

Gamblers Anonymous Guidelines for Public-Facing Digital Content

Purpose:

Digital media platforms such as video sharing services, podcasts, and social media channels provide modern opportunities for members to share experience, strength, and hope with compulsive gamblers who may still be suffering. These tools can extend the reach of the Gamblers Anonymous message to individuals who may not yet know that help exists.

However, participation in digital media must always respect the spiritual principles that guide the Fellowship. The Gamblers Anonymous Unity Program provides essential safeguards that protect the Fellowship from controversy, personality-driven promotion, commercialization, and violations of anonymity.

These guidelines are intended to help members who wish to create **video content, podcasts, or other digital media** do so in a way that reflects the spirit and intent of the Unity Steps while supporting the Fellowship's primary purpose.

The Guiding Principle: Carrying the Message

Any GA-related media should ultimately serve the Fellowship's primary purpose.

Unity Step Five reminds us:

"Gamblers Anonymous has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to the compulsive gambler who still suffers."

Digital media can be a powerful way to fulfill this purpose when used responsibly. The goal of such content should not be entertainment, self-promotion, or personal influence, but rather to share recovery experience in a way that may encourage others to seek help.

Members creating content should continually ask:

"Does this content help carry the message of recovery?"

Respecting Fellowship Unity

Unity Step One states:

"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon group unity."

Digital media content should never create division within the Fellowship or present personal viewpoints as official GA policy. Recommended practices include:

- Avoid presenting oneself as speaking **on behalf of Gamblers Anonymous as a whole**.
- Avoid criticizing other GA groups, service bodies, or members.
- Emphasize that opinions shared represent **personal experience only**.
- Encourage viewers to attend meetings and connect with the Fellowship.

The unity of the Fellowship should always take precedence over personal expression.

Avoiding Authority or Governance Claims

Unity Step Two states:

“Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

Members producing content should avoid presenting themselves as authorities, spokespeople, or representatives of GA.

Good practice includes:

- Avoiding titles that suggest official authority.
- Avoiding language implying endorsement by the Fellowship.
- Making clear that content reflects **personal recovery experience** rather than official guidance.

Service positions do not confer authority to represent GA publicly.

Inclusivity and Membership

Unity Step Three reminds us:

“The only requirement for Gamblers Anonymous membership is a desire to stop gambling.”

Content creators should be careful not to imply that GA membership requires additional conditions, beliefs, or qualifications.

Digital media should:

- Welcome individuals seeking help.
- Avoid gatekeeping language.
- Emphasize accessibility of the program.
- Be crafted with a strong consideration toward engaging with the compulsive gambler who still suffers

The message should remain open and inclusive to anyone who desires recovery.

Respect for Group Autonomy

Unity Step Four states:

“Each group should be self-governing except in matters affecting other groups or Gamblers Anonymous as a whole.”

Members creating media should avoid presenting the practices of their own local group as universal standards.

Members must consider that any content, once published to any digital platform, becomes potentially accessible to anyone, anywhere in the world. Digital Content, therefore, represents a matter which can affect other groups or the entire Gamblers Anonymous fellowship.

Helpful approaches include:

- Explaining that group practices may vary.
- Encouraging viewers to attend **local meetings** to learn how their groups function.
- Avoiding statements that imply one group's approach is "the correct" way.
- When developing content, to remain sensitive to statements/claims that may appropriately be applicable to the entire fellowship, as opposed to items which would be applicable at a more local (individual room/Intergroup/RSO) level.

Avoiding Endorsements and Outside Affiliations

Unity Step Six states:

"Gamblers Anonymous ought never endorse, finance or lend the Gamblers Anonymous name to any related facility or outside enterprise..."

Digital content should not be used to promote:

- Treatment centers
- Commercial recovery services
- Paid coaching programs
- Gambling addiction products or tools
- Outside organizations

Content creators should avoid linking GA with outside enterprises in a way that suggests endorsement. While GA Public Relations efforts can include engagement with outside agencies, the messaging shared in public-facing digital content cannot offer any recommendations, advocacy, and/or direct references/endorsements for any related facility or outside enterprise.

Financial Integrity

Unity Step Seven reminds us:

"Every Gamblers Anonymous Group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

Members producing content should carefully avoid monetization structures that may appear to profit from the GA message.

Recommended practices include:

- Avoiding advertising revenue connected directly to GA messaging.
- Avoiding sponsorships tied to recovery content.
- Avoiding paid access to GA-related content.

Recovery experience should not become a commercial product.

Maintaining the Non-Professional Nature of the Program

Unity Step Eight states:

“Gamblers Anonymous should remain forever non-professional...”

Content should not position the creator as a professional counselor, therapist, or recovery authority representing GA.

Members sharing their experience should emphasize:

- Personal recovery stories.
- Experience within the GA program.
- Peer support rather than professional treatment.

Avoiding Organizational Representation

Unity Step Nine states:

“Gamblers Anonymous, as such, ought never be organized...”

Media channels should avoid presenting themselves as official GA organizational structures.

Examples to avoid include:

- “Official GA Podcast”
- “Gamblers Anonymous Headquarters Channel”
- “GA Recovery Authority”

Instead, creators can frame content as:

- Personal recovery podcasts
- Members sharing experience in GA
- Discussions of recovery through the GA program.

Creators must recognize that the use of Gamblers Anonymous copyright logos and symbols are protected. They may not be used, copied, or reproduced without the expressed written permission of Gamblers Anonymous.

Avoiding Public Controversy

Unity Step Ten states:

“Gamblers Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues...”

Content creators should avoid discussion and/or imagery of controversial topics unrelated to recovery.

These may include:

- Politics
- Public policy debates
- Gambling legislation
- Social controversies unrelated to recovery.
- Discussions related to self-exclusion from any gambling facility/platform.

The focus should remain on **personal recovery within the GA program**.

Attraction Rather Than Promotion

Unity Step Eleven provides the key principle for public communication:

“Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion...”

Digital media should aim to **share recovery experience naturally**, rather than aggressively promoting the Fellowship.

Examples of attraction-based content:

- Personal stories of recovery.
- Discussions of GA principles.
- Reflections on meetings or recovery milestones.
- Encouragement for those seeking help.
- Articulating and sharing pointed questions directed to the compulsive gambler who still suffers, based upon members’ own lived experiences.

Content should avoid:

- Aggressive marketing language
- Claims that GA is the “only solution”
- Recruitment-style messaging
- Content that may be viewed as personal promotion, ie, “following my example in GA can give you the same results it has given me”.

The message should be inviting rather than promotional.

“We need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and Internet”.

These words are not solely a warning regarding the protection of anonymity (as embodied in Unity Step 12), but rather a safeguard emphasizing that the program comes before the individual. By maintaining personal anonymity in all forms of public-facing content, the focus remains centered on the message, with no risk of attention on the messenger.

This is important not only for the sake of avoiding the potential for personal promotion (in focusing on the fellowship and not the individual), but because ANYONE who openly discusses their Gamblers Anonymous recovery experience becomes, whether intentional or not, a representative of the Fellowship. And if any such representative experiences a significant personal setback (in the form of a relapse or other personal fall), then they become a (potentially) publicly recognizable face to a failure of Gamblers Anonymous.

Protecting Anonymity

Unity Step Twelve states:

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of the Gamblers Anonymous program...”

Anonymity is the most important safeguard when participating in digital media.

Members should carefully consider:

Personal Anonymity

Members are strongly discouraged from sharing their identity, understanding the permanence of digital media.

For the sake of preserving anonymity in any public-facing forum, members should consider the following:

- Use first names only.
- Avoid last names.
- Avoid identifying information.
- Avoid unaltered photo or video content of members discussing any aspect of their membership in the GA program.

Protecting Other Members

Members should **never identify other GA members** in digital media.

Avoid:

- Showing meeting attendees.
- Recording meetings (This is strictly forbidden by the GA Guidance Code).
- Sharing identifiable stories of other members.

Meeting Confidentiality

Meetings themselves can **never be recorded or broadcast**.

Recommended Best Practices for Digital Content

Members who choose to create recovery-oriented media may find the following practices helpful:

Include a simple disclaimer

Example:

“The views expressed here reflect personal recovery experience and do not represent Gamblers Anonymous as a whole.”

Encourage meeting attendance

Always remind viewers that recovery occurs through participation in meetings and fellowship.

Avoid sensationalism

Recovery stories should be shared with humility rather than dramatic storytelling designed for entertainment.

Maintain humility

Unity Step Twelve reminds us that principles must come before personalities. Content should avoid creating personal followings or recovery “influencers.”

Sharing of content

Those producing public-facing digital content are encouraged to share completed material with the national Digital Strategy Committee, for archival at the Trustee Website, where it can be made available for use by other RSO's & Intergroups.

Peer review of content prior to publication

Any public-facing digital content should be reviewed with other members and/or local Intergroup/RSO Public Relations committee members; any potentially questionable video or audio content should be reviewed and edited if concerns persist of said content compromising any aspect of GA's fundamental guiding principles.

Conclusion

Digital media can serve as a powerful tool to help carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer. When used responsibly and guided by the Unity Steps, these platforms can extend the reach of Gamblers Anonymous without compromising its spiritual foundations.

By remaining grounded in the principles of unity, humility, and anonymity, members can ensure that digital communication strengthens rather than weakens the Fellowship.

The goal is not to promote individuals or personalities, but to help ensure that **the message of recovery remains available to anyone who may still be suffering from compulsive gambling.**