

# District 41 Messenger

## SUMMER –2020

Addison – Bensenville – Elmhurst - Lombard – Oakbrook Terrace

Villa Park – Wood Dale

### ***The 12 Steps ...STEP 12***

*Editor Note: This series is focusing on the The Twelve Steps of our Fellowship ...One Step at a Time. This month we conclude with Step Twelve. We urge you to get out your Big Book and the 12 & 12 to read and comprehend what our founders have written in more detail.*

**Step Twelve ...Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

*{Editor Note ....many concepts in this issue are taken from the 1954 book "Sobriety and Beyond" (S&B) attributed to Fr. John Doe, although after his death his real name was revealed as Fr. John Pfau who was a sober member of Anonymous and a prolific speaker/writer on the principles of our program. Most of his works are out-of- print, but may be found used.}*

The Twelfth Step doesn't say carry THE message.

It says "carry THIS message." The message we carry is THIS;  
"We have had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps."

☐ Our message is not just some conversation. A suffering alcoholic is not going to listen to anything that doesn't have depth and weight. You have to tell your story. It has to have happened to you. With the right information you can be successful in getting people to the point of willingness. The information that alcoholism is a disease, allergy, and obsession brought Dr. Bob to the desire to stop drinking. *(Joe & Charlie)*

☐ "Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps" is the greatest promise in the book. If we apply the first eleven steps in our life to the best of our ability we will have a spiritual awakening. We believe things we never believed before. We believe God is a kind and loving God. We believe He stands ready to help any human being anywhere in the world the instant they are ready to turn to Him. We are now charged with the responsibility of carrying THIS message to other alcoholics. *(J&C)*

☐ "He's got a job for me and He has a job for you. It is only when you fit into His plan for you that you really become happy. Every human being on earth today has a God-given purpose." *(J&C)* We fulfill our purpose in life by using whatever talents we have to carry this message to those still suffering.

"Ask Him in your morning meditation what you can do for the man who is still sick. The answer will come if your house is In order."

***Tell Them What Happened to You***



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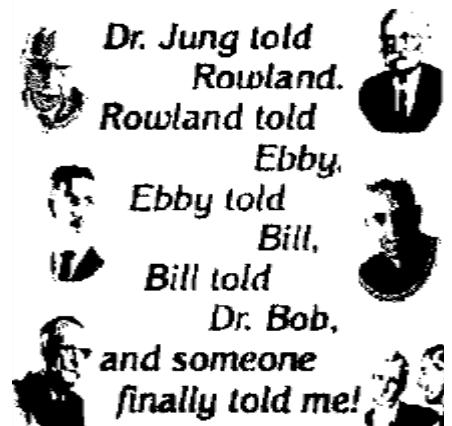
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**Websites**

[dupage41aa.org](http://dupage41aa.org)

[aa-nia.org/event](http://aa-nia.org/event)

[aa.org](http://aa.org)



USE ME, GOD.  
SHOW ME HOW TO TAKE  
WHO I AM, WHO I WANT  
TO BE, & WHAT I CAN DO,  
& USE IT FOR A PURPOSE  
GREATER THAN MYSELF.

*(Continued from first page)*

☞ “We have “Been There – Done That”. Our job is to tell our story. We tell what we have learned from our experience. We have come to believe, have made a decision, and have taken actions. We now know the value and the joy of helping others enjoy the experience of being awake, mentally and spiritually.

☞ The Twelfth Step teaches us we shall keep our sobriety only if we give it to someone else. In order to keep it ....in order to preserve ourselves ....we carry the message to other alcoholics ....which means we are to practice, and continue to practice, the Twelve Step Principles in order keep sober. We have the finest motive for doing it....a motive which cannot puff us up ...a motive that will keep us humble ...a motive which will not make us patronizing ...a motive which will remind us of our need ...a motive, which finally, enables the pathologically proud alcoholic to practice love of his fellowman and to show gratitude to his fellow man and still avoid getting on the bleeding deacon pedestal. Again we hear the echo: “It is in giving we receive”...“We keep only what we give away”.

☞ “All of us awaken every day from sleep. Seldom is it sudden, We often say we are half-wake. It is in AA we gradually awaken to a new life; a new attitude toward spiritual values; a new ability to think clearly. That is the Spiritual Awakening to the light of God’s grace which has entered our minds and our souls and awakened our spirit to a new consciousness of Him. We are now in the light of a new day,” (S&B)

☞ “We have stayed sober and kept what we have because we gave it away, no matter what the other person did with it in the end. What did we give away? It is very simple. It is explained very tersely and very clearly in the big AA book. ‘Tell Him What Happened to You.’ In fact, it is all you have to give away ....what happened to you. Period”. (S&B)

☞ “And Practice these Principles in all our Affairs.” which simply means ‘in all we do’, We do this In business, at home ....in EVERYTHING. And ‘practice’ means repeating over and over, every minute, every hour, every day.” (S&B)

☞ “Why does the old timer in our ranks sometimes disappear? Why do some eventually relapse? The answer is always the same Truth. They quit practicing all those things they learned in the Twelve Steps which are essential to maintaining sobriety and happiness. A Spiritual Awakening must be nurtured and continually developed. We learn to live skillfully on a practical level. We approach life now with care and attention, guided by the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is the most important part of the whole program for continued sobriety and happiness.” (S&B)

There is Value and Joy in the act of Helping Others.

Sharing how we’ve grown helps others to see  
the possibilities for a Spiritual Awakening in themselves.  
The only real mistake we can make is to stop trying to grow.

**Be of Service. Always.**

**BE THE PERSON  
THAT YOU  
NEEDED WHEN  
YOU WERE  
STRUGGLING.**

*The day you  
plant the seed is  
not the day you  
eat the fruit.*

**SHHH,  
SHOW ME**  
KUSHANDWIZDOM

**RECOVERY  
CANNOT  
BE A HOBBY.  
IT MUST  
BE A  
LIFESTYLE.**

## *Remembering the Experience Of Finding "Home"*

Home is ultimately the place where we find the peace and harmony which comes from learning to live with the knowledge of our own imperfections and from learning to accept the imperfections of others. We experience a falling away of tensions,

During this time of shutdowns and lockdowns and cancelled face to face meetings being replaced by Zoom and Conference Calls, we might remember the relief of being "at Home" with our fellow alcoholics and the warmth of a handshake or hug. And we should not forget the "still suffering" man or woman who finally finds the courage to locate and walk through unfamiliar doors for the first time only to find empty rooms.

*Here is an old but appropriate story which illustrates the joy of "finding home."*

Visiting a strange city, a newly sober AA member sets out to find an AA meeting. Following telephone directions, he walks in a church with many small rooms.

The first door he opens reveals a childrens choir getting ready to practice their Sunday hymns. He closes the door, and walks further down a long hallway. He stops at another door, opens it to find a church committee discussing business.

He begins to think maybe he's in the wrong place, or at the wrong time. He really needs a meeting, and decides to look for an exit door to try locating another meeting ....somewhere.

As he walks down the hall he suddenly smells the aroma of brewing coffee. He hears laughter and the sound of lively conversations. He finds the door, opens it, and is greeted by smiling faces. Familiar AA mottoes are hanging on the wall, and a banner of The Twelve Steps is prominent at the front of the room. He breathed a sigh of relief.

### **He Had Found Home**

#### *As Bill Sees It...*



*Be  
Of  
Service*

I just know we are expected, at some point, to do more than carry the message of AA to other alcoholics.

In AA we aim not only for sobriety. We try to become citizens of the world we had rejected, and of the world which largely rejected us.

This is the ultimate demonstration toward which Twelfth Step work is the first but not the final step. We must Practice our Principles in All of our Affairs.

## **OUR PRINCIPLES**

### **STEP ONE**

Admitting Defeat  
Willingness.

### **STEP TWO**

Believing

### **STEP THREE**

Deciding  
Surrendering Our Will

### **STEP FOUR**

Examining Ourselves  
Seeking the Truth

### **STEP FIVE**

Sharing, Asking for  
Feedback, Seeking  
the Truth

### **STEP SIX**

Willingness to Change

### **STEP SEVEN**

Humility, Changing

### **STEP EIGHT**

Living with Others

### **STEP NINE**

Taking Responsibility

### **STEP TEN**

Continuing to Grow,  
Continuing to  
Examine Ourselves

### **STEP ELEVEN**

Refining Our  
Spiritual Growth

### **STEP TWELVE**

Grow by Giving to Others

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***As a Result of These Steps. Period.***

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### ***Our Only Job ... Tell Them What Happened***

*(Taken from a Joe and Charlie Big Book Study, 1968)*

"Some of us start fancying ourselves as healers, miracle advisors, economic advisors. God, I don't anyone who has screwed up those things worse than we have in our lives.

"Now, we know just one thing. And let me tell you something, the one thing we know, we know it better than anyone else alive.

"You and I know more about alcoholism than anyone else alive, and we're the only people who have experienced it. We know more about recovery, because we have experienced it. We are the luckiest people alive.

"I think God got tired of seeing people like us die in the 1930's and He decided to do something about it, and He's always worked with people through people. I believe He picked Bill and Bob and the first one hundred. I think He picked Ebby Thatcher and Dr. Jung and Dr. Silkworth, the Oxford Groupers, that whole bunch, and put it together so we could have it today.

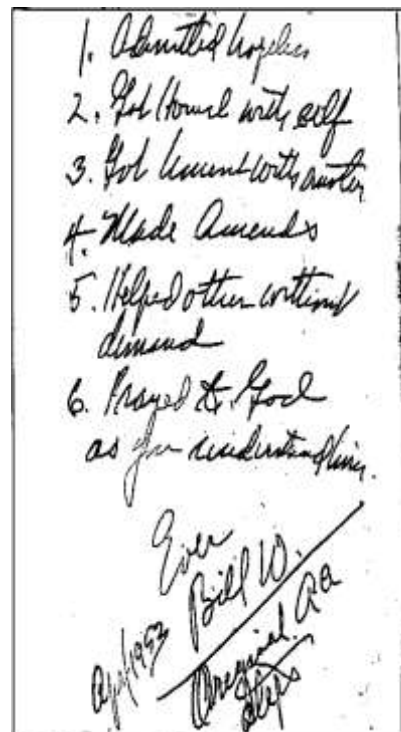
"If it is true He picked them then, we've got to realize those people are dead and gone. They are no longer here. If He picked them then He surely is picking more now. There's not an alcoholic in this room that ought to be here. Every one of us probably should be dead, some of us two or three times. And we said, 'my wasn't we lucky last night.' I don't think luck had anything to do with us being alive and sober today.

I think God picked us out,  
let us suffer our alcoholism so we would  
learn what He wanted us to know,  
and then when He got ready to use us,  
He removed the obsession to drink.  
That is the only reason we are here today,  
to be able to help other alcoholics."

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.

**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, Joe & Charlies Big Book Studies and The Twelve & Twelve and The Big Book along with numerous on-line AA sites.

**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.**



(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 at 7 pm in Elmhurst Presbyterian Church, 367 Spring Road at St. Charles Road, Elmhurst.

