

UNDERSTANDING ANONYMITY

Cast

- Narrator
- Goldilocks
- Personal Anonymity Bear
- Anonymity Within Al-Anon Bear
- Anonymity Outside Al-Anon Bear

Props and Staging

- Three chairs are set up for the three bears who are holding their weekly “Bear Al-Anon” meeting.
- There are three pictures of bears on sticks and their names. As an alternative, each character could wear a sign around their neck. The three bears are representing the three different elements of anonymity.
- The first bear needs *How Al-Anon Works* (B-22) and the *Al-Anon Newcomer Packet* (K-10).
- The second bear needs the following items: *Paths to Recovery* (B-24), and *the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

Hand out

Copies of the skit will be available for each member.

Stage directions

Each bear holds up a stick with a picture of a bear on it that represents the three different elements of anonymity that we need to understand or wears a sign around his neck, standing behind a chair in the following order to interact with Goldilocks as she goes from chair to chair:

- 1) Personal Anonymity Bear
- 2) Anonymity Within Al-Anon Bear
- 3) Anonymity Outside of Al-Anon Bear

Dialogue

Narrator: In our skit, entitled "Understanding Anonymity," we have three bears named: Personal Anonymity Bear, Anonymity Within AI-Anon Bear, and Anonymity Outside of AI-Anon Bear. The bears represent the three elements of anonymity. A newcomer, Goldilocks, comes to the "Bear AI-Anon" meeting.

Goldilocks enters the "Bear AI-Anon" meeting room and briefly stops when she sees the three chairs. She sits in the first chair in front of the Personal Anonymity Bear.

Goldilocks: I feel so safe sitting here.

Personal Anonymity Bear:

That is because newcomers need to know that we all respect their need to feel safe enough to share what is in their hearts and on their minds. We follow the principle of "whom you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here."

Goldilocks: I've noticed that some of you identify yourselves with only your first name, but others give their full name. What is the right thing to do?

Personal Anonymity Bear:

You can do whatever makes you feel comfortable. If giving only your first name feels right for you, that's quite okay. The day may come when you change how you feel about it.

Goldilocks: How long can I stay in this chair?

Personal Anonymity Bear:

As long as you need to. "Keep Coming Back"!

Personal Anonymity Bear:

Here is an AI-Anon Newcomers Packet and our book *How AI-Anon Works*.

Narrator: Goldilocks is now feeling more comfortable and is ready to move to another chair. Look, she's sitting in the chair in front of Anonymity Within AI-Anon Bear.

Goldilocks: I am beginning to feel better. I feel like a member now instead of a newcomer.

Anonymity Within AI-Anon Bear:

Now you are using the slogans and the Steps.

Goldilocks: And I have a Sponsor. I put my phone number on the group's phone list, and I am thinking about being a trusted servant for the group.

Narrator: As Goldilocks has outgrown the need to protect her own anonymity, she still continues to guard the anonymity of other Al-Anon, Alateen, and A.A. members.

Goldilocks: How long can I stay in this chair?

Anonymity Within Al-Anon Bear:

As long as you want to. "Keep Coming Back"! Here are *Paths to Recovery* and the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.

Narrator: Look! Goldilocks is ready to move on again. She's sitting in the chair in front of Anonymity Outside Al-Anon Bear.

Goldilocks: I want to share this message of hope with everyone and be a trusted servant in the district and Area.

Anonymity Within Al-Anon Bear:

That's great! Be ready to give other members your full name, telephone number, and e-mail and postal mailing addresses so that they know how to reach you. It's okay for members within the fellowship to give each other their personal contact information, especially when involved in Al-Anon service.

Anonymity Outside of Al-Anon Bear:

Excuse me. I was listening to your conversation about letting another Al-Anon member know your full name and how to reach you. I hope it won't be long until you are willing to carry our message to others outside of Al-Anon. Just like within our fellowship, it is also important to give professionals and the media your personal and local Al-Anon service arm contact information when you are doing public outreach. They will want to have your last name, address, and phone number. Would you be willing to do that?

Goldilocks: If I say "no," what happens?

Anonymity Outside of Al-Anon Bear:

We ask other members who are comfortable with sharing their names in order to spread our message.

Goldilocks: If I say "yes," then I get to be a messenger of hope to those outside of these rooms.

Anonymity Outside of Al-Anon Bear:

Even if your name isn't published, radio; press; TV; and the Internet are other media formats for public outreach work. The media needs to have a credible source if they have any questions or want to follow-up.

Goldilocks: So, I need to remember to ask that I never be identified by full name or a full-face picture. (Looks into the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*). Oops! I better get another e-mail address that doesn't have my full name in it. And I better not use my work e-mail address either. I sure wouldn't want my personality to become more important than the principles of the program! And I definitely wouldn't want the media or a professional to think Al-Anon is affiliated with my employer.

(Stands up and then talks to all three bears.) I am glad that your "Bear Al-Anon" meeting is open. I sure have learned a lot about anonymity. I can see that the spiritual principle of anonymity has many meanings. It all depends on where you are on the journey and to think about to whom you are speaking! My personal anonymity is about me. But within our fellowship or when doing public outreach, I really do need to be willing to share my full contact information so I can be reached by other members, professionals, or the media.

Narrator: Sometimes the principle of anonymity is misunderstood. We hope this skit has helped you bring some understanding to your anonymity. Copies of the skit are available for you to take back to your district and group.

Now I'd like to ask for some audience participation from the rest of you. What have you learned about the three elements of anonymity? This is also the time to ask any questions you might have.