

# District 41 Messenger

## WINTER– 2015 - 16

Addison – Bensenville – Elmhurst - Lombard – Oakbrook Terrace  
Villa Park – Wood Dale



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Dist41@aa-nia.org  
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aa.org

### Service Opportunities

District 41 General Service Representative (GSR) meetings are the place to find avenues for important service work. If you are interested in any of these areas, D41 is in need of your time and talents.

*The Archives  
Cooperation with Professional Communities  
The AA Grapevine Literature  
Public Information  
Special Needs*

**ALWAYS  
FORGIVE  
YOUR ENEMIES,  
NOTHING  
ANNOYS THEM  
SO MUCH.**

## ***The Words We Use...FORGIVENESS***

*We forgive out of exhaustion, disillusionment, and a growing awareness that revenge is just costing us too much. Forgiveness often happens naturally. Rather than an act of will, it is a dawning of awareness.*

*Forgiveness ...Confusing Forgiving with Forgetting sets a trap ...the offense is precisely what must not be forgotten. Salvation lies in remembrance. Forgiveness does not remove responsibility for our actions or the actions of others.*

*Forgiveness ...Letting Go of the Past is not some sort of erasure. Forgiveness is not an attempt to obliterate the past or wipe the slate clean. If we Forgive and Forget we are throwing away valuable experience.*

*Forgiveness ...The road to forgiving may be long or short, bumpy or smooth...but it is a rich, rewarding road which leads to the greatest of treasures. Freedom. We discover forgiveness in both of its forms ...we have been forgiven and we have forgiven. We get only by giving, and we give only by getting.*

*Forgiveness ...Forgive OR Re-Live. Respect the Truth. Respect yourself. We receive for ourselves the forgiveness we give to others. We cannot demand our own release before we have released our fellows. There is no escape from this. Forgiveness is granted, not offered. It is a gift to ourselves.*

*Forgiveness ...The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is an attribute of the strong. Only the strong and the brave can truly forgive. Those we forgive no longer absorb our energy and thought. We free ourselves of the anger, the pain, the persons who harmed us. We free ourselves of their power.*

*Forgiveness ...Forgiveness is Spiritual ...it cannot be willed. It results less from Effort than from Openness. It is a releasing of something we no longer wish to carry, rather than a moral decision made at a particular time and place. It is a releasing of the past, a by-product of acceptance. Whatever it is we are forgiving moves from the foreground to the background.*

*Forgiveness ... Fear is a significant factor in blocking our ability or desire to forgive. We were hurt and we might be hurt again. We must remember to keep ourselves out of harm's way if the person we are forgiving is likely to continue their offensive behavior.*

➤ *Continued on page two*

***The Opposite of Resentment is Forgiveness***

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➤ *Continued from first page*

**Forgiveness ...**Forgiving is something we do for ourselves. **We NEED to forgive.** An unforgiven injury binds us to a time and a place someone else has chosen. It holds us trapped in a past moment and a past feeling.

**Forgiveness ...** If we can't get through our anger, we'll never get to forgiveness. One of the people we might be angry at is ourselves, even if it's only for getting dragged into something we wish we'd been smart enough to avoid, or for not being perfect in our reactions, or for letting our lives get so far from the Truth. But nobody is perfect ...not us or anyone else. Forgiveness is giving up the possibility of a better past.

**Forgiveness ...**We forgive not to erase a wrong, but to relieve the residue of the wrong which is alive within us. We forgive because it is less painful than holding on to the past. Forgiveness is the smartest action to take on our own behalf.

**Forgiveness ...**Forgiveness isn't forever. We may need to re-forgive the same hurt many times if it is living inside many parts of us. Forgiveness does not erase the bitter past. A healed memory is not a deleted memory.

**Forgiveness ...**As we become more valuable to ourselves, forgiveness becomes easier. We hold less against ourselves because we know the harm resentment brings. We hold less against others. Forgiveness is giving up the resentment to which you are entitled and offering to the person who hurt you friendlier attitudes to which they are not entitled.

**Forgiveness ...**Forgiveness is a rebirth of hope, a reorganization of thought and a reconstruction of dreams. Once forgiving begins, dreams can be rebuilt. Meaning can be extracted from the worst experience and used to create a new set of moral rules...a new interpretation of life's events.

*Forgive*

**The moment we ponder a twisted or broken relationship with another person, our emotions go on the defensive.**

To escape looking at the wrongs we have done another, we resentfully focus on the wrong he has done us. Triumphantly we seize upon his slightest misbehavior as the perfect excuse for minimizing or forgetting our own. Right here we need to fetch ourselves up sharply. **Let's remember that alcoholics are not the only ones bedeviled by sick emotions. In many instances we are really dealing with fellow sufferers whose woes we have increased.** If we are about to ask forgiveness for ourselves, why shouldn't we start out by forgiving them, one and all? *(As Bill Sees It)*

***Guilt is a Choice ...and so is Forgiveness***

**YOU CAN GIVE  
THEM ANOTHER  
CHANCE, OR YOU  
CAN FORGIVE,  
LET GO, AND GIVE  
YOURSELF A  
BETTER CHANCE.**  
KUSHANDWIZDOM

**FORGIVE.**  
Now. Seriously. Please.

life

becomes easier  
when you learn  
to accept an  
apology you  
never got

~ Robert Brault ~

**THE BEST  
THING ABOUT  
THE PAST IS  
THAT IT SHOWS  
YOU WHAT NOT  
TO BRING INTO  
YOUR FUTURE.**

## Upcoming Events.....

Saturday, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 ...DuPage County Open ...Parkview Community Church, 764 St. Charles Road, Glen Ellyn IL 60137.

Doors Open at 6 pm, Open Speaker Meeting 7 to 8:30 pm.

Three Speakers ...1-5 years, 6-19 years, Over 20 years.

Sponsored by District 40, 41, 42, and 43.

For more information ...Maggie.allison@yahoo.com

**Women's Open Workshop, on Saturday' March 5, 2016, from 9 am to 12:30 pm at The Oakbrook Community Church, 3100 Midwest Road, (Midwest Road and 31<sup>st</sup> Street, Oakbrook, Illinois 60523.**

Sponsored by District 41.

**TOPIC: "The Big Shame Theory – Losing its 'Weight' and Learning to Live" Women's Open Workshop. >Identify Shame and how it weaves its way through our daily living >Explain the origins of Shame – family, cultural, religious, etc. > Provide methods to deal with Shame, including using the AA program and a spiritual way to achieve The Promises.**



District 41 CPC participated in an Addictions Event at Willowbrook High School on September 29, 2015. The event was planned to share information and tools on dealing with addiction. Sponsors included DuPage High School District 88, the Villa Park Police Department, State Representative Deb Conroy, St. Paul Lutheran Church in Villa Park, Christian Church of Villa Park and Christ Church of Oak Brook.

Kudos to Maggie A., Mike O. Ian O., Joe P., Max S., and Jason (friend of Ian) for participating in the Willowbrook Event. In grand AA style, we had the liveliest group of all the participants. (Submitted by Jeane M.)

## Voices from the District ....

(Share your thoughts by contacting the editor at Mike60148@comcast.net)

**Let Go and Let God is one of AA's sayings and I carry a poem in my wallet as a reminder.**

*As children bring their broken toys with tears for us to mend, I brought my broken dreams to God because He was my friend.*

*But instead of leaving Him in peace to work alone, I hung around and tried to help, with ways that were my own.*

*At last, I snatched them back and cried, "How can you be so slow?"*

*My child, He said, "What could I do? You never did let go." (Author Unknown)*

That's me sometimes. I pray to God for help in situations and then don't have the patience to wait on His answer. My alcoholic brain steps in all too often and makes a mess of things unless I pray every morning and ask for God's will in my life, meditate and wait on His answer.

"Patience is a Virtue" they say and that about sums it up. That "P" word has always been hard for me, but I am slowly learning. Besides, how totally freeing it is to "Let Go and Let God".

(Submitted by Karen F.)

### National A.A. Technology Workshop

Members attending the National A.A. Technology Workshop in St. Louis, MO, on October 2-4 2015, had the opportunity to meet others from across the US and Canada, and to focus on carrying the message through our fastest-growing means of communication—technology. Technology not only includes websites, but embraces e-mail, e-services, content management, innovation in mobile apps, cloud storage and backup, newsletters, correspondence, e-books, meeting directories, and archives. This benefits Intergroups, Area Committees, Districts, Public Information Contac Services, Bridging the Gap, and AA meeting Directories. The sites reach around the world to help the still-suffering Alcoholic, so mobility, accessibility, and anonymity are primary considerations.

Members of the unofficial Area 20 Technology Committee, including Jeane M., lead by our Area Webmaster, John C, discussed going forward with the development of a new Area 20 website. Because our District 41 website is powered by the Area 20 website, we will also be building a new website. Our long-range goal is to create websites needing a minimum of training to maintain. In the meantime, Jeane M is refreshing her WordPress skills, and wishes to thank District 41 for the opportunity to be of service.

# The Back Page

**F**orgiveness  
is not an occasional act,  
it is a permanent  
attitude

- Martin Luther King Jr. -

## We Always Have a Choice

Powerlessness is seeing ourselves as valueless...as not being able to imagine that we make a difference to anyone or anything. It is a feeling we are ignored by the Universe.

It is not appreciating our importance in the larger picture of our life and the lives of others. It is ignorance of our power, beauty, nobility, and worth. And it is denial of our responsibility for the consequences which we create.

**We can solve a problem only when we say "This is my problem and it is up to me to solve it."**

**All of our yesterdays, with their record of failure, resentments and hatreds, ended last night. We Have the Power to Change.**

**No one else in the Universe has been assigned to take care of you.**

As an adult, you now have the job, whether you like it or not, to take care of yourself. Only you have 24/7 access to how you feel, what you want, how you want it, and how much you want. **We can create a life of our own design.** It is possible to be clear, consistent, and strong enough to make a unique contribution to the human race. We can build a life of careful listening, quiet joy, and solid peace. We can rise to the risks of life, facing all of the challenges we find. **Willingness is The Key.**

*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 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.*

**The latest part of my life has had a purpose, not in great things accomplished but in daily living.** Courage to face each day ...Acceptance of things as they are.

I have tried to accomplish the little daily tasks, unimportant by themselves, but tasks that are important in daily living. Where derision, contempt and pity were once shown me, I now enjoy the respect of many people.

**Above all, I have the greatest thing accorded to man – the Love and Understanding of a Gracious God** who has lifted me from the alcoholic scrap heap to a position of trust where I have been able to reap the rich rewards which come from showing a little love for others and from serving them as best I can. *(He Sold Himself Short BB)*

**I AM  
MY PROBLEM,  
BUT ALSO  
MY SOLUTION.**

**It doesn't  
really matter  
who you  
used to be,  
what matters  
is who you've  
become.**

**For comments, suggestions, contributions ....please contact the editor.  
Mike60148@comcast.net**

**Forgiveness Gives Us Wings**

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