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# District 41 Messenger

Issue 11

**FALL – 2017**

Addison – Bensenville – Elmhurst - Lombard – Oakbrook Terrace

Villa Park – Wood Dale

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## ***The Words We Use...The PROMISES***

*Editor Note: Some years ago I came across a book titled “The Gifts of Sobriety...When the Promises of Recovery Come True” written by Barbara S. Cole. Her idea was, simply, to break down the paragraph of Promises into 12 separate sentences. Perhaps by circumstance, or by Bill W.’s intention, it seemed as if each of the 12 Steps corresponded by number with the 12 Promises. Some of Ms. Coles’ ideas are presented here. Her complete work might be an insightful addition to your bookshelf.*

**“The 12 Steps of AA can be viewed as trail markers along a path, and The Promises can be seen as the destination of that path. All of the Promises are firm, non-negotiable statements. They are solid and believable.”**

Sometimes the only way to know what is possible to achieve is to see it being enjoyed by others. The Promises are what we get if we are able to maintain willingness and take action over and over again. *The Promises are ours If We Work for Them.*

**PROMISE ONE** ☞ **We are going to know a new freedom and happiness.** Fear is controlling, all encompassing, suffocating, predictive, and death oriented. **We will know, as a result of sobriety, a new freedom. Freedom from a fear based life.**

**PROMISE TWO** ☞ **We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.** If we shut the door on our past we cannot learn from our mistakes. We cannot clean up the wreckage of our actions. **The prize for remaining sober is true awareness AS IT IS, not as we would like it to be.** We look behind us to help judge how relatively right or wrong we are in this very day.

**PROMISE THREE** ☞ **We will comprehend the word Serenity and we will know Peace.** Our alcoholism feels like a tornado, gaining in force and fooling us into believing that everything is “just fine.” **Serenity is not having to work so hard all the time to live like a human being.** We can relax and feel at peace with ourselves.

**PROMISE FOUR** ☞ **No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.** I know I have worth, both to others and myself. **I take notice of even the smallest feeling of self-worth and value it.** Our experience returns our dignity as we help others without shame or embarrassment. We become part of a community again, no matter how large or small. Our lives now are filled with purpose.



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### **Websites**

Dist41@aa-nia.org  
aa-nia.org/event  
aa.org

AA has a wrench  
to fit every nut that  
walks in the door



**The man who drinks too much on occasion is still the same man as he was sober.**

**An alcoholic, a Real Alcoholic, is not the same man at all.**

**You can't predict anything about him for sure ... except that he will be someone you never met.**

*(Raymond Chandler, Author)*

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***A Fundamental Shift in Perception***

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**PROMISE FIVE** ☞ ***That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.*** When alcoholism is active in our lives we feel useless. Our main purpose is find and keep alcohol nearby. It is terrifying to realize what is happening to us.

**PROMISE SIX** ☞ ***We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.*** With a clean mind, healthier body, and an opened heart, we are able to hear and see the struggles of others. My sobriety lets me listen and act unselfishly toward others

**PROMISE SEVEN** ☞ ***Self seeking will slip away.*** We have begun to care about the consequences of our actions toward ourselves and others. **Now we can see beyond our nose and find a way to serve others.** This is a fundamental shift in perception.

**PROMISE EIGHT** ☞ ***Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.*** Our attitude changes because we are not listening to the disease and its crazy logic of self-seeking . **Being willing to make a list of persons we have harmed, and consider making amends to them brings us out of the victim role and the more realistic role of the perpetrator.** It is never too late to make a change.

**PROMISE NINE** ☞ ***Fear of People and Economic Insecurity will leave us.*** I can live today without fear of being caught or found out for there is nothing to discover as I live openly and honestly. **Step Nine and Promise Nine address the need to stop harming others and harming ourselves** with feelings of guilt and shame and embarrassment which grew in our past. We take deliberate actions.

**PROMISE TEN** ☞ ***We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.*** I am grateful for the return of my own wisdom and clear intuition. **We can practice, with a clean and sober mind, to learn how to feel, hear, taste and otherwise experience everything all over again.** Sobriety brings increasing clarity and the ability to learn. We drop our baggage and habits and we are free to learn.

**PROMISE ELEVEN** ☞ ***We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.*** The Eleventh Promise and the Eleventh Step speak directly to one another in that they both address a single key concept which is Powerlessness. **We now have a clear realization that we are supported in ways we had never even dreamed of in the past.** We realize this Higher Power is a “constant” and not a “periodic” grace in our lives. We begin to relax and allow things to be as they are. As time goes on, the gifts deepen and become richer.

**PROMISE TWELVE** ☞ ***These promises will always materialize if we work for them.*** Addiction and addictive behaviors are about procrastination, empty threats and promises, and broken ultimatums. **We must first take action if we are to receive the promises.** Our actions take place in Steps One through Nine. When we are ready to take action there are millions of AA members throughout the world who are ready to share their experience, strength and hope with us. The sheer numbers of people living full, complete, healthy lives who once took these same actions have made our way a bit easier. **We never have to do this alone.**

###

**Ask to be Lead to the Person Who Still Suffers**

FALLING DOWN  
IS PART OF LIFE.  
—  
GETTING BACK UP  
IS LIVING.

-ANONYMOUS-

Learn  
to say  
**no**  
without  
explaining  
yourself.

SOLTSBEENSATD.TUMBLR

IT'S NOT ABOUT  
PERFECT. IT'S ABOUT  
EFFORT. AND WHEN YOU  
BRING THAT EFFORT  
EVERY SINGLE DAY,  
THAT'S WHERE  
TRANSFORMATION  
HAPPENS. THAT'S HOW  
CHANGE OCCURS.

WHATEVER KEEPS  
YOU SOBER, DO  
MORE OF THAT.

Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending.  
via curiano.com

**THE MONKEY  
IS OFF MY  
BACK BUT  
THE CIRCUS  
IS STILL IN  
TOWN.**

### **GSR Meetings**

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

God didn't give you the strength to get back on your feet, so that you can run back to the same thing that knocked you down.  
via curiano.com

## **Big Book Conference AA Northern Illinois Area 20 Saturday, November 4, 2017**

9:00 am until 4:00 pm  
Registration Begins at 8:00 am  
For Registration with Credit Card  
([www.bbc2017.aadistrict71.org](http://www.bbc2017.aadistrict71.org))

The location of the conference will be at the  
First United Methodist Church  
801 N. Sycamore St.  
Hinkley, IL 60520

For those wishing overnight accommodations rooms are available at reduced rates starting at \$69.99 at the Quality Inn in Sycamore. Call for reservations at 815.895.4979. Be sure to mention Friends of Bill. W. for discount.

Pre-registration forms available from GSRs or our website.  
Conference with lunch = \$22 ...Conference only = \$13

For more information or to Volunteer  
Please contact  
Doug A. @ 815.570.7222 or Tracy F. @ 815.739.5412

Guest Speakers will Eric H., Ontario Canada  
and Cookie S., Helena MN.

### *Twelve Rewards of Sobriety*

- Hope instead of desperation.
- Faith instead of despair.
- Courage instead of fear.
- Peace of mind instead of confusion.
- Self-respect instead of self-contempt.
- Self-confidence instead of helplessness.
- The respect of other instead of their pity and contempt.
- A clean conscience instead of a sense of guilt.
- Real friendships instead of loneliness.
- A clean pattern of life instead of a purposeless existence.
- The love and understanding of our families.
- The freedom of a happy life.

## The Promises 2.0

From pages 84 - 85 of the Big Book

Although not “officially” recognized as a Second Set of Promises there are words on pages 84- 85 of the Big Book (Into Action) which may ring true for those who are continually making a heartfelt commitment to our program of Alcoholics Anonymous..

- 1... We have entered the world of the Spirit. Love and tolerance of others is our code.
- 2... We have ceased fighting anything or anyone – even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned
- 3... We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, and we will find this has happened automatically
- 4... We will see that our attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation.
- 5... We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality – safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us.
- 6... We are neither cocky nor are we afraid.
- 7... This is our experience. This is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.
- 8... We are not cured of alcoholism. What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.
- 9... If we have carefully followed directions, we have begun to sense the flow of His Spirit into us. “How can I best serve Thee – Thy will, not mine, be done.”
- 10... To some extent we have become God-conscious. We have begun to develop this vital sixth sense.

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.**

## He Sold Himself Short

(Pages 295-296 in the Big Book)

### A Personal Experience of The Promises

This latest part of my life has had a purpose, not in great things accomplished but in daily living.

**1.** Courage to face each day has replaced the fears and uncertainties of earlier years. **2.** Acceptance of things as they are has replaced the old impatient champing at the bit to conquer the world. **3.** I have stopped tilting at windmills, and instead have tried to accomplish the daily tasks, unimportant in themselves, but tasks that are an integral part of living fully. **4.** Where derision, contempt, and pity were once shown me, I now enjoy the respect of many people. **5.** Where once I had casual acquaintances all of whom were fair weather friends, I now have a host of friends who accept me for what I am. **6.** And over my AA years I have made many real, honest, sincere friendships which I shall always cherish. **7.** Above all, I have gained the greatest thing accorded to any man ...the love and understanding 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 that come from showing a little love for others and from serving them as I can.



Good, sober is.

**(Editor Note) Information on upcoming workshops, reports, contacts, and other information can be found on our D41 website. It is the responsibility of GSRs (Group Service Representatives) to provide flyers and information to their groups. If you do not have a GSR for your group please choose your representative so they may attend the monthly meetings on the Third Thursday of every month (except July).**

**For comments, suggestions, contributions ....please contact the editor.  
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**To Be Helpful is Our Only Aim**