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**President's Message**  
**Steve King**  
**2016 MCA President**

Greetings MCA Members:

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your MCA president. It's an honor to serve this organization that has given me so many friendships and provided me with such a feeling of camaraderie over the years.

A lot of evolution in the field of corrections has occurred since our fine association was formed in 1933. We have evolved as a profession and as an organization but the area that has remained static is the necessity to foster and maintain relationships. Relationships and our ability to sustain them are critical to excelling and surviving in the world of corrections. Sure we now are aided by the advent of desktop computers, smart phones, and data bases designed solely on our behalf and for the benefit of our work. We also have in place evidence based practices. These developments were not available back 28 years ago when my career began. Through the use of technology, valid risk assessments and web based systems we now have greater ability to track offenders and obtain information from our partners outside of our counties and institutions. But what remains crucial to good corrections is still the relationships we develop with our offenders, peers and other professionals in law enforcement and the courts. Without good solid relationships, our effectiveness is greatly diminished.

Relationships are the backbone of MCA. This business of ours can be rough sometimes. We need the support of our peers and others in our professional circles to get through some of the tougher days. I can attest that my longevity in corrections is a direct result of relationships I've built and stumbled into along the way.

A great way to create a supporting environment for yourself is by investing your time and effort in MCA. I encourage all members to challenge themselves to become involved with this



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**Steve King**

[stevek@co.mower.mn.us](mailto:stevek@co.mower.mn.us)

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**Sara Eischens**

[sarah.eischens@state.mn.us](mailto:sarah.eischens@state.mn.us)

**Vice President**

**Connie Hartwig**

[connie.hartwig@state.mn.us](mailto:connie.hartwig@state.mn.us)

**Secretary**

**Robyn Wood**

[wood.robyn@co.olmsted.mn.us](mailto:wood.robyn@co.olmsted.mn.us)

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[Jennifer.Guse@blueearthcountymn.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Guse@blueearthcountymn.gov)

**Past President/Awards Committee**

**Michelle Smith, Chair**

[michelle.smith@state.mn.us](mailto:michelle.smith@state.mn.us)

**Education & Training Committee**

**Ryan Busch, Co-Chair**

[ryan.busch@co.wright.mn.us](mailto:ryan.busch@co.wright.mn.us)

**Jonathan Rowe, Co-Chair**

[rjonathan.lee.rowe@state.mn.us](mailto:rjonathan.lee.rowe@state.mn.us)

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**Amy Moeckel, Co-Chair**

[amy.moeckel@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:amy.moeckel@co.ramsey.mn.us)

**Dan Raden, Co-Chair**

[dan.raden@state.mn.us](mailto:dan.raden@state.mn.us)

**Juvenile Justice Committee**

**Jane Schmid, Chair**

[jane.schmid@co.brown.mn.us](mailto:jane.schmid@co.brown.mn.us)

**Legislative/Adult Justice Committee**

**Mark Bliven, Chair**

[mark.bliven@state.mn.us](mailto:mark.bliven@state.mn.us)

**Legislative Liaison**

**Calvin Saari**

[SISUwithSAARI@aol.com](mailto:SISUwithSAARI@aol.com)

**Membership Committee**

organization. There are several fine committees in our midst that meet regularly throughout the state and accomplish great work while having fun and building lasting relationships.

Currently we have an opening for a Student Services chair position on the MCA board. To inquire about this position please call me at 507-438-0599 or send me an email at [stevek@co.mower.mn.us](mailto:stevek@co.mower.mn.us) and let the fun begin.

Take Care,  
Steve King  
President  
MCA 2016



### Legislative Affairs

**Cal Saari**

**MCA Legislative Liaison**

With this being the first legislative report to you in 2016, I want to just take a moment to wish you all a Very Happy New Year! I'm sure we are all quite happy to have the hustle and bustle of the Holiday Season behind us so we can now really focus on our challenges for the new year. As you all know, the Minnesota Legislature will not meet as a full body until the opening session scheduled for Tuesday, March 8th.

This is usually a "short session" being the second year of the biennium, and is usually set to be a bonding year. 2016 will indeed be a short session as the Legislature must officially adjourn by May 17th, which leaves only about ten weeks to conduct business (and with an Easter break in the middle of it). We are quite sure there will be a bonding bill which will consume a lot of time. Bonding for Minnesota's needs is a top priority, but getting to a bonding package that all parties can agree to is a difficult task. Governor Dayton recently announced his bonding proposal to the public. Next both major political parties, the DFL and the Republicans will form their own bonding proposals and hopefully the Legislature can mold all proposals into a financial package that can gain majority votes in both the House and Senate and the approval of the Governor. It appears the state budget surplus is going to play a role in these deliberations as well as there has been no shortage of comments on how the surplus should be handled, and several Republicans have already taken a hard stance that some of the surplus must be used in lieu of bonding and borrowing more money for projects.

**Dayna Burmeister, Co-Chair**  
[dayna.burmeister@state.mn.us](mailto:dayna.burmeister@state.mn.us)  
**Dan Kempf, Co-Chair**  
[dan.kempf@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:dan.kempf@co.hennepin.mn.us)

**Nomination Committee**

**Laura Anderson, Chair**  
[laura.a.anderson@state.mn.us](mailto:laura.a.anderson@state.mn.us)

**Sponsorship Committee**

**Mark Groves, Chair**  
[mark.groves@voamn.org](mailto:mark.groves@voamn.org)

**Student Services Committee**

**Technology Committee**

**David Heath, Chair**  
[heathd@stlouiscountymn.gov](mailto:heathd@stlouiscountymn.gov)

**Administrative Manager**

**Debbie Beltz**  
[mca-mn@hotmail.com](mailto:mca-mn@hotmail.com)

2016 is actually not a budget year as the two year state budget was approved last year, and the budget is just normally adjusted in the second year of the biennium based on a number of factors, but there are plenty of proposals on the use of the budget surplus that will surely consume a majority of the Legislator's efforts. We need to also keep in mind that budget projections will again be made next month and certainly will show a slightly different take on the surplus as economic conditions have an enormous impact on the revenue amount.

Although the Legislature doesn't officially begin for another five weeks, the Committee work has been ongoing with several Committee's conducting regular hearing on proposals during the interim and then we have various Task Forces and Commissions tackling specific items which they hope will result in legislative proposals for consideration this Session. I want to comment on two of these in this report.

First, the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines Commission has been very active for the past several months and on December 30, 2015, they voted and approved new guidelines to reduce sentences for certain drug crimes in Minnesota, especially for first-time offenders. The amendments allow Judges and prosecutors to use mitigating factors to reduce sentences for people with addiction issues, and they also add several new aggravating factors, such as selling drugs to a minor or possessing or selling drugs in a broad geographic area, which can lead to a longer sentence. The new drug sentencing guidelines makes significant changes to the grid and is estimated that it will save 523 prison beds by 2020. The action by the Sentencing Guidelines Commission is effective August, 2016, unless the Minnesota Legislature takes formal action to change that. This action has been strongly opposed by Minnesota County Attorney's Association and the Minnesota Police and Peace Officer's Association. I've spent time talking with several legislative staff people and with a few Legislative Committee leaders about this, but I haven't sensed any great urgency or desire to address the changes at this point. There is a bill, SF 773, which does make changes to the guidelines which proposes to lessen prison sentences and falls somewhere between the current guidelines and newly approved grid by the Commission. We'll keep a watchful eye on this matter to see if the Legislature makes an effort to address this.

There is also the Joint Senate/House Committee on Reducing the Prison Population, which has been conducting several hearing on how to address this issue, and which continues to meet without a specific plan in place. Co-Chairs Senator Ron Latz and Rep. Tony Cornish have indicated they intend to have a proposal presented in the Session based on this Committee's recommendations.

Secondly, one of the legislative agenda items we have worked on in the past few years, the juvenile life without parole issue, has also been the topic of special attention this month. We and our collaborating partners thought we had this bill passed last year, but it ended up getting deleted from the final omnibus bill, so we agreed this would be one of our priority items for the current Session. Now, just this past Monday the US Supreme Court issued a ruling on this mandating that juveniles committed for murder must be considered for parole or given a new sentence. The ruling greatly expands the court's landmark Miller vs. Alabama decision that said sentences of mandatory life without parole for juveniles was

unconstitutional and amounted to cruel and unusual punishment. This new ruling extends to juveniles sentenced before the 2012 ruling. Minnesota currently has eight juveniles in prison under this statute. This should provide the impetus to change Minnesota language this year.

I'm hearing bits and pieces of information related to public pensions again, concern about protecting current public pensions, and other proposals to improve formulas, but nothing to specifically address early retirement. We'll be watching the work of the Pension Commission again this year to see how their proposals impact our membership, and we'll keep you posted.

One thing is for sure -although it will be a short Session, there will be plenty for us to work on. Please let me know of your interests and concerns, and thank you so much for your support!



## Capitol Hill Day 2016

Presented by:

Minnesota Corrections Association

Minnesota Association of Community Corrections Act Counties

Minnesota Association of County Probation Officers

Minnesota Community Corrections Association



We are pleased to announce a collaborative MCA/MACCAC/MACPO/MCCA Legislative Update workshop. This forum provides members information on what is being addressed during the current legislative session. This is an excellent opportunity to ask questions about our state of affairs. We invite you to attend this notable event to find out what's in store and learn how various state departments, county agencies and other social services organizations are dealing with changes. What are the legislative actions that could affect the work we all do in the future? Come and join us, ask a few questions, find some answers and, help generate ideas and discussion.

### Guest Presenters will include:

- **Mark Bliven**, Community Notification Supervisor, MN Department of Corrections and Chair of the MCA Legislative Committee
- **Lisa Franette**, MACPO lobbyist
- **Mark Haase**, Vice President for Council on Crime and Justice
- **Kathleen Lonergan**, Government Relations Director for the MN Department of Corrections
- **Tom Roy**, DOC Commissioner of Corrections
- **Cal Saari**, MCA Legislative Liaison
- **Invited Legislators:** Tony Cornish, Debra Hillstrom, Brian Johnson, Heldon Johnson, Ron Latz, John Lesch, Warren Limmer

**Date:** Tuesday, March 1, 2016  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
**Location:** Pung Training Room, Minnesota Department of Corrections Central Office,  
1450 Energy Park Drive, St. Paul, Minnesota (West Entrance, second floor)  
**Registration:** Register on line at [www.mn-ca.org](http://www.mn-ca.org).

**This Workshop is FREE!**



**Tech Talk**  
**David Heath**  
**Technology Committee Chair**

### **Best of 2016 Consumer Electronics Show**

Once again, the 2016 Consumer Electronic Show (CES) in Las Vegas January 6<sup>th</sup> through the 9<sup>th</sup> provided a glimpse of the technological future. The CES show is the premier technology show in the USA and is a huge event (32 Football Fields of show space), presenting every gadget and high tech device in the modern world. This year's show ranged from small gadgets to automobiles and everything in between.

Typically, to sort out this plethora of information, evaluations from two top companies covering the show are helpful. Digital Trends and Engadget, both have a large presence at the show, with Engadget serving as the official judge.

Personally, I prefer the Digital Trend review because they have some interesting categories. Here are links to both companies and their winners.

<http://www.digitaltrends.com/ces/top-tech-of-ces-2016-award-winners/>

<http://www.engadget.com/2016/01/08/presenting-the-best-of-ces-2016-winners/>

This year they both picked an electric car for the best in show.

**Chevy Bolt** seemed to impress both parties with a 200 mile range and the ability to reach an 80% charge rate in fifteen minutes. It also is affordable compared to electric cars in the past coming in at about 30K.

**Here are more award winners:**

**Best Robot or Drone:** Yuneec Typhoon H drone was awarded for it's ability not to crash into things. It has something called Real Sense technology built into it making it up to the task. **Awarded by Engadget.**

**Best Offbeat Product:** [EHang 184](#) is a drone capable of carrying a person aboard and was also **awarded by Engadget**. This drone will fly at 60mph with an altitude of 11,000 feet and is pre-programmed by the pilot where to fly before take-off. I think this will take a long, time to pass avionic inspections by the FAA before it's allowed to fly. It's an interesting concept for sure, but experience with my former employer, Duluth based airplane manufacturer, Cirrus Design, tells me this is a ways out. Producing innovative passenger aircraft and being allowed to sell and fly it is not easy. I am guessing they are plenty interested in the concept though. It's bound to happen someday and it might very well be the flying car many have imagined.

**Computing:** OLED display on laptops is coming out this year and **Digital Trends** picked the Lenovo –X1-yoga as the best laptop. They say the improvement in the OLED screens are noticeably apparent.

**Best TV Product:** [LG OLED G6](#): A repeat winner from last year, LG had the most impressive TV, winning the **award by Engadget** for the best picture at the show.

**Photography:** Livestream Movi live-event camera is a **Digital Trends** winner which is a pocket size video camera with a technology called Movi which takes citizen broadcasting to the next level. You can edit the film as you shoot and it will be good for citizen reporting or self expression on mediums like a YouTube video.

**Sports & Fitness:** FITGuard Head-Injury awareness mouth guard awarded by **Digital Trends**. This mouth guard is designed to measure impacts and the probability of concussions. LED's in the mouth guard will flash green, blue or red, measuring the impact and the probability of injury. Flashing red would be a hard hit with a high probability of injury. Green a light hit and blue moderate. It is designed for trainers and coaches to pull a player from a game even if the player says their okay. Hopefully that reading is an accurate diagnosis, if they pull the star player in a big game. I'm sure there will be some controversy if it's ever used in college or professional sports. However, every sports level is trying to control concussions, and it could become the new concussion protocol for prevention even in the big leagues. You never know.

**Home Appliance:** Marathon Laundry Machine won for **Digital Trends** and is a washer and dryer built into one machine. No need to move the clothes anymore to the dryer. Just wash them and it automatically dries them too, saving space and work in the laundry room.

**Best Startup:** Owlet a product awarded by **Engadget**, is a baby bootie an infant wears that can monitor heart rate and oxygen levels. A wearable designed to save lives.

**Cool Tech:** The [Genworth R70i Exoskeleton aging simulator](#) won the award for **Digital Trends**. If you want to feel old and arthritic with hearing loss, bad vision and deteriorating muscle mass, this is the exoskeleton for you. It simulates being old and is designed to create empathy for the elderly. Most exoskeletons are designed to make you stronger and faster which is why this is innovative. This technology might help care givers understand the challenges some senior citizens face. With tons of baby boomers getting old soon, this may help younger caretakers give them a break when their struggling to move about.

Check out the Web links at the top of the article for the whole story on all these products and more.

## **Juvenile Justice Committee**

**Jane Schmid**  
**Committee Chair**

### **Juvenile Justice 21**

I am happy to announce that MCA has received funding, through the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, to continue the work we began in 2014 with *Juvenile Justice 21: A Roadmap for Minnesota Juvenile Justice in the 21st Century*. In 2014 we brought over 450 juvenile justice professionals from across the state together to help create a report and recommendations for changes to Minnesota's juvenile delinquency policies and practices. (The report can be found on the MCA website under the Juvenile Justice 21 Project tab.) We identified six issue areas that need more in depth review and recommendations: family support; diversion, alternatives to detention and reentry; mental health; school collaboration; child welfare collaboration; and collateral consequences of delinquency records. The continuation of *Juvenile Justice 21* will continue these efforts through more focused research, stakeholder convening, and providing toolkits and recommendations in each issue area. We will focus on two issues each year, so the project will take three years provided funding continues. We will continue to contract with Mark Haase as Project Manager, and the MCA Juvenile Justice Committee will help to guide the project. Please let me know if you have any questions and look for more information soon as the project gets underway.

## **Training and Education Committee**

**Jon Rowe and Ryan Busch**  
**Co-Chairs**

We would like to thank the MCA Board of Directors for your continued support of our dedicated committee and the many committee members that help make these trainings well attended. We had another successful year of trainings in 2015 and are now in full swing of planning the 2016 MCA Spring Training.

### ***Emerging Drug Trends - What's Happening from Use to Treatment!***

**March 31, 2016**

**Rasmussen College, Mankato, MN**

We hope you join us in learning more about new drug concerns, chemical dependency treatment techniques, and current drug trends (bath salts, plant foods, synthetics, dabs, medical marijuana, etc.). See the MCA website for additional information. The event will be held on **March 31, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:45 p.m., at the Rasmussen College in Mankato, MN**. Registration is open on the MCA website at [www.mn-ca.org](http://www.mn-ca.org). We have a full line-up of speakers to present. Please don't forget to stop by the multiple vendors to connect. Lunch will also be provided.



## **Sponsorship Committee**

**Mark Grove**

### **What the . . . . ? : Successfully Managing Difficult Conversations**

**What's it been, two, maybe three years? As many of you know, I was a regular contributor to the Forum newsletter. I enjoyed writing humorous ditties about something or another that tickled my fancy. I took a little breather. I've been really busy and my creative juices took a break as well. Whelp! I'm back on the MCA Board for a one-year stint as the Sponsorship chair. I was chatting with Connie Hartwig last week and asked if she'd be interested in some article contributions. She said, "sure." I'm a big fan of Motivational Interviewing (MI). It's pretty darned effective and it's fun to practice. Do it correctly and you never get stuck, irritated or lost. Conducting MI makes everything easier. Conversations flow.**

**I know how incredibly busy we are; how incredibly difficult it is to keep up with our continuing MI skill practice. So . . . . I thought I'd devote 2016 to writing about some different aspect of the MI model in each issue. Here's the first installment. Quick question, "Do you have purposes that makes sense?" Having a purpose is a pretty good idea to have.**

**Imagine asking the Commissioner about the purpose of a particular initiative and getting the answer: "Um, I don't know. We thought we'd make something up and figure things out from there."**

**Not likely. Yet we often jump into our conversations in much the same way. We find ourselves in the middle of the conversation, and neither person is quite sure what the point is or what a good outcome would look like.**

**Other times we try having conversations when our purposes are simply off-base. When that happens, whatever you say or do is not going to help (and might even make things worse), because you've chosen a destination that is impossible to reach.**

**Remember, You Cannot Change Other People**



**In many situations, our purpose in initiating a conversation is to get the other person to change. There's nothing wrong with hoping for change. The urge to change others is universal. We want them to be more loving, to show more appreciation for our hard work, to give us more personal space, or to be more compliant with our wishes. The same thing is true with our clients. We want them to follow the rules, be more compliant, get a job, stay clean, find a whole new set of (non-criminal) friends.**

**The problem is, we cannot make these things happen. We cannot change someone else's mind or force them to change their behavior. If we could, many difficult conversations would simply vanish. We'd say, "Here are the reasons you should love me more," and they'd say, "Now that I know those reasons, I do." Or, "Here are the reasons you should stop smoking (drinking, using drugs, misbehaving, etc.)," and they'd say, "Now that I know those reasons, I'll quit right now."**

**Hah! We know things don't quite work out that way. Changes in attitudes and behavior rarely come about because of arguments, facts, and attempts to persuade. How often do you change your values and beliefs – or whom you love or what you want in life – based on something someone tells you? And how likely are you to do so when the person who is trying to change you doesn't seem fully aware of the reasons you see things differently in the first place.**

**We can have an influence, but here we need to be especially careful. The paradox is that trying to change someone rarely results in change. On the other hand, engaging someone in a conversation where mutual learning is the goal often results in change. Why? Because when we set out to try to change someone, we are more likely to argue with and attack their story and less likely to listen. Sound familiar? This approach increases the likelihood that they will feel defensive rather than open to learning something new. They are more likely to change if they think we understand them and if they feel heard and respected. They are more likely to change if they feel free not to.**

**Each Difficult Conversation is Really Three Conversations**

**Believe it or not, difficult conversations have an underlying structure. A powerful first step in improving how we deal with difficult conversations is to understand the underlying structure. Everything problematic that individuals say, think, and feel falls into one of three “conversations.”**

**The “What Happened?” Conversation: Most difficult conversations involve disagreement about what has happened or what should happen. Who said what and who did what? Who’s right, who meant what, and who’s to blame?**

**The “Feelings” Conversation: Every difficult conversation also asks and answers questions about feelings. Are my feelings valid? Appropriate? Should I acknowledge or deny them, put them on the table or check them at the door? What do I do about the other person’s feelings? What if they are angry or hurt?**

**The “Identity” Conversation: This is the conversation we each have with ourselves about what this situation means to us. We conduct an internal debate over whether this means we are competent or incompetent, a good person or bad, worthy of love or unlovable. What impact might it have on our self-image and self-esteem, our future and our well-being? Our answers to these questions determine in large part whether we feel “balanced” during the conversation, or whether we feel off-center and anxious.**

### **What We Cannot Change, and What We Can**

**No matter how skilled we become, there are certain challenges in each of the three conversations that we cannot change. We will still run into situations where untangling “what happened” is more complicated than we initially suspect. We will each have information the other person is unaware of; raising each other’s awareness is not easy. Furthermore, we will still face emotionally charged situations that feel threatening because they put important aspects of our (or their) identity at risk.**

**What we can change is the way we respond to each of these challenges. Typically, instead of exploring what information the other person might have that we don’t, we assume we know all we need to know to understand and explain things. Instead of**

**working to manage our feelings constructively, we either try to hide them or let loose in ways that we later regret. Instead of exploring the identity issues that may be deeply at stake for us (or them), we proceed with the conversation as if it says nothing about us – and never come to grips with what is at the heart of our anxiety. By understanding these errors and the havoc they wreak, we can begin to craft better approaches. Make sense?**

### **Arguing Without Understanding Is Unpersuasive**

**Arguing creates another problem in difficult conversations. No surprise here; it inhibits change. Telling someone to change makes it less rather than more likely that they will. This is because people almost never change without first feeling understood. This is where I often hear from our peers that MI takes too long. Or. . . . “I don’t need to understand ‘them.’”**

**To get anywhere in a disagreement, we need to understand the other person’s story well enough to see how their conclusions make sense within it. Plus, we need to help them understand the story in which our conclusions make sense. Understanding each other’s stories from the inside won’t necessarily “solve” the problem, but it’s an essential first step.**

### **Different Stories: Why We Each See the World Differently**

**As we move away from arguing and toward trying to understand the other person’s story, it helps to know why people have different stories in the first place. Our stories don’t come out of nowhere. They aren’t random. Our stories are developed in often unconscious but systematic ways. First, we take in information. We experience the world – sights, sounds, and feelings, Second, we interpret what we see, hear, and feel. We give it all meaning. Then we draw conclusions about what’s happening. At each step, there is an opportunity for each of our stories to deviate.**

**Put simply, we all have different stories about the world because we each take in different information and then interpret this information in our own unique ways.**

**Too often we trade only conclusions back and forth, without stepping down to where most of the real action is: the information and interpretations that lead each of us to see the world as we do.**

### **We Have Different Information**

**There are two reasons we all have different information about the world. First, as each of us proceeds through life – and through any difficult situation – the information available to us is overwhelming. We simply can't take in all of the sights, sounds, facts, and feelings involved in even a single encounter. Inevitably, we end up noticing some things and ignoring others. Therefore, what we each choose to notice and ignore will be different. Second, we each have access to different information.**

### **We notice different things**

**We each know ourselves better than anyone else can**

**We have different interpretations**

**We are influenced by past experiences**

**We apply different implicit rules**

**Our conclusions reflect self-interest**

### **Three Purposes That Work**

**The gold standard is to work towards mutual understanding. Not mutual agreement, necessarily, but a better understanding of each of your stories so that you can make informed decisions (alone or together) about what to do next. Anytime you think a conversation might be difficult, keep the following three purposes front and center in your consciousness.**

**Learning Their Story: Exploring the other person's perspective takes us into each of the three conversations. What information do they see that we missed or don't have access to? What past experiences influence them? What is their reasoning for why they did what they did? What are their intentions? How did our actions impact them? What do they think we are contributing to the problem? What are they feeling? What does this situation mean to them? How does it affect their identity? What's at stake?**

**Expressing Your Views and Feelings:** Your goal should be to express your views and feelings to your own satisfaction. You hope that the other person will understand what you are saying, and perhaps be moved by it, but you can't count on that. What you can do is say, as well as you can, what is important for you to say about your views, intentions, contributions, feelings, and identity issues. You can share your story.

**Problem-Solving Together:** given what you and the other person have each learned, what would improve the situation going forward? Can you brainstorm creative ways to satisfy both of your needs? Where your needs conflict, can you use equitable standards to ensure a fair and workable way to resolve the conflict?

### **Stance and Purpose Go Hand in Hand**

These three purposes accommodate the fact that you and the other person see the world differently; that you each have powerful feelings about what is going on; and that you each have your own identity issues to work through. Each of you, in short, has your own story. You need purposes that can reckon with this reality.

These are the purposes that emerge from a learning stance, from working through the three conversations and shifting your internal orientation from certainty to curiosity, from debate to exploration, from simplicity to complexity, and from "either/or" to "both/and." This may seem simple – perhaps even simplistic. But their straightforwardness masks both the difficulty involved in doing them well and the power they have to transform the way you handle your conversations.

### **Beginning from a Third Story**

In addition to your "story" and the other person's "story," every difficult conversation includes an invisible "third story." The third story is the one a keen observer would tell – someone with no stake in your particular problem. The key is to think like a mediator. This means describing the problem between the parties in a way that rings true for both sides simultaneously. It's easy to describe the problem so that only one of the disputants would agree with it. In fact, that's what

**each of us does when we begin inside our own story. The trick is being able to get two people with different stories to sign on to the same description of what is going on.**

**When I was in graduate school, I took a class in mediation. I discovered that mediators do not possess some magical intuition that allows them to do this. They rely on a formula (and a lot of practice). I remember one of our assigned texts was titled: Getting to Yes. This formula can be learned by anyone. You do not have to be an impartial third party to begin from the third story. You can begin your own conversation this way.**

### **Not Right or Wrong, Not Better or Worse – Just Different**

**The key is learning to describe the gap (or difference) between your story and the other person's story. Whatever else you may think and feel, you can at least agree that you and the other person see things differently.**

**The third story removes the judgment from the description, and instead describes the problem as a difference between you and the other person. It goes something like this: you and the other person have different preferences and standards around how something is to be done. Each of you are unhappy with the other's approach." That's how a mediator or observant friend might describe the problem.**

**In the third story there is not judgment about who is right or even whose view is more common. The third story simply captures the difference. That's what allows both sides to buy into the same description of the problem: each feels that their story is acknowledged as a legitimate part of the discussion.**

**Once you find it, you can begin with the third story yourself. You do not need to know what the other person's story entails to include it in initiating the conversation in this way. All you have to do is acknowledge that it's there. That there are probably lots of things you don't understand about their perspective. That one of the reasons you want to talk is that you want to learn more about their view. You can begin from the third story by saying, "My sense is that you and I see this**

**situation differently. I'd like to share how I'm seeing it, and learn more about how you're seeing it."**

**Here are three examples:**

**From inside your story: "If you don't complete this assignment, it's going to disrupt your involvement in this program."**

**From the third story: "I want to talk to you about the incomplete assignment. You and I obviously have different understandings of what the facilitator intended, and how the program works. I want to understand why you see things the way you do, and to share with you the program's perspective and expectation. In addition, I have strong feelings and fears about how this impacts on you; I suspect you do too."**

**From inside your story: I was very upset by what you said in front of our supervisor.**

**From the third story: I want to talk to you about what happened in the meeting this morning. I was upset by something you said. I want to explain what was bothering me, and also hear your perspective on the situation.**

**From inside your story: "You can be difficult in class – disruptive and argumentative. You've said in the past that things at home are fine, but something must be troubling you."**

**From the third story: "I want to share with you my concerns about your behavior in class and hear more about your sense of what might be contributing to it. I know from our past conversations that you and I have different thinking on this. My sense is that if someone is having trouble in the program, something is usually bothering them at home, and I know you've felt strongly that that's not true in this case. Maybe together we can figure out what's motivating you and how to handle it.**

**Most conversations can be initiated from the third story to include both perspectives and invite joint exploration. Stepping out of your story doesn't mean giving up your point of view. Your purpose in opening the conversation is to invite the other person into a joint exploration. In the course of that**

**exploration you'll spend time in each side's perspective, and then come back to adjust your own views based on what you've learned and what you've shared.**

### **It Takes Time**

**Most difficult conversations are not, in actuality, a single conversation. They are a series of exchanges and explorations that happen over time. However it goes, you should have follow-up conversations to check in and, if necessary, look for new ways to "master" difficult conversations.**

**In the next issue, I plan to talk about "motivation" and "change." What is it? Where does it come from? Can it be influenced? How it relates to Motivational Interviewing. In the meantime, good luck in developing your mastery of the difficult conversations skill**

Sincerely,  
Mark Groves, Chair  
Sponsorship Committee

## **2015 MCA Scholarship Award**



Congratulations to Samantha Olson,  
recipient of the 2015 MCA Scholarship Award.  
Sam is the daughter of MCA members Gene and Stacy Olson.  
Samantha was awarded a \$500 scholarship and  
will be attending St. Cloud State University in the Fall.

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!**

See the MCA website home page for the 2016 Scholarship Award application.  
Deadline for submission is August 1, 2016





Save the Date  
2016 MCA Annual Training Institute  
Grand View Lodge  
October 26-28, 2016

**MNSORP-Michele Wilson,  
ISR Agent MN DOC**

In 2001, the National Institute of Corrections launched the Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) pilot project recognizing the growing incarceration rates nationwide and budget shortfalls in corrections. Minnesota joined the initiative in 2009 after being awarded a technical grant. Minnesota's vision included reducing recidivism, supporting successful offender re-entry, and creating safer communities. (Pages)<sup>1</sup> The Minnesota Sex Offender Re-entry Project (MNSORP) is a non-profit organization founded by individuals concerned about the negative impact of the barriers to offender re-entry on the public and the offenders. MNSORP has a mission to increase public safety by reducing barriers that can lead to recidivism and further sexual victimization. MNSORP believes that offenders who are housed, employed, stable, and supported will be less likely to re-offend and, thereby, increasing public safety. Contrary to public perception, most convicted sex offenders will not repeat their crimes; however, the harder our community makes it for them to find stability and support, the more likely it is that they will re-offend. (MNSORP)<sup>2</sup>

In recent months, MNSORP has attempted to focus on combating efforts in Minnesota communities to implement residency restrictions. Currently, 34 cities in Minnesota have implemented residency restrictions- despite the overwhelming research pointing to the ineffectiveness of such rulings. The following findings were published on the Kansas Department of Corrections website in an attempt to educate the public regarding this: (Corrections)<sup>3</sup>

**Twenty Findings of Research on Residential Restrictions for Sex Offenders and the Iowa Experience with Similar Policies:**

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<sup>1</sup> Pages, M.D. (n.d). Minnesota Department of Corrections. Retrieved January 20, 2016, from [iShare.doc.state.mn.us;site/tpc/TPC%20guiding%20documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx](http://iShare.doc.state.mn.us/site/tpc/TPC%20guiding%20documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> MNSORP. (n.d.). Retrieved January 20, 2016, from [mnsorp.org: http://www.mnsorp.org](http://www.mnsorp.org)

<sup>3</sup> Corrections, K.D. (n.d.). Kansas Department of Corrections. Retrieved January 2016, from <https://www.doc.ks.gov/publications/CFS/sex-offender-housing-restrictions>

1. Housing restrictions appear to be based largely on three myths that are repeatedly propagated by the media: 1) all sex offenders reoffend; 2) treatment does not work; and 3) the concept of "stranger danger." Research does not support these myths, but there is research to suggest that such policies may ultimately be counterproductive. Sex offender residence restrictions. A Report to the Florida Legislature, October 2005, Jill S. Levinson, Ph.D.
2. Research shows that there is no correlation between residency restrictions and reducing sex offenses against children or improving the safety of children. Iowa County Attorneys Association
3. The resulting damage to the reliability of the sex offender registry does not serve the interests of public safety. Iowa County Attorneys Association
4. There is no demonstrated protective effect of the residency requirement that justifies the huge draining of scarce law enforcement resources in the effort to enforce the restriction. Iowa County Attorneys Association
5. Many prosecutors have observed that the numerous negative consequences of the lifetime residency restriction has caused a reduction in the number of confessions made by offenders in cases where defendants usually confess after disclosure of the offense by the child. In addition, there are more refusals by defendants charged with sex offenses to enter plea agreements. Plea agreements are necessary in many cases involving child victims in order to protect the children from trauma of the trial process. Iowa County Attorneys Association
6. Recommendation 1: Shared Living Arrangements appear to be a frequently successful mode of containment and treatment for higher risk sex offenders and should be considered a viable living situation for higher risk sex offenders in the community.... Recommendation 2: Placing restrictions on the location of correctionally supervised sex offender residences may not deter the sex offender from re-offending and should not be considered as a method to control sexual offending recidivism. Report on Safety Issues Raised by Living Arrangements for and Location of Sex Offenders in the Community; Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Sex Offender Management Board
7. ....the number of sex offenders who are unaccounted for has doubled since the law went into effect. Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault
8. There is no accommodation in the current statute for persons on parole or probation supervision. These offenders are already monitored and their living arrangements approved. Iowa County Attorneys Association
9. [This policy] is contrary to well-established principles of treatment and rehabilitation of sex offenders....These goals are severely impaired by the residency restriction, compromising the safety of children by obstructing

the use of the best known corrections practice. Iowa County Attorneys Association

10. The sex offender residency restriction was a very well intentioned effort to keep the children of our communities safe from sex offenders. It has, however, had unintended consequences that effectively decrease community safety. Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault
11. ....some offenders are attempting to comply by providing descriptions of where they are actually living.... "under the 7<sup>th</sup> street bridge," "truck near river," "rest area mile marker 149," "Flying J, in truck," "in tent, S side of I-80," "RV in old K-Mart parking lot," "I-35 rest area," ....Two listed Quick Trips.... For the first time, sex offender treatment providers tell us, sex offenders are absconding in larger numbers. Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault
12. When a brutal sexually violent crime occurs, such as the one that occurred in Iowa last year, our societal tendency is to focus all our resources and energy on stopping offenders. The long-term solutions to eradicating sexual violence from our society, however, do not lie in measures taken to stop re-offense, but rather in preventing sexual violence from happening in the first place. Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault
13. ... the Board of the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault joined the Iowa County Attorneys Association in stating that these unintended consequences warrant replacing the residency restriction with more effective measures. Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault
14. Housing restrictions have passed in most localities with little resistance. Child safety is rightly the primary concern when sex offender restrictions are imposed. It seems to make sense that decreasing access to potential victims would be a feasible strategy to preventing sex crimes. There is no evidence, however, that such laws are effective in reducing recidivistic sexual violence. On the other hand, such laws aggravate the scarcity of housing options for sex offenders, forcing them out of metropolitan areas and farther away from the social support, employment opportunities and social services that are known to aid offenders in successful community re-entry. Sex offender residence restrictions. A Report to the Florida Legislature, October 2005, Jill S. Levinson, Ph.D.
15. Despite overwhelming public and political support, there is no evidence that proximity to schools increases recidivism, or, conversely, that housing restrictions reduce reoffending or increase community safety. Sex offender residence restrictions. A Report to the Florida Legislature, October 2005, Jill S. Levinson, Ph.D.
16. Based on the examination of level three re-offenders, there were no examples that residential proximity to a park or school was a contributing factor in any of the sexual re-offenses noted... Enhanced

safety due to proximity restrictions may be a comfort factor for the general public, but it does not have any basis in fact...it appears that a sex offender attracted to such locations for purposes of committing a crime is more likely to travel to another neighborhood on order to in secret rather than in a neighborhood where his or her picture is well known. Level Three Sex Offenders Residential Placement Issues, 2003 Report to the Legislature, Minnesota Department of Corrections

17. Having such restrictions in the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul would likely force level three offenders to move to more rural areas that would not contain nearby schools and parks but would pose other problems, such as high concentration of offenders with no ties to the community; isolation; lack of work, education and treatment options; and an increase in the distance traveled by agents who supervise offenders. Again, no evidence points to any effect on offense rates of school proximity residential restrictions. Level Three Sex Offenders Residential Placement Issues, 2003 Report to the Legislature, Minnesota Department of Corrections
18. Since blanket proximity restrictions on residential locations of level three offenders do not enhance community safety, the current offender-by-offender restrictions should be retained. Proximity restrictions, based on circumstances on an individual offender, serve as a valuable supervision tool...Most of these supervision proximity restrictions address the issue of the offender associating or interacting with children or minors, rather than where the offender resides. Level Three Sex Offenders Residential Placement Issues, 2003 Report to the Legislature, Minnesota Department of Corrections
19. A significant number of offenders have married or have been reunited with their victims; and, in those cases, the residency restriction is imposed on the victims as well as the offenders. Iowa County Attorneys Association...
20. A tight web of supervision, treatment and surveillance may be more important in maintaining community safety than where a sex offender resides. Report on Safety Issues Raised by Living Arrangements for and Location of Sex Offenders in the Community; Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Sex Offender Management Board.

For more information regarding residency restrictions, other re-entry concerns, or to become a member please visit the MNSORP website at <http://www.mnsorp.org/>.

#### **About the MCA FORUM**

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Articles should not be of the nature of a commercial solicitation of products or services; rather,  
they should be informative on topics of interest to MCA membership at large.

Minnesota Corrections Association  
PO Box 261 • Wyoming, MN 55092-0261  
651-462-8320 • [mca-mn@hotmail.com](mailto:mca-mn@hotmail.com) • [www.mn-ca.org](http://www.mn-ca.org)