

Secret Facebook Pages for AA Groups, Districts & Areas

A pending District 16 motion would create a secret Facebook page to facilitate communication among members in Jackson County.

The motion is part of a move by the Technology Outreach Committee to utilize current technology to carry the message and reach out to a society that increasingly uses social media to communicate.

It's important to remember that Facebook is only a tool to expand our outreach to the alcoholic who still suffers. This is a step forward to remaining relevant with our communication tools.

The proposed District secret Facebook page would not have "AA", "Alcoholics Anonymous" or an AA-related name ("Friends of Bill") in its name or description. Membership would be by invitation only, initially through GSRs, then through another invited member of the page. Photos of members will not be approved. Monitoring and access will be a responsibility we all carry as servants to this community. Technology Outreach Committee will act as moderators and administrators.

In 2013, the last year from which data could be found, GSO reported that 32% of home groups had a private or secret Facebook page. At a recent Technology in AA conference in Sacramento, a number of the areas and districts represented at the conference had a secret Facebook page or were launching within a few months. More were in planning stage.

Why the concern over what kind of page it is? *Only one level – Secret – gives the level of protection that honors Tradition 11.*

There are three levels of privacy on Facebook pages: Open, Closed and Private.

A secret Facebook group is totally off the radar, visible only to members. It is accessible only by invitation from group administrators.

A closed Facebook group on the other hand, is visible to the public at large with member approval by a group administrator.

An open Facebook group is open to the public, without the constraints listed above.

This chart on Facebook helps explain the difference.

Note that secret groups seem to be designed to protect anonymity, which is why many home groups, Districts and Areas have started them for members.

Privacy settings are our paramount concern. If set correctly – to Secret – only members will be able to access the page, post or see others posts.

That's key to honoring Tradition 11 and keeping anonymity paramount.

Vera F., the current delegate for Oregon Area 58, gave a workshop on the topic at the Pacific Northwest Conference recently.

She notes a secret group:

- * Provides the best anonymity protection.
- * Can't not be found by searching groups.
- * Only members can find the group, post and see post,
- * Must be invited to be a member.

This works within Tradition Eleven.

	Open	Closed	Secret
Who can join?	Anyone can join or be added or invited by a member	Anyone can ask to join or be added or invited by a member	Anyone, but they have to be added or invited by a member
Who can see the group's name?	Anyone	Anyone	Current and former members
Who can see who's in the group?	Anyone	Anyone	Only members
Who can see the group description?	Anyone	Anyone	Current and former members
Who can see the group tags?	Anyone	Anyone	Current and former members
Who can see what members post in the group?	Anyone	Only members	Only members
Who can find the group in search?	Anyone	Anyone	Only members
Who can see stories about the group on Facebook (like in News Feed and search)?	Anyone	Anyone	Only members