

Social Media Guidance for the Fellowship

PI & EComms Subcommittee, July 2026

Introduction

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) exists so that when anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, the hand of AA is there.

Today, many people look for help online. Social media is one of the places they may turn to. It can help us carry the message, reach those seeking help, and make information about AA more widely available. It also brings new responsibilities.

This guidance for members shares experience from across the Fellowship on how social media can be used in a way that protects our unity, our anonymity, and our primary purpose.

It is not a set of rules, but an invitation to apply AA principles in an increasingly digital world.

References:

- The Twelve Traditions
- Understanding Anonymity
- Hints and Suggestions on Internet Safety
- Social Media Policy for AAGB
- AI Guidelines for the Fellowship

Please also see more information on Safeguarding, which is available on our website and in our Structure Handbook.

Our Guiding Principles

Our use of social media is guided by the same principles that shape all AA activity;

- Anonymity comes first. We protect our own anonymity and that of others at all times.
- Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. We share what AA is, without advertising or persuasion.
- We place principles before personalities. We avoid opinion, debate, or controversy.
- We remember our primary purpose, which is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

- We aim to ensure that our online presence is welcoming and accessible to all, using clear language and making use of accessibility features where practical.
- When in doubt, it is often best to pause and reflect before posting.

Using Social Media as an AA Member

Many AA members use social media in their daily lives. There is no single right way to do this, but experience suggests the importance of care and awareness.

Anonymity

Social media is a public space. Anything shared online may be visible to others, copied, saved, screenshot, or passed on beyond its original audience. This includes posts, comments, likes, and shares, depending on individual settings.

Members are encouraged to think carefully before sharing anything that may identify them, or others, as members of AA. This includes photographs, names, meeting details, or conversations that take place within the Fellowship.

A simple guide is to ask whether the content would be appropriate on a public noticeboard.

Sharing About Recovery

Many members choose to share aspects of their recovery online. If so, it helps to speak from personal experience and to avoid suggesting that one is speaking on behalf of AA as a whole.

Care is taken not to present AA as the only solution, or to make claims that go beyond our shared experience.

Members are reminded that anything shared online may be seen by a wider audience than originally intended.

Members may wish to avoid sharing personal contact details publicly and to exercise caution when engaging in private conversations with people they do not know online.

Interacting with AA Content

Members may choose to follow or interact with AA related content online.

Following, liking, sharing, or commenting on content does not in itself break anonymity, but these actions may be visible to others depending on privacy settings.

Each member is responsible for their own decisions in this area and for understanding how their chosen platforms work.

When encountering criticism or misinformation about AA online, experience suggests avoiding argument or debate, and responding, where appropriate, in a calm and informative manner consistent with our Traditions.

If there is any uncertainty, it is suggested to speak to a more experienced member, and at times it may be preferable simply to observe rather than engage.

Members are also encouraged to be aware of online safety risks such as impersonation accounts, harassment, scams, and the sharing of personal information.

Social media ought not be a substitute for professional, medical, safeguarding, or crisis support services.

Existing AA Presence on Social Media

Today there are many AA related social media accounts, groups, forums, channels, and online communities. Some are operated by recognised AA service structures, while others have been created independently by others.

Many of these resources provide support, information, and opportunities for connection. However, members should be aware that not all AA related online spaces represent Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, and approaches to anonymity and moderation may vary, and some may generate income or collect user data.

Members should be aware that social media platforms may store messages, photographs, and other personally identifiable information, and are encouraged to exercise care when sharing sensitive or confidential information online.

As with any AA activity, members are encouraged to consider how their participation aligns with AA principles and traditions.

Groups, Intergroups and Regions

Some Groups, Intergroups, and Regions may wish to establish social media accounts or pages as part of their Public Information activity.

Experience suggests that social media can be an effective way of helping people find local meetings and learn more about AA. Before creating a social media presence, it may be helpful to consider the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the account?
- How will it help carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic?
- How will anonymity be protected?
- Who will be responsible for managing the account?
- Who will have access to passwords and account recovery information?

- How will continuity be maintained when trusted servants rotate?
- Will comments or direct messages be enabled, and if so, who will monitor them?
- What process will be used to approve content before publication?
- How will the account avoid expressing opinions on outside issues?
- Is there support from the relevant group conscience?

Groups may also wish to consider whether an existing Intergroup, Region, or AA GB social media account already meets the need before creating additional accounts.

Experience suggests that accounts are not linked solely to a single member's personal email address and that more than one trusted servant has access to account recovery information to support continuity when service positions change.

Official and Unofficial Accounts

AA members are free to create personal social media content and groups, provided they remain mindful of the Traditions and the anonymity of others.

Where an account represents a Group, Intergroup, Region, committee, or service body, it is helpful to make this clear and to ensure that the account remains accountable to the relevant service structure.

Where an account is operated by individual members and is not affiliated with a recognised AA service body, it may be helpful to make clear that the views expressed are personal and do not represent Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole.

Carrying the Message Online

Whether participating in an existing online community, creating a local social media page, or sharing personal recovery experience, the same principles apply;

- Our common welfare comes first.
- We protect anonymity.
- We avoid outside controversy.
- We remember that our primary purpose is to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

While social media can help people connect with AA, our experience continues to show the importance of meetings, sponsorship, and one alcoholic sharing with another.

When responding online, experience suggests sharing information about meetings and official AA resources while avoiding counselling or advice-giving.

A Pause Before Posting

Before posting, it can be helpful to reflect:

- Does this protect anonymity, both mine and others?
- Am I speaking from my own experience rather than for AA?
- Is this in keeping with our primary purpose?
- Could this lead to misunderstanding or controversy?
- Is this welcoming, inclusive, and accessible to those seeking help?

If there is any doubt, it is often best to wait and, if helpful, discuss it with another member.

In the Spirit of AA

Social media is simply another place where we practice the same principles we use elsewhere in AA.

Used thoughtfully, it can help carry the message while protecting the anonymity and unity that remain at the heart of our Fellowship.

Review

These guidelines should be reviewed annually by the PI & EComms Subcommittee. We invite comments, suggestions, and your shared experience as we learn more about using social media together in AA service.

Email to: socialmedia@aamail.org