



# BREAKTHROUGH

**\*\*Informing, Inspiring, Instructing\*\***

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS NORTHERN ILLINOIS, AREA 20, DISTRICT 42  
SERVING BURR RIDGE, CLARENDON HILLS, DARIEN, DOWNERS GROVE, HINSDALE, OAKBROOK, WESTMONT & WILLOWBROOK

## Growing Our Sobriety

### D.I.R.T. -- Doing It Right Today

Welcome to this month's Breakthrough Letter. Whether you're barely hanging on, or Quietly winning your battles, this message is for you.

#### D is for Doing

Doing the next right thing when everything In you wants to give up. It's rolling up Your sleeves and getting your hands dirty even when you don't feel like it. Real Change only happens through action.

#### I is for It.

It means showing up for your own recovery. It means choosing the meeting, the phone call, the honest conversation, the walk instead of the drink. The "it" is your life, and today you refuse to abandon it.

#### R is for Right.

Right means choosing the hard thing over the easy thing that used to destroy you. It's staying true when your head and heart are both screaming for relief. Doing it right isn't always pretty, but it's always honest.

#### T is for Today.

Today is all we're promised. Not forever, not perfect – just this day. This single moment where we plant our feet, breathe deep, and decide that no matter what yesterday looked like, today will be different.

In the dirt of our daily struggle, something powerful is growing. From these small faithful choices, strength is born, resilience takes root, and sobriety becomes our quiet victory.

From the members of the D.I.R.T. Crew - *Emily, Dave, Julie, Mary and Rodney*



***"One can choose to go back toward safety or forward toward growth. Growth must be chosen again and again; fear must be overcome again and again."***

- Abraham Maslow

## Our Members Share...



One of our members recently submitted an excellent (in my opinion) article about his experience with resentment. He gave me permission, as the Breakthrough Editor, to use what I felt appropriate. After numerous attempts to “edit” his article I realized I would be doing a disservice to him and the reader by attempting to shorten his message. So, I am going to print this over the next several issues. I hope you agree that Tom’s message is a powerful reflection on his experience with this challenge and that you enjoy his reflection. -- TC

### Resentment’s Kryptonite

A recent conversation with a friend about a resentment he was struggling with got me thinking about my own journey. His honesty reminded me how subtle and corrosive resentment can be — and how many times I’ve had to learn to **name it, claim it, and tame it**.

#### Name It

The first step is always awareness. I can’t get free from a resentment I don’t know I have. That might sound simple, but it’s often more than half the battle.

I’ve been sober for a long time and grew up in AA. I’m steeped in recovery culture — and sometimes, that familiarity becomes a trap. I know all the slogans: “Resentment is the number one offender.” I know it’s dangerous, toxic, a threat to my peace and sobriety. So I convince myself I don’t have any. “Oh, resentments are bad? Then I’m fine. I’ve risen above all that.”

But my resentments rarely look like resentments. They wear disguises. They masquerade as insight, truth, fairness, or justice. They present as “standing up for myself” or “protecting the innocent.” They show up wearing the mask of virtue — defending my family, my faith, or “the right way” to do AA. My resentments tell me I’m fighting hypocrisy or confronting bullies. They make me feel righteous and noble, not bitter and toxic.

That’s why it’s so hard to see them for what they are. When I’m convinced I’m defending something sacred, resentment feels justified — even holy.

But acting on resentment never brings justice. It promises fairness and healing, but it always delivers division and pain. It does not work.

A sponsor helps me see what I can’t. He’s not a guru or mystic — just someone who’s not me. Because my resentments are rarely invisible; they’re just invisible to me.

Over time, I’ve developed a few signs that help me recognize them:

If I daydream about someone being humiliated or hurt — I have a resentment.

If seeing them in my mind triggers anger or revenge fantasies — I have a resentment.

If I’m angry at God because they seem to be doing fine — I have a resentment.

If I imagine the apology they “owe me” — I have a resentment.

If I’m rallying allies against them — I have a resentment.

If I want to crush them in an argument — I have a resentment.

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***“Resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.”***

-- Saint Augustine

A few years ago, I was riding in the car with my sponsor, talking about one of my kids. She wanted to transfer schools because of a boy who "went too far" on a date. I didn't know the details, but I knew she was hurt and perhaps scared. I told my sponsor, "I'd like to find that guy and put a bullet in his head."

He just said, "That's a resentment you've got there."

And he was right.

Five minutes earlier, you could've hooked me up to a lie detector and asked if I had any resentments. I would've said "no" and passed the test. I didn't see it. I wasn't angry, I told myself — I was being a good dad. I wanted justice. And those things might even be true. But the fact that my resentment came from a "good place" didn't make it any less poisonous. It was still a resentment, and I needed to name it.

### **Claim It**

Once I've named it, I have to own it. That's the next step.

My resentment is mine to deal with. The focus has to shift from what they did to what I'm going to do about it. What kind of person do I want to be?

That doesn't mean I pretend I wasn't wronged. Some harms are real and undeniable: betrayal, abuse, death, injustice, tragedy. There are times when there truly are not "two sides." I'm not being asked to excuse evil. But even when I'm fully justified, the resentment still poisons me. -- *Tom H.*

.... to be continued in the July-August Breakthrough

### ***A member writes about finding hope and serenity in his group meeting***

My name is Emilio, and I am originally from Minnesota. Because of the spiritual tools of AA and the people who have shown me the way, my eyes, and thoughts and heart are trained toward gratitude rather than self pity today. I've come to trust that the next chapter of my life will bring new opportunities to grow to be of service and to enjoy this beautiful life. Never in my life could I have imagined I would find myself so useful, helping other people recover from the insanity of our disease. I knew it was in fact possible for me to be in the world of AA with my fellows and free of that pervasive feeling of loneliness. What the program gives me is a faith in a Higher Power that sustains and comforts me. AA doesn't mean I will have a life free of trials and tribulations, but what it does give me is a new approach and a new way to deal with life. When I first came to AA I was suffering from mental health issues as well as alcoholism, but I didn't realize it at the time.

I am thankful that once I was in recovery, my view of the situation changed. It's human nature to look to the outside for improvement or growth when often all you need is within you. It may simply require refocusing on what is truly important: that is to be sober no matter what the situation. I applied to AA class in DuPage County Jail. My first day I met Jeff and Buddy Love who are the instructors on Wednesday night for AA class. They have been my inspiration and are great amazing instructors. Adopting a positive attitude even when you are under pressure or the odds seem stacked against you nearly always assures a positive outcome and thinking of myself in a positive way. No matter what you face in life, approach it with a positive outlook. Consider what is true, honorable, right, pure, lovely and admirable about the situation or the person and go from there. Acceptance of the reality of any situation lead me to take accountability for my actions and as a result I have owned the mistakes of my past and now comprehend the word serenity and I finally have peace in my soul. Thank you to AA classes, and God Bless Jeff and Buddy Love for taking the time to share this amazing class of AA every Wednesday evening at the DuPage County Jail. -- *Emilio C.*

# MEETINGS AND EVENTS

For a list of Meetings , Service Opportunities

And Upcoming Events in District 42

Please Visit

[aa-nia-dist42.com](http://aa-nia-dist42.com)

## Women's Meetings

### Serendipity Group - Hybrid

Tuesdays 10 a.m.

New Day Center

740 Pasquinelli Drive, Suite 104

Westmont

Discussion

Zoom Meeting ID 5200041125

Password 1212

### Step into Sobriety -Remote

Thursday 10 am

12 steps and 12 traditions

Zoom Meeting ID 5200041125

Password 1212

### Thank God Women's Group Meeting

Fridays at 7 pm

Avenue Christian Church

5750 Holmes Ave.

Clarendon Hills (Enter Door #4)

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday: Big Book Topic

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday: Step Reading

5<sup>th</sup> Friday: Speaker and Food ☺



Dist. 42 Answering Service

630-387-9942

## Upcoming District 42 Workshops

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

1125 Franklin

Downers Grove,

10 am – 12 noon

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the Month

Please consider supporting these workshops by attending, and having your group volunteer to present a workshop.

Ask your group's GSR for details.

Consider sharing an article, or reflection :

**Articles**

**Are due by July 10<sup>th</sup>**

Send to:

[breakthrough@aa-nia-dist42.com](mailto:breakthrough@aa-nia-dist42.com)

## Monthly District Meeting

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month at 7:00 p.m.

**\*\*Service Opportunities Available\*\***

St. Andrews Episcopal Church

1125 Franklin St.

Downers Grove

*I AM RESPONSIBLE*

Argyle Sweater

Scott Hilburn



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## Bingo Night

Third Saturday of the Month

8:30 p.m.

Westmont Club



## Bowling

First Monday of Every Month

Tivoli Bowl

938 Warren Ave.

Downers Grove

6:30 until 8:00

