

# District 41 Messenger

## SPRING- 2016

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



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### ***The Words We Use...SPIRITUALITY***

*When we attempt to define Spirituality we discover not “its” limits, but our own. Because the spiritual is beyond our control, it is never quite what we expect. “We must find some spiritual basis for living, or else we die.” (Bill W.)*

**Spirituality ...Deep down in every man, woman and child is the fundamental idea of God.** We found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and express even a willingness to believe in a power greater than ourselves, we commenced to get results, even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that Power. **Our brokenness allows us to become whole.**

**Spirituality ...Spirituality is, above all, a way of life. We don’t just think about it, or feel and sense it around us – we live it.** It is what we see, how we feel, and why we choose what we choose. Life is not something to be observed. There is a “still” part of us, however small, that wants us to grow and that is willing to do the work and take the risks involved in spiritual progress.

**Spirituality ...The spiritual penetrates to all of our depths. We must live it, think it, feel it, and most important, act it in our lives for only if we do it, only if we practice it, will we come to understand what it is. Spirituality is not Spectacular.** We listen, ask questions, and tell stories. We remain open to Release, Gratitude, Humility, Tolerance, Forgiveness, and Self-Honesty. **We are not better than other good people.** We live the best we can and we allow others to do likewise.

**Spirituality ....You have it only as long as you seek it. It is in the depth and agony of the hurt that we find our way.** Turn toward God....Just Do It. There is a place with a light which knows no darkness, and a peace which passes all understanding. There is a part of our being which is beyond the personal self. Identify with that part.

**Spirituality ...The unconventionality of AAs spirituality, its wariness of dogma and directives of organized religion, is appealing. Alcoholics Anonymous makes no claim to be right. It is a spirituality more interested in questions than in answers, more a journey toward humility rather than a struggle for perfection.** The 12 Steps are a patchwork quilt of woven spiritual threads borrowed directly and indirectly from the traditions of Greek, Christian, and Jewish thoughts. Our spiritual progress is aided by the concepts and experiences of more than 25 centuries of spiritual thinkers. Spirituality is beyond us and yet it is in everything we do.

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#### **I Am Responsible...The GSRs**

When I first came to AA, my world was very, very small. In my head, I thought I was very, very big. That thought was smashed as I slowly crept out of my tiny self, finally willing to ask for help. I received help in a greater way than I ever expected. Four sober years later, I find myself in my first year as your trusted servant District 41 DCM (District Committee Member). The people I have met in our District (41) and our Area (20) have inspired and encouraged me. Our monthly district meetings are entertaining and informative. Who’s there? Our officers, committee chairs, visitors from within and without District 41 and **General Service Representatives (GSRs)**. Who is the **GSR** from your home group? If you don’t have one, you need one. If you have a treasurer, you need a **GSR**. The **GSR** is the link to the district is the link to Area is the link to the General Service Office.

What can you do? Take a look at the District 41 Website- all our monthly meetings for the last several years are posted. Become a GSR or a committee member or write for our newsletter. Ideas and concerns are always welcome. I’m thankful I dipped my toe in and now I’m completely immersed.  
**Susan H. - District 41 DCM**

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**Spirituality ...Desperation and curiosity leads us to a spiritual path. Spirituality is open-ended ...unable to be possessed. It is more at home with questions than answers.** There are no shortcuts to spirituality, no techniques which command it, and especially no magic tricks. The ONLY technique is a four letter word...TIME.

**Spirituality ... Those who know, do not say. Those who say, do not know.** A saint is a saint UNTIL he believes he is a saint.

**Spirituality ...Cooperation with God is the great necessity of our lives. All else follows naturally. Cooperation with God is the result of our consciousness of His Presence.** Guidance is bound to come to us as we become more attuned to the Great Consciousness of the Universe. We must have many quiet times when we not so much ask to be shown and led by God, as to feel His Presence. (24 Hours)

**Spirituality ...God will reveal Himself to us in many ways. God is beyond names and forms. The transcendent is unknowable and unknown.** Our faults cannot hurt God. He needs nothing from us. God is not mocked, nor does he mock his children. We were created to seek God, and He promises a response ...”When you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me.” A cry from the heart, a trusting cry, always pierces the darkness and reaches the divine ear of God. There are no limitations for God. Whatever you dare ask for you will be given ...you need only ask and have faith.

**Spirituality ...Spirituality is nurtured in community, the oneness with others that springs from shared vision and shared goal, shared memory and shared hope.** Spirituality can be “discovered” in solitude, but it can only be fulfilled in community. It can only be communicated from person to person.

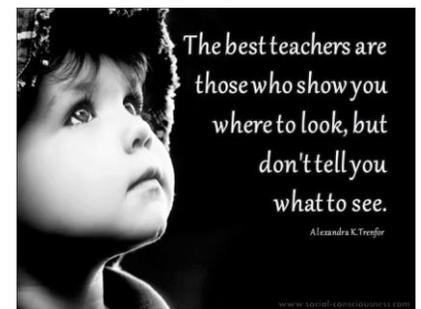
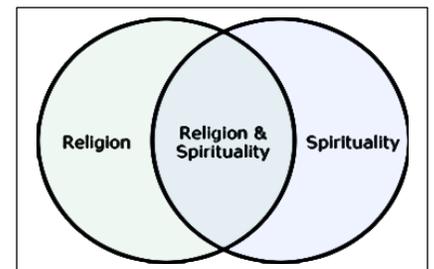
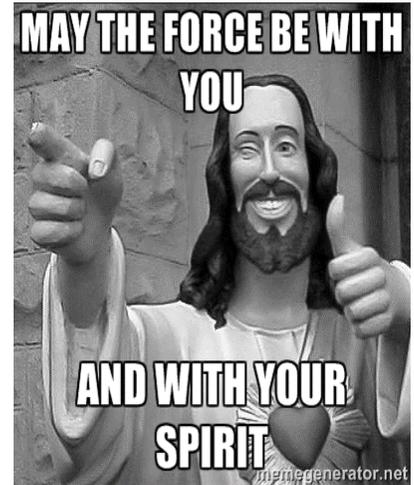
*(Editor Note: Many of these excerpts were from the book “The Spirituality of Imperfection” by Ernest Kurtz and Katherine Ketcham. Their work is known and appreciated by Friends of Bill everywhere.)*

**God ...I can't say it in words. Would you listen through my heart?**

**Spirituality is a journey,** a pilgrimage, as we discover day by day the distance traveled is less important than the experienced gained. When we are on a journey, and the end keeps getting further and further away, then we realize that the real end is the journey. (Joseph Campbell)

**We don't how to get there but hope to find someone on the way who has the same quest who can help guide us.** On this journey we learn about ourselves, and what risks we are willing to take. Spirituality takes us places we never expected to go. It is a matter of falling and getting up again, building something up and then being knocked down. Hang on and enjoy the ride... down seven times, stand up eight. Spirituality, like daily bread, comes one day at a time. Each day requires constant rediscovery and continual new insight into what it means to be human, and what it means to exist as a “fully human” being. Spirituality awakens an identity which lies within us all. The goal of the spiritual pilgrimage is, quite simply, to keep moving forward, however slowly, One Step at a Time.

**Pay Attention to the Small Details of Life**



*Spirituality lies not in the power to heal others, to perform miracles, or to astound the world with our wisdom, but in the ability to endure with right attitude whatever crosses we have to face in our daily lives, and thus to rise above them.*

~ Sri Daya Mata ~

OkDay.com

*“Something lost, a part of yourself, perhaps?  
That which you seek, inside you will find.”  
(Master Yoda)*

## Voices from the District ....

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

**Heroin Addicts in A.A.** *This contribution is presented by a dually addicted member of our fellowship.*

**I am an alcoholic and a member of A.A. What finally brought me to my knees and gave me the gift of desperation was Heroin. I was taught early on in my sobriety that when I'm in the rooms of A.A., in keeping with our singleness of purpose, I should identify myself as alcoholic and confine my comments to my problems as they relate to alcohol. Since I have a genuine alcoholic history I found no great difficulty in doing this. With the desperation of a drowning man, I sought out another alcoholic who has put the solution the Big Book offers into his life and asked him to guide me through the process. He stressed the importance of doing so with other alcoholics and of being of service in A.A. I followed his suggestions and have been clean and sober ever since. A.A. has brought me into contact with many other heroin addicts seeking an answer to their addiction in the rooms of A.A. Some have a real alcoholic history and are able to identify enough to stay here and grab onto this solution on and also engage in continuous 12th step work. Others cannot. That crucial element in the process is missing. It is the same element that was present when Bill Wilson first called on Dr. Bob – *identification*.**

In my sobriety I've been blessed with the opportunity to work with many heroin addicts in detox and treatment centers. Many of them belong to what Bill Wilson referred to as "**the straight addict contingent**." In most cases they were welcomed into A.A. but could not identify enough to put Alcoholics Anonymous in the center of their lives. Invariably they drifted off to the edges of the group and eventually were heard from no more.

As the heroin epidemic continues to rage in DuPage County, more and more heroin addicts are finding their way into detoxes and treatment centers. Many will end up in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous. Those with a real alcoholic history will certainly identify. However, most "straight addicts" will have a difficult go of it in A.A. As Bill Wilson said, "If we persist in trying this, I'm afraid it will be hard on the addict himself."

About two years ago several heroin addicts who have recovered in A.A. were approached by a local treatment center and asked to start a weekly meeting of Heroin Anonymous. We meet on Saturday nights to practice and study the steps as they are laid out in the Big Book. We have since grown to five weekly meetings in DuPage County. In our area there are over 375 weekly A.A. meetings and only five meetings of Heroin Anonymous. A handful of heroin addicts who have recovered in A.A. feel a responsibility to show up and carry the message of recovery to our brother and sister heroin addicts in H.A. But we are far too few.

If you are a member of A.A. and are reading this, and if heroin addiction is also a significant part of your story, we appeal to your "sense of duty" and ask for your support. Help H.A. grow in DuPage County. Help us to create a strong fellowship with a singleness of purpose that may someday produce the same wholesale miracle in heroin addicts as A.A. has done for alcoholics.

There seems to be no reason why several A.A.'s cannot join, if they wish, with a group of straight addicts to solve the alcohol and the drug problem together. But, obviously, such a dual purpose group should not insist that it be called an A.A. group, nor should it use the A.A. name in its title.

*(continued next column)*

## Upcoming Events.....

**The 2016 Illinois State Conference** will be held at Pheasant Run Resort, 4051 E. Main Street, St. Charles, IL on August 12<sup>th</sup> through August 14<sup>th</sup>. Theme of the conference will be "Our Real Purpose." Website ...www.AAILCON.org

**24<sup>th</sup> Annual Fox Valley Open** will be held at the Fox Valley Presbyterian Church, 227 East Side Drive, Geneva, IL on Saturday, May 21, 2016. Doors open 7 p.m. Call 630.287.8722.

**District 42 Workshop** will be held at the Christ Church of Oak Brook, 31<sup>st</sup> and York, from 10 am until 11:30 am. This is an Open Meeting. "**The Doctors Opinion**" from the Big Book is the topic.

**Big Book Conference, AA Northern Illinois Area 20. "A Design for Living"** is the theme and will be held Saturday, October 29, 2016 from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm. Registration begins at 8 am. The event will be held at the Wheaton Bible Church, West Chicago, IL. For information contact website ...niabigbookconference@gmail.com

**To those I may have wronged,  
I ask forgiveness.**

**To those I may have helped,  
I wish I did more.**

**To those I neglected to help,  
I ask for understanding.**

**To those who helped me,  
I sincerely thank you so much...**

*Heroin Addicts in AA...continued*

Neither should its straight-addict contingent be led to believe that they have become A.A. members by reason of such an association. Certainly, there is every good reason for interested A.A.'s to join with outside groups working on the narcotics problem, provided the Traditions of anonymity and of no endorsements are respected. In conclusion, I want to say that throughout A.A.'s history, most of our special-purpose groups have accomplished very wonderful things. There is great reason to hope that those A.A.'s who are now working in the grim regions of narcotics addiction will achieve equal success. In A.A., the group has strict limitations, but the individual has scarcely any. "**Remembering to observe the Traditions of anonymity and non-endorsement, he can carry A.A.'s message into every troubled area of this very troubled world.**" -*Bill Wilson, Problems Other Than Alcohol, 1958...Dually addicted members interested in offering their experience, strength and hope through HA are urged to call.....*

**Contact Heroin Anonymous DuPage County:  
331.240.0780**

# The Back Page

If drinking is interfering with your work, you're probably a heavy drinker. If work is interfering with your drinking, you're probably an alcoholic.

(Anonymous)

izquotes.com

I'm stronger because  
I had to be,  
I'm smarter because  
of my mistakes,  
happier because of  
the sadness I've  
known, and now  
wiser because  
I learned.

## Annual General Service Conference

Once more it is time for AAs Annual General Service Conference, which will take place April 17-23, 2016 in New York City. **The theme of the 66<sup>th</sup> conference is "Our Spiritual Way of Life: Steps, Traditions and Concepts," underscoring the importance of AAs Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity and Service.** Consisting of delegates from the 93 service areas of the United States and Canada, along with trustees, directors and staff members from the General Service Office, Grapevine and La Vina, the purpose of the conference is to deliberate on matters affecting the Fellowship as a whole. The first conference was held in 1951 and principles of debate have been handed down from generation to generation.

*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.*

## A.A. is Self-Supporting Through Its Own Contributions



1960 = 10¢  
2016 = \$2.25

GAS



1960 = 22¢  
2016 = \$2.50



1960 = 25¢  
2016 = \$12.95

"Our groups, our areas, and A.A. as a whole will not function unless our services are sufficient and their bills are paid."

Bill W., 1957



Please consider putting \$2 in the basket.

Most importantly, KEEP COMING BACK!

We need you more than we need your money.

by Candace F @ Perry Street Workshop, NYC

SOMETIMES GOD  
WILL GIVE YOU EXACTLY  
WHAT YOU WANTED  
JUST TO SHOW YOU  
IT'S NOT AT ALL  
WHAT YOU NEEDED.

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For comments, suggestions, contributions ....please contact the editor.

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