us use only our first name.

~ Rob M. (2.24.1985) Weber Road Nooners Group, Corpus Christi, TX