

## THE LOWERCASE A'S: AWARENESS & ACCEPTANCE



### **awareness**

*noun*

1. The state or condition of being aware; having knowledge; consciousness

*Synonyms:* cognizant, conscious, sensible, awake

“At the start, this was all we needed to commence spiritual growth, to effect our first conscious relation with God as we understood Him.”

*Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 47*

“Most of us think this awareness of a Power greater than ourselves is the essence of spiritual experience. Our more religious members call it ‘God-consciousness.’”

*Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Ed., p. 568*

*Continued on page 8*

#### **Step Ten**

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

#### **Tradition Ten**

Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

#### **Concept Ten**

Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority — the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description or by appropriate charters and bylaws.

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## **PUBLIC AWARENESS**

One of my service goals this year was to get out of my service bubble and explore committee work. Since April of this year, I've been regularly attending the area PI committee meetings. I was inspired by the fabulous workshop that the PI and CPC chairpersons presented to the entire area. After one sitting in the Public Information, I felt even more inspired. What did PI do, who did they work with or for and how could I be a part of it?

The sole purpose of PI is to carry the message to still suffering alcoholics, particularly to the general public. Some of the ways in which this is done is through health fairs, Public Service Announcements (PSA's), media exposure, including the internet, as well as, workshops. I had the pleasure of being able to volunteer at a health fair in August. This was a remarkable experience! In addition to hanging out with some new AA fellows, I got to carry the message to the public who isn't necessarily AA savvy. Not many people stopped by our booth and asked questions, but several people did take brochures. The need that I saw in this particular community was so blatantly clear, but just like me, it has to be when they are ready. It made me supremely grateful that I found Alcoholics Anonymous over 6 years ago. Without this program, I could still be one of those people in that devastatingly hopeless state of a perpetual alcoholic haze. I don't have to be that way today. Carrying the message instead of carrying my mess is by far a more fulfilling way to live the life that God envisioned for me.

The difference I've discovered in the last few months between carrying the message to a sponsee versus the general public is "awareness." A sponsee has already walked into the rooms and seen that there is a program that can help her/him; the general public isn't always aware there is that help. Being able to inform the public that there is a solution, there are places to go for help and there are people out there that understand what it's like. AA was here when I needed it. I want it to continue be here for the next alcoholic who needs it. Ensuring that our society continues is so vital. It's my way of giving back to all those that came before me and those that will come after me. In doing service to God and others, I am of service to myself. If I'm working for and with others, I get to stay sober today. I get to have a *place* to go when I need a solution. That's how AA was in the past, it's how it is in the present and I hope to continue to ensure that's how it is in the future.

In Service,  
Deborah G.

## **My First Experience at a Regional Forum**

It's always a wonderful time when I reunite with my friends in the Fellowship at any A.A. event. I have had the pleasure and opportunity to attend and participate in many assemblies, workshops, conventions and conferences since getting sober in 2012 and I have loved attending each and every one. The experiences keep getting better and better and I know I would not miss one of these events! I have learned so much about our Fellowship and have met so many wonderful people, it goes beyond words.

I wanted to share my most recent experience attending my first ever Regional Forum this past weekend, October 9-11<sup>th</sup> in St. Louis, MO. As DCM of District 52, my district graciously assisted with my funding to attend the Forum and I owe all the members a sincere thank you for the privilege to be able to serve. I was able to attend the Forum with many other members from our area including other DCMs, past delegates, our current delegate, Melissa R. and our Alternate Delegate, Ron C. as well as our Chair, Troy B. The sharing sessions were so informative and provided the opportunity to learn and hear from our trusted servants on what is happening at GSO, the Grapevine and with our General Service Board and Trustees.

The Forum offered all attendees a wide variety of interesting workshops and sharing sessions including "The Twelve Traditions", "Involving Young People in Service", "How to Grow Our Fellowship" and "Anonymity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century". I attended each presentation and also attended two of the workshops on Saturday night "Are We Reaching Minorities?: Race in A.A." and also the workshop presented by our current delegate, Melissa R., concerning the topic of "Communication: How We Can Better It with Technology?".

I had a wonderful time and highly recommend the Forums as a great way to introduce yourself to learning more about the current issues and concerns within our Fellowship. I took the opportunity to ask questions at the workshop and also introduced myself as a first time attendee to the Forum on Sunday morning. Everyone in our Fellowship was so supportive and very helpful. I urge anyone in our area who is serving or has the opportunity to serve in any capacity to attend the Regional Forum. It should not be missed! It will not only enhance your knowledge of A.A. but enrich your life!



Sincere Regards,  
Dana G.

DCM – District 52, SETA 97

# The Bright Spots

Awareness and acceptance do not always have to be a painful process for me anymore, it can be a new meaning of life! I will admit that when I found out my alternate was not going to be able to go to the Forum this year, I was sad for about a minute, we met the first time at a Forum and our paths have been intertwined ever since, we are family together, we travel well together, we have a work system down, we can cover a lot of service ground between the two of us, we both love coffee, we get inspired at a lot of the same things and we just have fun, but I was only sad for that minute because...God gave me a *first timer!* The big book talks about in "Working With Others" how our lives will take on a new meaning watching newcomers grow up right before our very eyes and become a part of and how we will not want to miss it, it will be the bright spot of our lives. These promises came true in my life at this year's Forum, I got to walk hand in hand with a first timer on each side of me, in front of me and behind me, I love being right smack in the middle of this new life I have been given. There is a reoccurring situation in my life that I wish I could change, but as it goes can only change my attitude and reactions to it. It seems that almost every time I go to a Regional Forum or SWRAASA, I have buried someone close to me. I would scream at God why or cry to Him that I could not take any more emotional pain and that please oh please just let me stay home and grieve there...by myself. This year unfortunately was no exception, but because of my personal experiences at the recent Assembly and Forum, I understand the role these opportunities play in my life. I became fully aware of the importance my attitude plays in the quality of my life and those closest to me, it helps me accept that for me I grieve at home with my family, I grieve at meetings with God and my home group, I grieve with my best girlfriends over coffee, but I heal when I am serving Alcoholics Anonymous, I become whole when I walk into an Area Assembly and Regional Forum and the fellowship I have grown up in is smiling at me giving away free hugs, I feel alive with purpose when I catch a glimpse of the first timer helping another member with her experience, strength and hope or standing with God through the tears qualifying herself for a position to serve. I smile when we get on the plane first thing Friday morning and my first timer blessing is beside herself with joy because she is sitting across from a member of D90 ON THE SAME PLANE, I laugh when she realizes that she can answer one of the questions from the sharing sessions on her own and I want to cry with gratitude when I see the pride put into wanting to serve their District and Area well. My life takes on a new meaning when I let God turn an opportunity into a privilege, replace the loss of a family member with a new member of my AA family, my life takes on a new meaning when I sit in big ballrooms knowing that God grew this AA family up around me because He knew that I would need to sit in the middle of them all so they could help heal my grieving heart, by serving Alcoholics Anonymous together hand in hand. He knew that life changing circumstances would happen to me and that if I can be aware of the solutions available to me the acceptance of unchangeable events do not have to be painful for life, but the new meaning my life will take on will be lifelong. Thank you District 40 for making my opportunity to serve our Area and my trip to the 2015 Regional Forum possible, I am extremely grateful to have been given this privilege to gain awareness and acceptance of the many bright spots shining in my heart.

Michelle H.  
D40 DCM

## District 40 GSR Official Meeting Minutes Southeast Area Alcoholics Anonymous

August 11, 2015

**Call to Order:** Serenity Prayer, Preamble and Unity Declaration

**Tradition VII/Concept VII:** reading and summation by

**Volunteers for next month:** Tradition VIII/Concept VIII will be Betsy K. and Pam F.

### Introduction of Attendees:

**Ana D.** (D40 Secretary, Area 67 Newsletter Chair); **Betsy G.** (Past D40 DCM, Past Area 67 Delegate, God Meeting Group); **Betsy K.** (GSR, Katy Big Book); **Beverly H.** (Alt. GSR, Bear Creek Fellowship); **Bill A.** (Alt. GSR, Breaking the Chains); **Chanse D.** (Houston Bid for WACYPA); **Cheryl B.** (Katy Crossroads Group); **Cindy M.** (D40 Correctional Facilities Chair, Area 67 CFC Secretary, Katy Big Book); **Cletus B.** (GSR, Rule 62 Group); **Corrie H.** (D40 Alt DCM, Katy Big Book Group); **Deborah G.** (D40 Newsletter Chair, Katy 164); **Jackie S.** (GSR, Bear Creek Fellowship); **Jeff S.** (Alt. GSR, Post Oak Group); **Jeffrey L.** (GSR, MNMSS); **Karen N.** (Alt. GSR, Katy Primary Purpose Group); **Kate L.** (Alt. GSR, Broad Highway); **Kaylee S.** (GSR, Broad Highway); **Kelly S.** (GSR, West Houston Group); **Marianne O.** (GSR, Katy 12 & 12); **Melissa M.** (Alt. GSR, Memorial Going Home Group); **Michelle H.** (D40 DCM, Katy Big Book Group); **Mike W.** (D40 Treasurer, God Meeting Group); **Pam F.** (D40 Treatment Facilities Chair, Katy Big Book); **Richard B.** (GSR, First Light Group); **Robin K.** (GSR, Simply AA); **Sunshine P.** (GSR, Spring Shadows Group); **Tom B.** (Alt. GSR, D40 Archives Chair, West Houston Group)

### Normal Business:

1. **Secretary's Report** – Accepted as written.
2. **Treasurer's Report** – Accepted as submitted.

### Committee Reports:

- a. **Archives** – No report.
- b. **Coffee Committee** – All is good in the world of coffee. Coffee is good.
- c. **Correctional Facilities Committee – CFC** – Cindy M.
  - Went to the Annual Round Up held at Intergroup. The food, fellowship & speakers were great. What struck me was that there were the same group of people involved there as well as at the SETA CFC functions. Someone who's been involved over 15 years in corrections work said that this is the most cooperation between the groups they have ever seen and it is heartwarming

& becoming very effective. Speaking for myself, I believe we must be able to cooperate amongst ourselves to truly know how to cooperate outside of AA. Makes me all warm & fuzzy inside to see the change.

- First ever CCS/Pre-Release Workshop held at the Post Oak Club on 8/8. It was incredibly organized. The Panel participants were highly experienced & informative. We are definitely thinking about having an annual workshop on that CFC volunteer portion in the future.
- The annual CFC Conference is the weekend of 9/11. I volunteered to get a group or a bunch of people to host the Saturday 11:30 - ? Luncheon hospitality room 516. I would also like to ask if it's possible to donate part of the CFC Budget to food. I'm also trying to get history on how/why the Conference started. Hopefully, next month I'll have some info.

d. **Grapevine** – OPEN – A subscription challenge is going on right now. Look at flyers for more information. Writing articles is a part of helping!!!

e. **Intergroup** – Several workshops and events have been held at Intergroup. It is about 2 years' worth of events that have been held. Coming up a trustee will be elected. Oct 4<sup>th</sup> trustees will be elected for the Intergroup Bard. If anyone is interested, an application can be completed and submitted to Intergroup.

f. **Information Technology – IT** – Assumed role of District 40 IT Rep at July 2015 Meeting. Richard attended the SETA IT meeting via telephone Saturday July 25<sup>th</sup> 2015. Richard was appointed Alternate Support Role for SETA IT Committee

g. **Literature** – Sharon S.

- Kathleen T, literature chair opened with statement that our job is to promote reading of literature and general service office is funded in part by sale of literature. We are to attend group conscience meetings at various groups and explain literature.



## District 40 GSR Official Meeting Minutes Southeast Area Alcoholics Anonymous

- Kathleen proposed compiling a hard copy book with pamphlets in one central location. It was decided the idea would be cost prohibitive and they should be responsible for sale of each will not go forward.
  - Tammy brought up the fact she was responsible at this assembly to purchase literature and bring it in for sale...She feels this assembly not the venue to sell the literature and sales were low. Kathleen will check to see if the host district is responsible for the literature or if she as area literature chair should be...matter was tabled.
  - The question was posed as to whether or not we would want to revise the current brochure "Do you think you are different" because it might be divisive. The proposal to seek a revision was voted down.
  - We to read 5 or 6 pamphlets before the next assembly so we may discuss.
- b. Newsletter** – Thanks to all those that wrote into the newsletter on their experience on the Traditions dinner and the International convention. There were two exceptional articles; one from our actual speaker from the Traditions dinner who had the most unique point of view and the other from a woman who just recently was released from a “gated community” that attended the International convention. September’s newsletter topic will be on slogans. “Think. Think. Think.”, “Let Go and Let Go” etc. All those familiar slogans we hear and see in meetings, share about your feelings and/or experience in how they have played into your sobriety.
- c. Public Information/Cooperation with Professional Community – PI/CPC**
- Jim B. said he would discuss this topic at the district level and let them know that we are available and let district attendees take the info to meetings to see if there is any interest in our presenting what we do and how we do it. Hopefully to build our committee and see if anyone knows of a need for our services.
  - Jim B. was at a health fair this a.m. and gave several people in positions to help alcoholics learn about AA a flyer with our phone # 713-834-3880.
  - Several committee members want to put to a vote the idea of moving our PI/CPC monthly meeting to the morning of the last Saturday of the month.
- Due to a conflict at the Spring Branch Club for our September PI/CPC meeting, it was voted on and approved that we will meet at the Cracker Barrel Restaurant at I-10 and Barker Cypress at 9 a.m. Saturday, September 26, 2015.
  - Our August meeting will occur as normal on the last Saturday in Aug at the Spring Branch Club at One PM
- d. Treatment Facilities Committee – TFC**– Working on BTG contact information sheets. Please turn in any sheets you have to me. If you need additional sheets please see me after the meeting.

### Current Items:

1. Area TFC Committee Presentation – Pam F.  
History of TFC was provided which is really interesting. The job of the committee is to take a meeting or information requested by the treatment facilities in our area. Bridge the Gap is a program where volunteers sign up to greet the patients when they leave the facilities. Be the first contact and take them to meetings. Introduce them to others in meetings to help them out. Working on special needs to target individuals who need a meeting but to do not have the resources due to their limitations.
2. Gratitude Dinner Report – Deborah G.
  - The committee met on July 16th at 6:30pm at the SBMC. Flyers were distributed in both English and Spanish.
  - The Alternate Delegate Ron C. is working to get commitments from all of the other districts to provide assistance with set-up, break down, sides, appetizers and desserts. There are only 8 out of 17 districts that have not yet committed. Ron will be meeting with them before our next committee meeting.
  - As previously reported, the main dish will be a combination of turkey and ham. I am still in the process of pricing options but my best guess at this time is to request the same as last year, \$900. Currently \$300 is budgeted for the GD but I am also requesting GSR's go back to their groups to ask for donations.
  - A bilingual speaker is confirmed, Ms. Yolanda Flores, Regional Trustee from San Antonio.
  - Motion was made to increase the budget from \$300 to \$900, motion was passed.

## District 40 GSR Official Meeting Minutes Southeast Area Alcoholics Anonymous

- Open Positions...
  - Secretary
  - Parking Coordinator
  - Registration Coordinator
  - A/V Coordinator
- Outstanding items at this time....
  - IT Equipment
  - Event Agenda
  - Site Plan
  - Job descriptions
  - Committee
  - Displays
- The next meeting is August 20, 2015 @ 6:30pm at SBMC. Everyone is Welcome!!

### 1. Regional Forum Lottery – Michelle H.

Corrie will not be able to attend Regional Forum this year and a lottery was held for trustees to win this lovely opportunity. Congratulations Deborah G. for winning!!!

### 2. Job Descriptions – Corrie H.

Job descriptions are available for anyone looking to serve in one of our open positions. If anyone is interested there are several copies available just ask Corrie or Michelle.

### 3. Open Alternate Positions – Michelle H.

Asked anyone if they are interested to go back and pray on whether they would like to serve in one of these positions.

### 4. Workshop Topics – Michelle H.

Topics were provided and emailed. Everyone was asked if D40 would like to hold a workshop in the fall. It was decided to hold it early next year possibly in January. GSRs were asked to discuss these topics and ask for feedback on what they would like to see or provide other topics that are of interest. This will remain on the agenda for now.

- a. Have people to bring back the meeting on topic
- b. Pull them aside and talk to them about it.
- c. Suggest that they also attend a discussion meeting so they can have that format available.
- d. Remind them about the preamble to keeping it on topic
- e. Putting in the preamble “to keep it in the solution”
- f. Hold a mini workshop on how to chair/lead a meeting.

### Group News:

1. Chansé introduced himself and discussed WACYPA and the want to have this conference

here in Houston. They are currently looking to help out in the community.

2. Katy 164 – Requested suggestions on how to get the a Big Book & 12 & 12 Study back on topic at their meetings. Suggestions were provided:
  - a. Having a timer

### Announcements:

- **69<sup>th</sup> Texas State Convention:** August 14 – 16, Midland Center, 105 N. St. Midland, TX 79701
- **34<sup>th</sup> D90 Convention:** August 14 – 16, Holiday Inn Hotel, Beaumont Plaza, 3950 I-10 S. @ Walden Rd. Beaumont, TX.
- **D10 Monthly Service Manual Study:** August 25<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm, First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin St, Houston, TX.

“This ability to laugh at yourselves to accept the puncturing of your own self importance is one of the basic steps in A.A. I believe — of course it makes every individual more livable and lovable whether alcoholic or not. What little I have been able to absorb made life much simpler for me, I know.”

*Ruth Hock*

*Alcoholics Anonymous' 1st Secretary*





# THE LOWERCASE A'S: AWARENESS & ACCEPTANCE

Continued from page 1

## **acceptance**

*noun*

1. The action of consenting to receive or undertake something offered.
2. The action or process of being received as adequate or suitable, typically to be admitted into a group.

*Synonyms:* confirmation, receipt, undertaking, adoption

“We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were alcoholics.”

*Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 30*

“Afterward, we found ourselves accepting many things which then seemed entirely out of reach.”

*Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 47*

“Because it was only through feeling defeat and feeling failure, the inability to cope with my life and with alcohol, that I was able to surrender and accept the fact that I had this disease, and that I had to learn to live again without alcohol.”

*Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Ed., p. 295*

## **DISTRICT SERVANTS**

**DCM**  
Michelle H.  
[dcm-40@aa-seta.org](mailto:dcm-40@aa-seta.org)

**Alternate DCM**  
Corrie H.  
[dcm-40-alt@aa-seta.org](mailto:dcm-40-alt@aa-seta.org)

**Secretary**  
Ana D.

**Alt. Secretary**  
OPEN

**Treasurer**  
Mike W.

**Alt. Treasurer**  
OPEN

**Grapevine Chair**  
OPEN

**Literature Chair**  
OPEN

**IT Representative**  
Richard B.

**Treatment Facilities Chair**  
Pam F.

**PI/CPC Committee Chair**  
Jim B.

**Correctional Facilities Chair**  
Cindy M.

**Intergroup Liaison**  
OPEN

**Newsletter Editor**  
Deborah G.

**Multi-Lingual Chair**  
Meagan V.

**Coffee Chair**  
Betsy K.

**Archives Chair**  
Tom B.



## Upcoming Events

### **D51 Service Fair**

October 24, 2015, 11:30-2:00  
The Delta Club

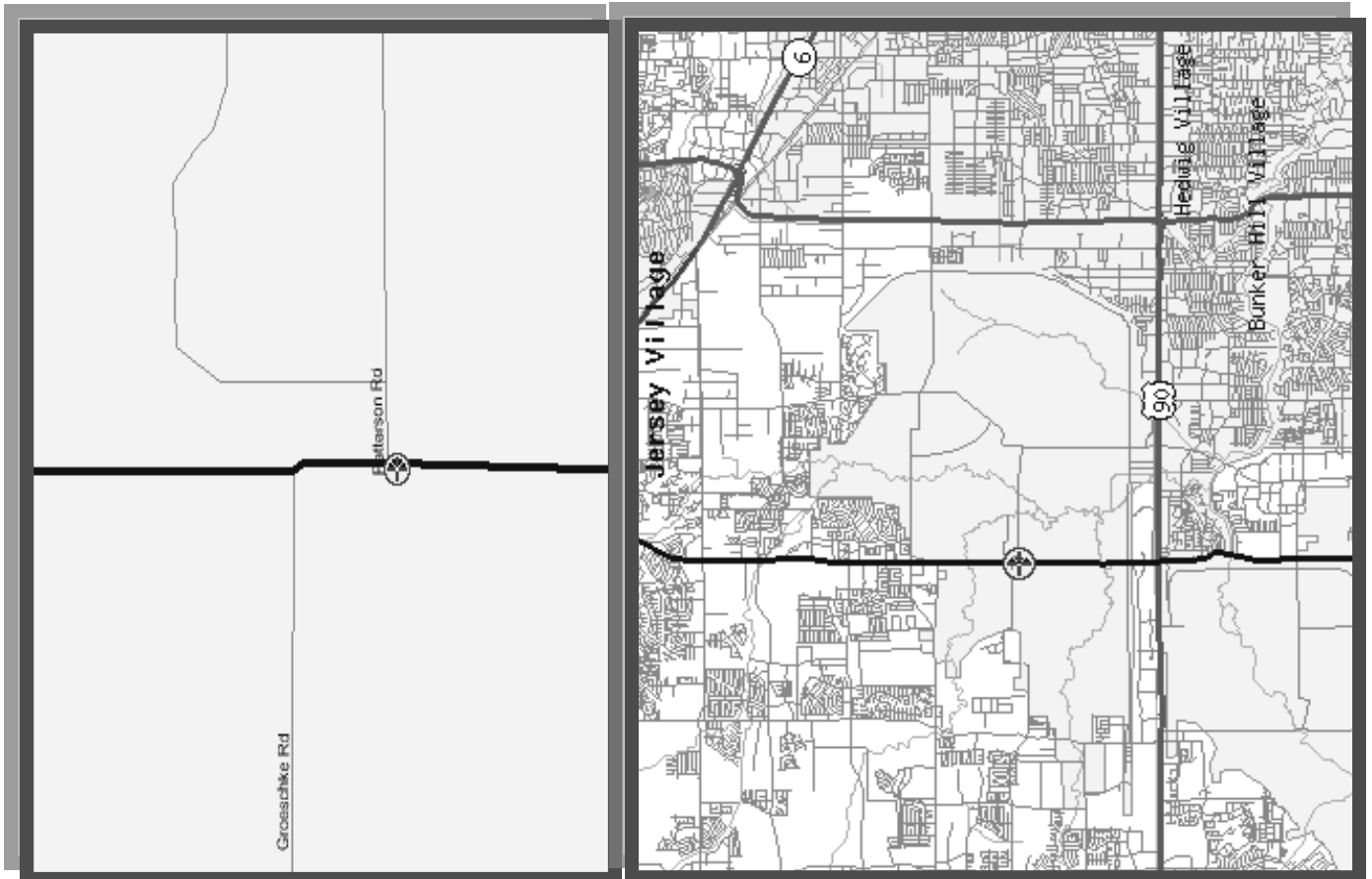
### **D40 PI/CPC Meeting**

October 31, 2015, 9:00 am  
Spring Branch Memorial Club

*\*See flyers on SETA/Intergroup Websites*

The first step  
toward change  
is awareness.  
The second  
step is  
acceptance.

Nathaniel Branden





If you have a story, quote, cartoon, or image you would like to see published in the District 40 News, please send it to [dcm-40@aa-seta.org](mailto:dcm-40@aa-seta.org)

THE NEXT DISTRICT MEETING IS  
**NOVEMBER 10, 2015**

**AT 7:00 PM**

District 40 meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 7:00 PM—9:00 PM at the Bear Creek Community Center 3055 Bear Creek Drive, Houston, Texas 77084

| Committee   | Meeting Time   | Location  | Area Assembly*               |
|---|--|---|------------------------------|
| Archives  | 1st Saturday of the month at 10:00 AM                          | 521 N. Sam Houston Pkwy East, Suite 215 Houston, TX 77060   | Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM |
| Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) | 1st Monday of the month at 7:30 P.M.                           | Houston Council On Alcohol And Drugs 303 Jackson Hill Houston, TX 77007   | Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM |
| Correctional Facilities (CFC)                     | 3rd Wednesday of every month from 7:30-9:00 PM                 | The Delta Club 6400 Westpark Dr, Suite 355 Houston, TX 77057  | Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM |
| Grapevine   | 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:30 PM                           | The Delta Club 6400 Westpark Dr, Suite 355 Houston, TX 77057  | Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM |
| Intergroup  | 3rd Thursday of every other month at 8:00 PM                   | 4140 Directors Row, Suites D & E, Houston, Texas, 77092   | -                            |
| Internet Technologies (IT)                        | 4th Saturday of the month from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM             | Spring Branch Memorial Club 1200 Blalock, Suite 378, Room C   | Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM |
| Literature  | -  | -   | Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM |
| Mult-Lingual                                      | 1st Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM                          | District 66 5645 Hilcroft Suite 410 Houston, TX 77036   | Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM |
| Public Information (PI)                           | 3rd Monday of the month at 7:15 PM (Except on Assembly months) | Houston Council On Alcohol And Drugs 303 Jackson Hill Houston, TX 77007   | Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM |
| Treatment Facilities (TFC)                        | -  | -   | Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM |
| District 40 PI/CPC Committee                      | Last Saturday of the month from 1:00-3:00 PM                   | Spring Branch Memorial Club 1200 Blalock, Suite 378, Room C   | -                            |
| PI/CPC Phone #713-834-3880                        |  | *Area Assembly meets in the months of April, July and October at Sheraton North Houston 15700 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Houston, TX 77032; January Assembly meets at the SETA Annual Convention. Location TBA. |                              |

**SETA and Intergroup Committee Meeting Times**

**Just Starting a group in District 40 and wish to add it to this newsletter?**



Send group information, location and meeting times to [SETA-40@aa-seta.org](mailto:SETA-40@aa-seta.org) and [intergroup@aahouston.org](mailto:intergroup@aahouston.org). You may also contact Intergroup at 713-686-6300.