

RED LIGHT-GREEN LIGHT. 2016 MAY ASSEMBLY.

Question 2: **How can WSO Facebook fit with our tradition regarding anonymity?**

Al-Anon's tradition of anonymity is summed up in Tradition 12:

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

The first place to look for Al-Anon's traditions of anonymity is our *Service Manual*, starting on page 91. The *Manual* identifies 3 branches of anonymity. The first of these 3 branches is what mainly concerns Al-Anon's Facebook presence:

- Anonymity as it applies outside Al-Anon/Alateen, governing our contacts with the general public, the media, and professionals

Tradition 11 states that: *We need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and TV, and the Service Manual updated this statement in 2014 to add ". . . Internet, or other evolving public media . . ."*

On page 92, the *Manual* states that in all web-based communication, INCLUDING social networking sites, members "must maintain their personal anonymity and that of any Al-Anon/Alateen or A.A. member."

The *Service Manual*, on page 114, goes on to state that "when Al-Anon/Alateen membership is revealed" we should always use first name only, or a pseudonym. When we DO NOT reveal our membership when participating in any form of public media, members CAN use their full name, face the camera, or appear in print. Reposting or "sharing" an Al-Anon Facebook post, without identifying myself as an Al-Anon member, falls directly within this guideline.

Other sources of information about anonymity as related to Facebook can be found in

- P-33 Why Anonymity in Al-Anon?, the 2014 revision

- Al-Anon Members/Website – Outreach to the Public/Media, [accessed on May 6, 2016 at <http://al-anon.org/members/public-outreach/outreach-to-the-public-media>, then the link at the bottom,] ***Understanding anonymity on the Internet.***

“Regardless of the amount of time in the program or experience in Al-Anon service, anonymity on the Internet remains a challenging, confusing matter.”

- A Power Point presentation from our last Area 9 Assembly in October 2015, ***Technology & Anonymity, Do’s and Don’ts / Myths and Facts***; created by our Panel 55 Delegate Wendy R. [email: delegate@afgarea7.org]

MYTH: Clicking “Like” or “Follow” on any Al-Anon social media site means I am a member of Al-Anon. FACT: “Liking” or “Following” simply means you like the message.

- A WSO online publication, ***Social Media Guideline for Areas and General Service Offices***, [November 2015; accessed on May 6, 2016 at <http://al-anon.org/members/public-outreach/some-helpful-public-outreach-tools>]

Comments members make on Facebook are often accompanied by their full name, as well as their picture. [Detailed review of your personal privacy settings is essential.]

- A WSO online publication and printed card, ***F.A.Q. for Alanon Websites***, S-66; [accessed on May 6, 2016 at <http://al-anon.org/members/public-outreach/outreach-to-the-public-media>, see link to this publication at the bottom of the page]

Information on our [Al-Anon’s] website is to let people know how to get in touch with us. The WSO phone number, address, email address, and Website address may be posted as a source of additional information.

Many of our Conference Approved Literature titles discuss the spiritual and practical application of anonymity. Look in the indexes of our daily readers and the discussions and questions about Steps 11 and 12 in books such as *Reaching for Personal Freedom* and *How Al-Anon Works*.