

Middle of the Road

"In some sections of A.A., anonymity is carried to the point of real absurdity. Members are on such a poor basis of communication that they don't even know each other's last names or where each lives. It's like the cell of an underground.

"In other sections, we see exactly the reverse. It is difficult to restrain A.A.'s from shouting too much before the whole public, by going on spectacular 'lecture tours' to play the big shot.

"However, I know that from these extremes we slowly pull ourselves onto a middle ground. Most lecture-giving members do not last too long, and the superanonymous people are apt to come out of hiding respecting their A.A. friends, business associates, and the like. I think the long-time trend is toward the middle of the road -- which is probably where we should be."

LETTER, 1959; "As Bill Sees It" #241

Tradition 11: "We need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, (TV) and films."

Dr. Bob, co-founder of AA, commented on Tradition Eleven as follows:
"Since our Tradition on anonymity designates the exact level where the line should be held, it must be obvious to everyone who can read and understand the English language that to maintain anonymity at any other level is definitely a violation of this Tradition.

"The AA who hides his identity from his fellow AA by using only a given name violates the Tradition just as much as the AA who permits his name to appear in the press in connection with matters pertaining to AA.

"The former is maintaining his anonymity ABOVE the level of press, radio, and films, and the latter is maintaining his anonymity BELOW the level of press, radio, and films - whereas the Tradition states that we should maintain our anonymity AT the level of press, radio, and films."

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