
District 41 Messenger

FALL – 2016

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HONESTY
costs nothing.
LYING
could cost you
everything.
WordSense.Tumblr.com

**“ Not telling
the truth is
the quickest
way to turn
yourself into
a stranger. ”**

- Mark W. Perrett

The Words We Use...Honesty/Truth

The first paragraph of “How It Works” contains the word Honest three times. The quest for Truth – the Truth of NOW – is a central theme. Examining the Mind, Letting Go of Blocks to Clarity, Healing Ourselves and Others, these are our goals. Our intention is to bare our souls to ourselves and each other. We have acknowledged our failings. We have tried to Let Go. We have sought to bring ourselves closer to the past so it won’t continue to haunt us.

HONESTY/TRUTH ☞ Shame is banished and we are no longer dogged by secrets and guilt. We stop pretending and we stop giving logical reasons for our illogical behavior. **Honesty brings us Responsibility, Relief, Comfort, and Rewards.**

HONESTY/TRUTH ☞ When we are close to the Truth, it is the safest place to be. The Truth can’t hurt us when we are there. **We can’t forget the Truth once we have seen it, and we can’t run away from it anymore. We may try to outrun it, but the Truth will haunt us until we accept it.** And we must act on the Truth if that is what it asks of us.

HONESTY/TRUTH ☞ Coming to terms with Reality is not an easy task. We must face our pain honestly. **When we speak of people hitting bottom and reaching their breaking point, we really mean that a series of hurts finally exceeds our capacity to conceal the Truth.** We must face up to ourselves. There is no other place to go. The barriers we have erected to protect ourselves have become too costly and emotionally exhausting to maintain.

HONESTY/TRUTH ☞ To become Honest we must become Quiet. Take a little distance. Correct whatever lie we just told. Be brutally Truthful and admit it to yourself. **We are always the main obstacle in our own way, not other people.**

HONESTY/TRUTH ☞ Truth is never to be found in thinking a particular way, or acting in any particular manner. **Truth is found in meeting everyone and everything with compassion and attentiveness. Truth is found in being present in our life with all of our heart and all of our mind.** Truth is found in keeping open and curious. People dedicated to the Truth live in the open, and because of this courage they have no fear.

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As Sober As the Secret We Keep

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HONESTY/TRUTH ▢ Honesty means Acceptance ...acknowledging a problem exists. Honesty requires steadiness in continuing to face the Truth of who we are. **Admit the lies we tell and understand why we tell them.** We must be as gentle and compassionate with ourselves as we possibly can. We will forgive others as we forgive ourselves.

HONESTY/TRUTH ▢ The journey we take, if it is to be authentic, cannot be a private thing between ourselves and God. Other eyes (unbiased help) are essential, for our own eyes only see what we want to see. **We need a friend to help keep us honest. We cannot always trust our own judgement where addiction is concerned.** The tricks of our alcoholic mind are too great. The alcoholic mind is cunning, baffling, powerful. We suddenly become blind when it comes to looking at ourselves.

HONESTY/TRUTH ▢ The most auspicious moment of our lives is when we make the commitment to Know the Truth ...a commitment so firm there is no turning back. **We must heed the voice of our heart, for it knows the way. Our heart whispers the Truth every minute of every day. Accepting the Truth, rather than running from it, is the beginning of Sobriety. Nothing less succeeds.**

HONESTY/TRUTH ▢ Our growth depends on being as Honest as we can. Our goal is true self-acceptance ...accepting our limitations so we may begin working on them. Understand how our needs and self-doubts lead us to distort the Truth. We overcomplicate things in order to avoid facing their Truth. **No one is perfect. We are not saints. But we must be perfectly honest about our failures.** Honesty is the source of our strength. Respect the Truth.

HONESTY/TRUTH ▢ Know and admit our weaknesses. Give up our false expectations. Surrender to the Truth of the moment. Take responsibility for ourselves and how our lives have turned out. **Examine our heart ...all of the answers lie within. Our dishonesty keeps us prisoner and primes us to explode when we can no longer hide.** The smallest lie can defeat trust, create suspicion, and block the expression of love.

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Where In AA Do I Fit In ???

NIA 20, along with D40 and D41, will present a
Service in Action WorkshopSept. 24 from 9am until 12pm.
Continental Breakfast served at 8:30 am

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
350 E. Madison St.
Lombard, IL 60148

Come and join others as they share their experience in everything from 12 step calls, being a delegate and participating in General Service Conferences. Learn opportunities for carrying the message and finding your particular Primary Purpose in the Fellowship of AA.

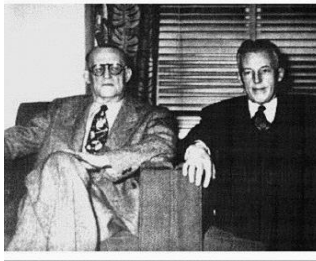
SOMETIMES HONESTY CAN BE INCREDIBLY MESSY

"More people would
learn from their
mistakes if they
weren't so busy
denying them"

BE THE SAME PERSON
PRIVATELY
PUBLICALLY
AND
PERSONALLY

RUNNING TOWARD MY
DREAMS, TRIPPED OVER
REALITY AND HIT MY
HEAD ON THE TRUTH.

**Just Be Honest
With Yourself.
This Opens the Door.**



>Remember November >Gratitude Month >The Birthday Plan

“A Genuine Gratitude for Blessings Received.”

Excerpts from the GSO “Box 459”

Gratitude sits in the middle of A.A. – gratitude for a release from active alcoholism and, as Bill W. points out in Step Ten in Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (p.95), “a genuine gratitude for blessings received.” There is no time frame on an A.A. member’s gratitude, no expiration date, and A.A.s have long been focusing on Thanksgiving week (November) as a tangible time to highlight their gratitude for A.A. and recovery and to turn that gratitude into action by supporting the GSO in a big way.

Many groups observe **Gratitude Month** by holding Traditions meetings and taking up special contributions to the General Service Board for A.A. services worldwide. And besides observing Gratitude Month, many members also use the Birthday Plan **“to give back what’s been given to us.”**

In terms of its history, the **Birthday Plan** was conceived during a coffee break at the Oklahoma State Convention in 1954. Ted R. and Ab A. had the idea that **members might like to celebrate their sobriety by “giving it away to G.S.O. at the rate of a dollar a sober year, on their A.A. birthdays.”** Some give a penny for every day of their sobriety.

Birthday contribution envelopes are available at no charge from G.S.O. or contributions can be made at aa.org.

“Think about what you could and should do, and remember that alcoholism is a family business: your children and grandchildren are stockholders and may not know it yet. What we invest today in this Fellowship will insure that the hand of A.A. will be there when and if a member of your family needs it.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monthly GSR Meeting is held on the third Thursday of every month at 7 pm in the Rear Room of the Anona East Club.

Big Book Conference

AA Northern Illinois Area 20
Sponsored by District 41 joined by Districts 22,23,10,11,40,90,62

“A Design for Living”

Saturday Oct. 29, 2016

9am to 4pm.

Registration begins 8am

Wheaton Bible Church

27W500 North Avenue
West Chicago, Illinois 60185

Reduced Rate Rooms

Holiday Inn & Suites

Carol Stream, IL

630-665-3000

Mention **Group Code WBC** prior to Oct. 7 for conf. room rate.

Catered Lunch, Breakout Panels, Spanish Panels.

Conference w/Lunch

\$20.00

Conference Only ...\$12

More info at

niabigbookconference@gmail.com

Or call Jason ...312.834.1819

Bill Wilson said...



This Matter of Honesty ...Only God can fully know what **Absolute Honesty** is. Therefore, each of us has to conceive what this great ideal may be – to the best of our ability. Fallible as we all are, and will be in this life, it would be presumption to suppose that we could ever really achieve Absolute Honesty. **The best we can do is to strive for a better quality of honesty.**

Sometimes we need to place love ahead of indiscriminate ‘factual honesty.’ We cannot, under the guise of ‘perfect honesty,’ cruelly and unnecessarily hurt others. **Always one must ask, ‘What is the best and most loving thing I can do?’”** (As Bill Sees It ... pg.172)

...incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates ...

It is often blatantly tragic to see a person bungle their own life and the lives of others, yet remain totally incapable of seeing how much all of the tragedies originate in themselves and how they continually keep it going. **The difficulty we have in accepting responsibility for our behavior lies in the desire to avoid the pain of the consequences of that behavior. We human beings find it extremely difficult to know the Truth about ourselves.** Our egos have a massive defense budget. Anything we have to hide has tremendous power over us.

QUIT IT

When we are brought to our knees and clarity of responsibility does come, it is an awful Truth. It is just too simple and we have seen it too many times before. It sits in front of our eyes like an ugly billboard proclaiming the ugliest words we know. **QUIT IT.**

It all comes down to this ...quitting it, not engaging the next addictive behavior, not indulging in the next temptation.

Don't do it ...Refuse to do it ...Choose not to hop on board. Refuse to do it and keep refusing to do it.

Solid intent brings the Power of Grace. It seems so simple and so impossible. Ask for help. We cannot stay sober alone.

**TRUTH
HAS NO AGENDA**

Where we are, not where we want to be, is where we must start. Rather than judge ourselves we need to accept what we discover and be willing to change. We must hunt down the Truth, dispose of our Fantasies, and accept Reality. We must free ourselves of the mental melodramas we ourselves have created.

- **Why am I not being honest?**
- **What am I not giving?**
- **What am I not receiving?**
- **Who can help me?**
- **Who am I not listening to?**
- **What is the lesson here?**
- **How can I be smarter?**
- **What is my real motivation?**



District 41 Messenger is published quarterly by District 41 of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is intended as a service letter to inform district members of service opportunities, events, and experiences relevant to carrying the AA message, in and through service. Opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors and do not necessarily express or reflect the thinking of Alcoholics Anonymous, District 41, or the editor. This newsletter is a confidential document. Please do not take it to jails, treatment centers, etc. It is meant for use in the AA community.

Editor's Note: The words of guidance in this newsletter are taken from years of scribbling in notebooks after listening to meeting comments and reading books. **I don't often remember exactly where comments come from, and every paragraph has a little from one place and a little from another to promote fluidity. BUT, I can make a list of some references from my book shelf:** "Shift Happens" by Robert Holden, Ph.D. "Drop the Rock" by Bill P. and Todd W. "Carry this Message" by Joe McQ. "The Steps We Took" by Joe McQ "Understanding the 12 Steps" by Terrence Gorski. "Emotional Resilience" by David Viscott, Ph.D "The Spirituality of Imperfection" Kertz & Ketcham and, of course, *The Twelve & Twelve* and *The Big Book*.

STOP PRETENDING

**For comments, suggestions, contributionsplease contact the editor.
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