**Tradition 12: 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.**

*From Tradition Twelve, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*

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The General Service Office has been receiving enquiries from members regarding the effect of COVID-19 (coronavirus) virus, and how it might impact meetings.

While appreciating the concerns of the membership, The General Service Office does not have access to any information that is not currently publicly available and would encourage members to consider the advice given by their relevant governments and health services across Europe.

Regarding Anonymity, at all times Groups are encouraged to co-operate with medical authorities, therefore if a member of a group is requested to supply names of members to relevant authorities for the purpose of checking who has been in contact with whom for tracking COVID 19 spread it is suggested that the Group hold a conscience about the dissemination of Group member identities*. -*

Therefore, the advice is for each member or group to inform themselves on best practice for meetings by seeking proper medical advice from the responsible authority. However, we are aware of the actions that some groups are taking across the service structure and these include:-

* They are restricting physical contact, shaking hands, holding hands, hugging, etc.
* Suggesting that members who think they may be at risk of having contracted the virus stay away from meetings until they are sure they are clear.
* Suggesting that members who may be particularly vulnerable to the effects of the virus consider their personal safety before attending meetings.
* Where members are unable to attend for any reason, that the Group stay in contact, perhaps by phone, email or some form of social media as appropriate
* Making use of online facilities – this has included regular face to face meetings converting to an online format as a result of moment restriction in their area.
* Attending one of the many existing online meetings - a list of those meetings registered with GSO can be found on our website at [https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/AA-Meetings/Find-a-Meeting/online](about:blank)

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| [Find a Meeting | Alcoholics Anonymous - Great Britain](about:blank)  Find a Meeting. Please select a county or time using the tools to the right to search our database. Search results will appear here and placemarks will indicate locations of meetings in the interactive map above.  www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk |

In all of the suggestions above it is probably easier if they are discussed in advance so the group is prepared for any eventuality. As with most things, they are best facilitated by the group talking about them.

278 As Bill sees it: Speak up without Fear

***“Few of us are anonymous so far as our daily contacts go. We have dropped anonymity at this level because we think our friends and associates ought to know about A.A. and what it has done for us. We also wish to lose the fear of admitting that we are alcoholics. Though we earnestly request reporters not to disclose our identities, we frequently speak before semi-public gatherings. We wish to convince audiences that our alcoholism is a sickness we no longer fear to discuss before anyone.***

***If, however, we venture beyond this limit, we shall surely lose the principle of anonymity forever. If every A.A. felt free to publish his own name, picture, and story, we would soon be launched upon a vast orgy of personal publicity.”***