

## Tradition 12 - Anonymity

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

We've heard "Principles before Personalities" so often its become a cliché like Easy Does It or First Things First. But what does it mean? What is principle of Anonymity?

Anonymity is more than just being nameless, it is that state in which our name, personality, experiences, appearance; everything that distinguishes us as individuals is unimportant. Anonymity is the whole basis of our program it is truly the spiritual foundation. In order to survive we must set aside the "differentness" we live by and become part of-usually for the first time the third step is the awakening of anonymity in each of us.

Let us examine "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions." The first tradition talks about our common welfare and N.A. unity. The placing of common welfare before individual welfare in the group setting is a direct application of anonymity. The I wants, I wills, he shoulds etc. are replaced by "we" oriented thinking for the common good; the result is unity. Unity is the direct result of the application of the principle of anonymity within the group and the fellowship.

The second tradition talks about but one ultimate authority. No single person (no personality) but a loving God to whom we have each turned over our will and our lives and whos will it is our object to carry out. The anonymity of the servant should typify our leaders-they themselves are not important it is only the service that counts.

The third tradition is a statement of anonymity-we do not define our members except that they must have a desire to stop using or stay clean. Nothing else should

matter. This desire is the one crucial must of our program. We as members must either come with the desire to stay clean or develop it before this program will work for us.

Autonomy except as it affects others is another application of anonymity. We refrain from placing demands on other groups and try not to limit what can be done to help the suffering addict. It is the principle of anonymity within the fourth tradition that allows our groups the flexibility necessary to serve our message of recovery to help the suffering addict.

This primary purpose is itself dependent upon anonymity to insure that it is our spiritual message being offered rather than our personalities. We have learned through our frustration and pain how easy it is to carry our illness rather than our recovery.

Our lack of participation in the personalities of outside organizations and our determination to avoid being used to suit their needs allows us to avoid the pitfalls of money and power which threaten our existence. This again is anonymity in action.

By refusing outside contributions uniformly, regardless of source, we seek to avoid the entanglements which would limit or destroy our ability to achieve our primary purpose. This is protective anonymity.

By not singling out our members as "Professionals" we try to maintain their ability to experience personal recovery and grow. Not forcing power and status on our members is yet another form of anonymity.

Our service boards and committees are responsible to a loving God as expressed in a group conscience at some level; not a particular personality or set of personalities. Surely this is also anonymity.

The tenth tradition again deals with our relationship to outside pressures, and again in anonymity we uniformly do not participate.

Anonymity is obvious on a personal level. None of us are singled out. None of us represent N.A.; to do so would place our personality along side of the God of our fellowship.

Anonymity! Anonymity! Anonymity! Its everywhere in our traditions. The principle of anonymity in action to protect ourselves from our defects of personality and character. Putting anonymity into action makes it impossible for personalities to come before principles.