



# Sobriety in Stumptown

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Portland Area Intergroup  
825 NE 20th Ave,  
Portland, OR  
503-223-8569

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## *November Stories and Art*

### **November Thoughts**

*by Amy B., Sobriety in Stumptown Editor*

In the November issue, members discuss what they received from working Step Eleven of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous as well as navigating the holidays while in sobriety.

### **Definitions**

*by Jackson, from Portland, Oregon*

I spent years more of my life drinking because I was afraid of the "God thing". I didn't get it. I was opposed to it. I couldn't relate, I couldn't pretend, I would never be able to get sober if God was always going to be a part of it. I didn't know there was another way than simply believing in and worshipping the Judeo-Christian concept of God and spirituality.

I am an agnostic by definition. I don't know if there is anything else. I am a human being, I can't see more than two-hundreds yards in front of me in clear conditions, I certainly can't know with any certainty what lies at the furthest extents of this universe. For this reason, I am not an atheists. Atheists are sure, I am not sure. Believers are also sure. So how does someone who is not sure work this program and stay sober?

Step Eleven's wording is one of the most off-putting segments of the steps for someone who is not caught in the appeal of the God concept. It uses language that directly refers to a Christian, male deity. In order to stop and consider this step, I have to analyze who wrote it. I have to be aware that the founders of this program were Christian males who wrote these steps from their own perspective, but they also added the opt-out option within that personal definition. "As we understood Him" allows us to form our own opinion.

The Big Book has many wonderful portions, but for Step Eleven, it falters to truly explain itself to the agnostic, despite having an entire chapter dedicated to it. In my journey to somehow get sober despite a lack of belief in a Christian God, I found the most convincing and embracing explanation of Step Eleven in the Twelve and Twelve. The chapter that this auxiliary text has on this step isn't totally free of Christian dogma, but its inclusion is presented in a way that has it incorporated into a regiment that focuses on

spirituality rather than religiosity.

If we view spirituality simply as our life force, as that unexplainable factor that makes us a human, something more than a rock or a tree or even a bird, it suddenly becomes easier to isolate and attempt to have contact with it. The idea of establishing conscious contact with that primal part of ourselves, that thing that used to be our whole world when we were children, that thing we lost touch with when the troubles and trials of being a person in this world interfered to the point where we drank to try to simplify things again, this is the true purpose of Step Eleven.

The founders of AA and the writers of the Twelve Steps may have been white, Christian men, but that doesn't mean this is a program solely designed for use by that demographic. Every human is spiritual and can therefore find relief from alcoholism or any addiction through that life force.

## Coping Methods

*by Luke S. from Portland, OR*

In my first year of sobriety, everything that was a "first" was baffling. I stopped drinking in summer. It was only a few months before it was the holidays. There is a strange dichotomy around these joyous celebrations—many people actually view this time of the year as one of the most difficult. It is a time where family comes together, for better or worse. It is a time of financial pressure. It is a time to reflect on the people we have lost who are no longer with us. Add to that being new in sobriety, and this time can be entirely overwhelming.

That first year, faced with these issues, I did the only thing I knew how to do, threw myself into the program. It was the first time I began to view the program as a refuge from anything in life that had become too much to handle on my own. That is what the program was for, to be a buffer between me and the things that made me drink.

My first sponsor took me to an Alkathon, twenty-four hours straight of meetings on New Year's Eve. That first year I was simply attending, taking everything I could from the event. But for the next five years afterwards, I was volunteering, giving everything I could. It was what I could do to be of service and feel like I was giving a gift of some kind during this season of giving.

## Monthly Business Meetings

For details about monthly business meetings, contact the PAI Office at 503-223-8569. Or send your questions or concerns to: [1212@pdxaa.org](mailto:1212@pdxaa.org)

**Portland Area Intergroup (PAI):** Business Meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month, 7:00 PM, 4524 SE Stark St. (Unity of Portland), Portland.

**Portland Deaf Access Committee:** Monthly, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of every month, 6:30, The Alano Club, NW 24<sup>th</sup> & Kearney.

**Dist 9:** 1<sup>st</sup> Wed, 6:30 PM, 24<sup>th</sup> and Kearney, Portland

**Dist 10:** Last Mon, 7:00 PM, 12945 Beaverdam Rd., West Side Service Cntr, Beaverton

**Dist 11:** Last Thu, 7:00 PM, "URS" Club, Portland

**Dist 12:** 1<sup>st</sup> Tue, 6:30 PM, 12x12 Club, 7035 NE Glisan, Portland

**Dist 15:** 1<sup>st</sup> Wed, 6:45 PM, 710 6<sup>th</sup> St., Oregon City

**Dist 18:** 1<sup>st</sup> Sat, 9:30 AM, 215 N 6<sup>th</sup> St., St. Helens

**Dist 23:** 1<sup>st</sup> Tue, 6:00 PM, Emmanuel Presbyterian, 19200 SW Willamette Dr., West Linn

**Dist 24:** 1<sup>st</sup> Thu, 6:00 PM, 5441 SE Belmont St., Portland

**Dist 25:** 4<sup>th</sup> Tue, 5:30 PM, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 39901 Pleasant Street, Sandy, OR

**Dist 26:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun, 5:00 PM, St Charles Church, 5310 NE 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Portland

**Dist 27:** 1<sup>st</sup> Mon, 7:00 PM, 11631 SE Linwood Ave., St. Paul's Methodist, Milwaukie

**Dist 31:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Tue, 7:00 PM, 937 NE Jackson School Rd., Hillsboro

**Dist 34:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat, 5:00 PM, 485 Portland Ave., Gladstone

**Dist 35:** 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sat, 7:00 PM, 18926 SW Shaw St., Suite A, Beaverton

**Dist 36:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Thu, 7:00 PM, St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, 2201 SW Vermont St, Portland

**Dist 37:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Tue, 7:00 PM, Sherwood Community Friends Church, 23264 SW Main Street, Sherwood, OR

## Committee News

**Portland Area Intergroup** is a committee of volunteers that encourages mutual support and cooperation between Portland A.A. groups and provides services that would be too much for the individual groups to handle by themselves. PAI provides services for the AA community and the general public.

**We have several committee positions available. Portland Area Intergroup needs your help.** Working on a committee is excellent 12th Step service work. If you are interested in being on any Portland Area Intergroup committee, send an email to [pdxaa.org](mailto:pdxaa.org) with "COMMITTEE INTEREST" in the subject field. Or, just click on [Service](#) on the Intergroup website. **Intergroup committees carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic.** Please help yourself and others. Sign up. Thank you.

**Bridging the Gap (BTG):** Provides a one-time, temporary contact for people transitioning from a treatment center to A.A. meetings. BTG meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Portland Intergroup Office basement, located at 825 NE 20th Ave, Suite 200, Portland. "We Bridge the Gap so alcoholics leaving treatment don't have to walk alone across that scary gap between the beginning of recovery in treatment and the continued recovery in A.A." Please contact the PAI office via phone, 503-223-8569, or email [btg@pdxaa.org](mailto:btg@pdxaa.org), if you are interested.

**A.A. Hotline:** The A.A. Hotline keeps the Portland phone number for A.A. active 24 hours a day, every day of the year. The way this is accomplished is by volunteer support. Calls to the A.A. number placed after Central Office hours and redirected to volunteers' phones, keeping the volunteer's number anonymous. A volunteer can elect to go on a 12th Step call or just provide the information the caller needs about meetings. Commitments are generally two times a month. In particular, if you're a night-owl, we'd really appreciate your help. Call the Central Office for more information at 503-223-8569.

**Corrections Committee Information:** Take meetings into correctional facilities & carries the A.A. message to the alcoholic who suffers. The Corrections team is looking for A.A. volunteers, both men and women, to bring A.A. meetings into the jails in Multnomah County, specifically Inverness Jail, the Courthouse and the Justice Center. If you have questions on becoming a volunteer, or if you would like to be on the PAI Corrections Committee, please email: [corrections@pdxaa.org](mailto:corrections@pdxaa.org), or call the Central Office for more information at 503-223-8569.

**Cooperation with Treatment Centers:** The Treatment Centers needs your help to share your experience, strength, and hope with the alcoholic who still suffers by taking meeting into treatment facilities. The Treatment Center committee needs volunteers to help coordinate and facilitate meetings at treatment centers. We need your help to contact treatment centers that have reached out to Portland Area Intergroup for A.A. support. We also speak with treatment

centers to find out if A.A. is currently bringing in meetings, or if they would like to arrange an appointment to speak with a representative from A.A. that could explain what we can offer them and their patients. We also coordinate with A.A. groups to find out about the service opportunity, and how their group members can participate in this important 12<sup>th</sup> Step work. The committee meets monthly at 6pm, before the Portland Area Intergroup meeting. If you have questions, please email [treatment@pdxaa.org](mailto:treatment@pdxaa.org), or call the Central Office at 503-223-8569.

**Public Information Committee:** Panels meet with the media, schools, clubs, and the general public and show videos (produced by the General Service Office), provide literature, contact information and answer questions about A.A. For more information, email [pi@pdxaa.org](mailto:pi@pdxaa.org), or call the Central Office at 503-223-8569.

**Newsletter (*Sobriety in Stumptown*):** The committee for the very publication you are now reading is looking for members. Send an email of interest to: [newsletter@pdxaa.org](mailto:newsletter@pdxaa.org)

**Events:** The Events Committee needs committee members. Send an email to [Events@pdxaa.org](mailto:Events@pdxaa.org) for more information.

## **Get Published!**

If you have A.A. news, a meeting change, a big event, a story, a painting, a poem, or just a rant, Sobriety in Stumptown wants to hear it! Send articles of 1000 words or fewer to:

[newsletter@pdxaa.org](mailto:newsletter@pdxaa.org)

Deadline for the December issue: **December 3rd**

### **Step Eleven**

*"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."*

### **Tradition Eleven**

*"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."*

### **Serenity Prayer**

*"God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference."*

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