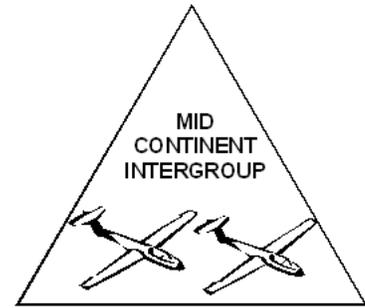


THE PILOT

MID-CONTINENT INTERGROUP
7701 E KELLOGG DR STE 835
WICHITA, KANAS 67207-1767



June 2013

Literature Selection ~ *Twenty-Four Hours a Day* ~ 27 June

A.A. Thought for the Day

If you can take your troubles as they come; if you can maintain your calm and composure amid pressing duties and unending engagements; if you can arise above the distressing and disturbing circumstances in which you are set down, you have discovered a priceless secret of daily living. Even if you are forced to go through life weighed down by some unescapable misfortune or handicap and yet live each day as it comes with poise and peace of mind, you have succeeded where most people have failed. You have wrought a greater achievement than a person who rules a nation.

Have I achieved poise and peace of mind?

Meditation for the Day

Take a blessing with you wherever you go. You have been blessed, so bless others. Such stores of blessings are awaiting you in the months and years that lie ahead. Pass on your blessings. Blessing can and does go around the world, passed on the currents from man to man. Shed a little blessing in the heart of one person. That person is cheered to pass it on and so God's revitalizing, joy-giving message travels on. Be a transmuter of God's blessings.

Prayer for the Day

I pray that I may pass on my blessings.
I pray that they may flow into the lives of others.

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Literature Selection ~ *Voices of Recovery* ~ 14 November

"We discover that we can learn from and work in harmony with people whose personalities we dislike, as long as we focus on OA principles."

— *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, p. 203

Tradition Twelve says that "anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." But just what are those principles that we ought be placing before personalities? A

quick read of the Twelve Steps reveals that honesty, hope, faith, courage, integrity, willingness, humility, self-discipline, love, perseverance, spiritual awareness, and service are among them. When placing just one of these principles before a challenging personality or situation, I reach a state of humility and thereby become "teachable." Bill W. wrote, "We alcoholics see that we must hang together, else most of us will finally die alone." These principles, when applied, can help us fulfill AA's legacy and ensure that OA will be here for the next newcomer who stumbles through our door.

Literature Selection ~ *For Today* ~ 22 June

Unhappy is the man, though he rule the world, who doesn't consider himself supremely blest. ~ Seneca

The fact that I am here at all is a blessing. Would I have chosen not to be born? That is the alternative.

The fact that I no longer have to compulsively overeat is a supreme blessing, indeed. Continuing the way I was going, I might not still be around today. That makes each day a gift.

The habit of complaining, of wishing things were different, is nothing more than a way of insuring depression and misery. As I expose this and other destructive habits to the twelve-step program, asking God to remove them, I can allow myself to be happy. I am coming to realize that it is not life that owes me something; it is I who owe something to life.

For today: To accept myself is to enjoy my life, and to feel supremely blessed.

Literature Selection ~ *Lifeline Sampler*, pp. 84-85

Confidentiality

In my two years in Overeaters Anonymous, I have come to believe that one of the least understood—and practiced— aspects of anonymity is that of confidentiality at the interpersonal level. This is quite understandable: anonymity does not come naturally to most humans; it has to be worked at.

The town I live in is rural and underpopulated, and our OA group is small. I frequently run into my fellow OAs “in public”—in the drugstore, at PTA functions, at civic events and social gatherings. Often, the person I encounter is someone I sponsor or with whom I have recently discussed the program. In the presence of other people, I have to control my urge to ask, “How is such and such a problem coming along?” I talk instead about something of interest to everyone.

When I first came to OA there was only one meeting in our town, but later a second group was started. Some people stayed with the original meeting, some attend only the new one, and some of us go to both. From time to time, members who switched to the new meeting ask quite personal questions about those who remained at the old meeting—people who often have entrusted me with their confidences. I am convinced these queries are prompted by loving interest rather than a desire to gossip, but I believe anonymity precludes repeating any personal sharing heard at a meeting or in private conversation. So, though I fully understand the impulse to ask after one another, I explain how I feel and say, “So-and-so would like it if you called and talked to her yourself.”

The same principle applies when someone who usually attends our meeting is absent. We are such a small group that every person is vital to the meeting, and you are missed when you’re not there. It is natural to ask, “Where is Jane?” but I feel uneasy when someone volunteers an answer. I remember the time I missed a meeting because I was in an embarrassing jam. I had discussed my dilemma with a few people from the meeting, but I certainly would not have wanted the reason for my absence disclosed to the group. However, if members have established the practice of explaining why people are absent, it’s hard to avoid doing so when a situation such as mine comes up.

In our little group, a special effort is made to introduce newcomers to everyone. But I’m afraid some members go overboard when, in their eagerness to demonstrate the group’s professional and social diversity, they disclose personal information about absent members, forgetting that the only person we are free to divulge information about is ourselves.

When someone I sponsor has a problem which another member has experienced, I try to get the two of them together. It would be natural to say, “I know someone more familiar with that than I am. Would you like me to ask her to call you?” Then I call Janet and, if she is willing to share her experience, I give her the other member’s name and number. This takes a little extra time, but each person’s anonymity remains intact and they are both free to share only as much as they wish.

Anonymity means I don’t tell my friends or family if someone they know comes to a meeting; if I call an OA who is not home and someone offers to take a message, I leave my name and number but I don’t say I’m from OA; if a member who has moved to another city writes me a letter, I don’t share it with the group unless the writer tells me to do so.

Anonymity means all this and more, but between group members and their circle of friends and family, it is very simple: I am free to share only my own experience with you. I am not free to share your experience with anyone, or to share anyone else’s experience with you. That is confidentiality, one of anonymity’s many treasures.

~ January 1983

Word of Mouth

“In my view, there isn’t the slightest objection to groups who wish to remain strictly anonymous, or to people who think they would not like their membership in A.A. known at all. That is their business, and this is a normal reaction.

“However, most people find that anonymity to this degree is not necessary, or even desirable. Once one is fairly sober, and sure of this, there seems no reason for failing to talk about A.A. membership in the right places. This has a tendency to bring in other people. Word of mouth is one of our most important communications.

“So we should criticize neither the people who wish to remain silent, nor even the people who wish to talk too much about belonging to A.A., provided they do not do so at the public level and thus compromise our whole Society.”

LETTER, 1962

The Rationalizers and the Self-Effacing

We alcoholics are the biggest rationalizers in the world. Fortified with the excuse that we are doing great things for A.A., we can, through broken anonymity, resume our old and disastrous pursuit of personal power and prestige, public honors, and money—the same implacable urges that, when frustrated, once caused use to drink.

« « « » » »

Dr. Bob was essentially a far more humble person than I, and anonymity came rather easily to him. When it was sure that he was mortally afflicted, some of his friends suggested that there should be a monument erected in honor of him and his wife, Anne—befitting a founder and his lady. Telling me about this, Dr. Bob grinned broadly and said, “God bless ’em. They mean well. But let’s you and me get buried just like other folks.”

In the Akron cemetery where Dr. Bob and Anne lie, the simple stone says not a word about A.A. This final example of self-effacement is of more permanent worth to A.A. than any amount of public attention or any great monument.

A.A. COMES OF AGE

1. pp. 292-293
2. pp. 136-137

Tell the Public?

“A.A.’s of worldly prominence sometimes say, ‘If I tell the public that I am in Alcoholics Anonymous, then that will bring many others.’ Thus they express the belief that our anonymity Tradition is wrong—at least for them.

“They forget that, during their drinking days, prestige and achievement of worldly ambition were their principal aims. They do not realize that, by breaking anonymity, they are unconsciously pursuing those old and perilous illusions once more. They forget that the keeping of one’s anonymity often means a sacrifice of one’s desire for power, prestige, and money. They do not see that if these strivings became general in A.A., the course of our whole history would be changed; that we would be sowing the seeds of our own destruction as a society.

“Yet I can happily report that while many of us are tempted—and I have been one—few of us in America actually break our anonymity at the public-media level.”

LETTER, 1958

Literature Selection ~ *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, pp. 184-187

Tradition Twelve

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

The spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice. Because A.A.’s Twelve Traditions repeatedly ask us to give up personal desires for the common good, we realize that the sacrificial spirit—well symbolized by anonymity—is the foundation of them all. It is A.A.’s proved willingness to make these sacrifices that gives people their high confidence in our future.

But in the beginning, anonymity was not born of confidence; it was the child of our early fears. Our first nameless groups of alcoholics were secret societies. New prospects could find us only through a few trusted friends. The bare hint of publicity, even for our work, shocked us. Though ex-drinkers, we still thought we had to hide from public distrust and contempt.

When the Big Book appeared in 1939, we called it “Alcoholics Anonymous.” Its foreword made this revealing statement: “It is important that we remain anonymous because we are too few, at present, to handle the overwhelming number of personal appeals which may result from this publication. Being mostly business or professional folk, we could not well carry on our occupations in such an event.” Between these lines, it is easy to read our fear that large numbers of incoming people might break our anonymity wide open.

As the A.A. groups multiplied, so did anonymity problems. Enthusiastic over the spectacular recovery of a brother alcoholic, we’d sometimes discuss those intimate and harrowing aspects of his case meant for his sponsor’s ear alone. The aggrieved victim would then rightly declare that his trust had been broken. When such stories got into circulation outside of A.A., the loss of confidence in our anonymity promise was severe. It frequently turned people from us. Clearly, every A.A. member’s name—and story, too—had to be confidential, if he wished. This was our first lesson in the practical application of anonymity.

With characteristic intemperance, however, some of our newcomers cared not at all for secrecy. They wanted to shout A.A. from the housetops, and did. Alcoholics barely dry rushed about bright-eyed, buttonholing anyone who would listen to their stories. Others hurried to place themselves before microphones and cameras. Sometimes, they got distressingly drunk and let their groups down with a bang. They had changed from A.A. members into A.A. show-offs.

This phenomenon of contrast really set us thinking. Squarely before us was the question “How anonymous should an A.A. member be?” Our growth made it plain that we couldn’t be a secret society, but it was equally plain that we couldn’t be a vaudeville circuit, either. The charting of a safe path between these extremes took a long time.

As a rule, the average newcomer wanted his family to know immediately what he was trying to do. He also wanted to tell others who had tried to help him—his doctor, his minister, and close friends. As he gained confidence, he felt it right to explain his new way of life to his employer and business associates. When opportunities to become helpful came along, he found he could talk easily about A.A. to almost anyone. These quiet disclosures helped him to lose his fear of the alcoholic stigma, and spread the news of A.A.’s existence in his community. Many a new man and woman came to A.A. because of such conversations. Though not in the strict letter of anonymity, such communications were well within it spirit.

But it became apparent that the word-of-mouth method was too limited. Our work, as such, needed to be publicized. The A.A. groups would have to reach quickly as many despairing alcoholics as they could. Consequently, many groups began to have meetings which were open to interested friends and the public, so that the average citizen could see for himself just what A.A. was all about. The response to these meetings was warmly sympathetic. Soon, groups began to receive requests for A.A. speakers to appear before civic organizations, church groups, and medical societies. Provided anonymity was maintained on these platforms, and reporters present were cautioned against the use of names or pictures, the result was fine.

Then came our first few excursions into major publicity, which were breathtaking. Cleveland’s *Plain Dealer* articles about us ran that town’s membership from a few into hundreds overnight. The news stories of Mr. Rockefeller’s dinner for Alcoholics Anonymous helped double our total membership in a year’s time. Jack Alexander’s famous *Saturday Evening Post* piece made A.A. a national institution. Such tributes as these brought opportunities for still more recognition. Other newspapers and magazines wanted A.A. stories. Film companies wanted to photograph us. Radio, and finally television, besieged us with requests for appearances. What should we do?

As this tide offering top public approval swept in, we realized that it could do us incalculable good or great harm. Everything would depend upon how it was channeled. We simply couldn’t afford to take the chance of letting self-appointed members present themselves as messiahs representing A.A. before the whole public. The promoter instinct in us might be our undoing. If even one publicly got drunk, or was lured into using A.A.’s name for his own purposes, the damage might be irreparable. At this altitude (press, radio, films, and television), anonymity—100 percent anonymity—was the only possible answer. Here, principles would have to come before personalities, without exception.

These experiences taught us that anonymity is real humility at work. It is an all-pervading spiritual quality which today keynotes A.A. life everywhere. Moved by the spirit of anonymity, we try to give up our natural desires for personal distinction as A.A. members both among fellow alcoholics and before the general public. As we lay aside these very human aspirations, we believe that each of us takes part in the weaving of a protective mantle which covers our whole Society and under which we may grow and work in unity.

We are sure that humility, expressed by anonymity, is the greatest safeguard that Alcoholics Anonymous can ever have.

SKY PILOT'S "FUEL" FOR FLIGHT

*I'm nobody! Who are you?
 Are you nobody, too?
 Then there's a pair of us -- don't tell!
 They'd banish -- you know!*

*How dreary to be somebody!
 How public like a frog
 To tell one's name the livelong day
 To an admiring bog!*

~ Emily Dickinson

ASK Anna Nimity

Dear Anna,

Since I came to OA, I have lost a lot of weight, and I look and feel marvelous and sexy. I informed my sponsor that I would like to be a poster child for OA; I would like an image of me in a bikini placed on a large billboard to get the word out that others can look and feel great if they join OA. I do not understand why my sponsor does not support me in this endeavor. Please advise me!

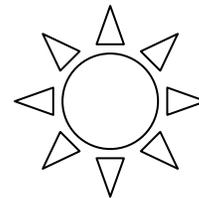
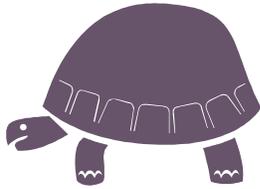
Simply Gorgeous

Dear *Simply Gorgeous*,

First, let me congratulate you on what the OA program has done for you. Good for you! Regarding your "poster child" idea, while you are well-intentioned, it would be advisable to refrain from implementing the idea, based on Tradition Twelve: *"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."*

Yours in humble service,
 Anna

Myrtle the Turtle:
 Concerning anonymity,
 we are to shine the light
 on the OA program, not
 on ourselves.



"BIG BOOK" READING LIST FOR JUNE 2013

1	136-145	16	446
2	145-150	17	388
3	268	18	486
4	182	19	58-63
5	295	20	63-71
6	375	21	309
7	522	22	10
8	348	23	501
9	104-113	24	369
10	113-121	25	30-37
11	494	26	37-43
12	151	27	258
13	Dr's Opinion	28	Gratitude List
14	470	29	44-49
15	281	30	50-57

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Intergroup Meeting 9 July 2013 @ 6:30 PM
 Intergroup Office: 7701 E Kellogg Dr Ste 835
 All are welcome!
 www.oawichita.org

**Mid-Continent Intergroup
 Treasurer's Report for period ending 14 May 2013**

Checking:			
Beginning Balance (4/5/13)		\$	1259.93
Donations			
Mon (10:00 a.m.)	\$	40.00	
Mon (7:30 p.m.)	\$	272.00	
Wed BB (5:30 p.m.)	\$	61.00	
Fri (noon)	\$	0.00	
Sat (9:30 a.m.)	\$	0.00	
Sat (1:30 p.m.)	\$	0.00	
Concordia	\$	50.00	
Anonymous	\$	285.00	
Void Incorporation Check	\$	120.00	
Total Donations		\$	828.00
Expenditures			
Telephone	\$	(107.89)	
Incorporation	\$	(100.00)	
Off Exp.—Stamp	\$	(0.00)	
Rent	\$	(520.00)	
Pilot Copying	\$	(0.00)	
Total Expenditures		\$	(727.89)
Net (Donations – Expenditures)		\$	100.11
Ending Balance (5/14/13)		\$	1360.04
Publicity Budget	\$	(28.76)	\$ (28.76)
Prudent Reserve (3/29/13)	\$	3373.02	\$

MID-CONTINENT INTERGROUP OFFICERS

(Terms are 2 years in duration, and are limited to 2 consecutive terms per position)

Chairperson:	Deb S	316-734-6790	(2 nd term, '11)
Vice Chair:	Laura L	316-687-5904	(2 nd term, '12)
Secretary:	Barb H	316-733-2136	(1 st term, '12)
Treasurer:	[unfilled]		
Literature:	Jill C	316-371-2045	(1 st term, '11)
Pilot Editor:	Bruce C	316-630-0863	(1 st term, '12)
Parliam.:	[unfilled]		

All officers are willing to lend an ear for your concerns, comments and questions! Please thank them for their generous service to OA!