



Opportunities and Challenges

NAATW – 2014 - W308

The Internet, Technology, and AA

The Opportunities
The Challenges

Friend or Foe?

- Opportunities—to use the internet and other technologies to better carry the message.
- Challenges—to understand how the traditions apply in this electronic world.

Opportunities.

- **Some things to think about...**
- Are my group, and I, making full use of aaoklahoma.org aa.org and other A.A. sites?

Opportunities.

- **Some things to think about...**
- Are my group and I making use of email, texting, smart phones, etc..?

Opportunities.

- **Some things to think about...**
- Are my group and I aware of the new electronic formats for AA Conference Approved and Grapevine literature?

Opportunities.

- **Some things to think about...**
- Could a newcomer or out-of-town visitor find AA in your town using the internet?

Opportunities.

- **Some things to think about...**
- Do you know someone who could benefit from Online AA meetings?

Opportunities.

- **Other ideas:**

- With Skype, your next speaker meeting could have a speaker in Japan, or Europe or anywhere else in the world! Think of the possibilities.
- Free or low cost teleconferencing is now available. Think about where that might be useful. Example – the State Technologies and Grapevine committee have used teleconferencing for regular meetings.
- What about social media like Facebook for carrying the message? Very limited possibilities. See challenges section below.

Opportunities.

- **And what other ideas come to your mind?**
 - Discussion

Challenges.

- The challenges in using the web to carry the message center around the traditions.
- Particularly, we need to be aware of anonymity on the internet.

Challenges

Goal today:

- Is **NOT** to lay out a set of rules—do's and don'ts for using the internet.
- It **IS** to understand how the principles of the traditions apply in the electronic age.
- So each of us can make informed decisions as questions arise.

The Principles of Anonymity

- **The Principles**

- Public Anonymity – Tradition 11 – Press, Radio, Films, TV, and now web pages.
 - "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. " Now add TV and the Web.
 - In this "public" arena, we do not use names or faces if AA is to be mentioned -- ever.
- Personal Anonymity – Tradition 12 – Any setting not involving Press, Radio, Films, TV, and Web.
 - "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."
 - Here each person has choice of how anonymous to be in each setting. But we always guard others anonymity.

The Principles When Using Technologies

- At the public level (Tradition 11) are:
 - The world wide web pages—including social networking pages, posts, pictures, videos... by members. (Facebook, YouTube, Google+, LinkedIn ,etc.)
 - In this “public” arena, we do not use names or faces if AA is to be mentioned -- ever.
 - Social networking sites involve names and/or faces, so we take care not to reveal our AA membership in our posts—not ours or anyone else’s.

The Principles When Using Technologies

- At the personal level (Tradition 12) are:
 - Emailing, texting, instant messaging
 - Here each person has choice of how anonymous to be.. But we always guard others anonymity.
 - Watch out for cc's in emails that mention AA—so as not to inadvertently break someone else's anonymity--Use bcc instead.

Applying the Principles

- The principles have not changed.
- We will have to make judgment calls in the world of technology, just as we now do in other settings—just when is it appropriate to reveal AA membership?
- Most of us are familiar with making personal anonymity judgment calls
- What's new for most of us is considering public anonymity – Tradition 11.

Applying the Principles

- Example Facebook posts to think about
 - I just got back from a great AA meeting. It is good to be sober.
 - I just got back from a great meeting. It is good to be sober.
 - I just got back from the Unanimity Club. It is good to be happy, joyous, and free.
 - What a great evening. It is good to be alive.
- Examine my motives, why is posting about AA so important to me.

Applying the Principles

- Other technology examples
 - I text all of my friends, “What a great thing it is to be sober in AA. Such a blessing to be a member.”
 - I send email to Joe, “Great to see you at the AA meeting.”. And I .cc Sara.
 - I record AA talks and put them on my web site for download.
 - I “checked in” at the Unanimity Club on Facebook.



Thank you.