



# Sobriety in Stumptown

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

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## *January Stories and Art*

### **January Thoughts**

*by Amy B., Sobriety in Stumptown Editor*

Welcome to 2019! In the January issue, members discuss what they received from working Step One of the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

### **Step One**

*by George D. from Portland, OR*

I knew that day as I looked into the trunk of my car and saw that six pack of Stroh beer that I already had a problem. It was the 70s, what a great time to be a teenager, 'sex, drugs, and rock'n roll' and as I like to say, "not necessarily in that order." Life in fact seemed like it couldn't be better.

I was older than most of my classmates, as I had been held back in the third grade. It seemed I was unable to pay attention and was always too hyper to sit still. I'm pretty sure ADHD played a significant role in that event, long before ADHD was considered a medical diagnosis. Being older, I had my license and car by the start of my sophomore year.

As I drove up to school that day, I felt no less glorious than Caesar's triumphant return to Rome. I felt powerful and certain that at last I would fit in. All I ever wanted was to fit in, to be one of the cool guys and hoped that the pretty girls would like me. Neither that nor the beer would ever fill that void that was deep within, and I knew this void would never go away.

That was in the 70's and it wasn't until the age of 55 on the day of 12/13/14 that I finally quit! I quit running and I quit crying. On that day, I finally gave into my innermost self and admitted that in fact I was an alcoholic and that my life had become unmanageable. This was the beginning of my fellowship with Alcoholics Anonymous and finding a new way to live.

## **Atheists Welcome**

*by Luke from Portland, OR*

We're told that our sober life is about service and the enrichment of a Spiritual Life. Yeah, I get that we live in Portland and that many people here are claiming Atheism, but like the literature says, that's a tricky proposition since Atheism claims proof for the non-existence of God. If you have that proof, than you are a *real* Atheist, or else you probably have to settle for being an Agnostic, which I'm sure works just as well for many.

But looking at life without religion is one thing, looking at life without *spirituality* is quite different because it doesn't necessarily include dogma or specificity of purpose or intent. My hope is that you are open to the concept that allows AA to work—and that is this: Your plans and designs to make your life a success have not worked as well as you planned or else you would not have found yourself in the rooms of A.A. So why not experiment with some new ideas?

Let's say that you find the concept of a power that runs the Universe quite offensive. Believing that something guides your life and has a benevolent attitude towards you seems to fly in the face of all the pain and suffering you see about you. Often religious people seem to be the worst hypocrites. Many leaders of religion seem to be lost in the trappings and finery of their status instead of simply helping the poor or attempting to change some of society's more flagrant abuses against humanity. But none of that takes into account what AA is suggesting you do. "Resign from the debating society..." to quote the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions book, and don't bother about the big picture. Focus on the solution which is developing a personal relationship with a power greater than yourself. That you can at least attempt by experimentation.

My first sponsor stressed a relationship with God. He said I never had the benefit of a loving father and suggested that every day when I returned to work, just pick a spot in my living room where I imagined a loving father might sit and tell him about my day. I should mention that I was pretty young when I sobered up, so I was still somewhat obsessed about how my childhood traumas were responsible for my drinking and lack of coping skills. Hey, it definitely took some of the burden off of me, and that was my intention. There was something about that exercise that, to this day, allowed me to experience a kind of kinship with this being, whatever it was, that seemed to pay attention to me and my shares, which often included some pretty graphic details and was filled with laughter most of the time. It still seems to remind me that if there really is a God out there, he probably has a remarkable sense of humor.

I know some AA old timers who found their personal spirituality by working the Twelve Steps, in order, with a sponsor, and discovered that the very fact it changed their lives positively, that that seemed to be proof enough something outside of them seemed to be providing resources they didn't realize they had. Others attempted to disprove the steps worked, by doing them, and upon receiving the same rewards as their brothers

and sisters who claimed existing spirituality, the non-believers became convinced (even if they refused to use the “God word”) that some force or power seemed to have changed the course of their lives and made them question what the hell it was.

## **Unmanageable**

*by Joseph S. from Portland, OR*

The most important part to working Step One, in my experience, is realizing there are two parts to this step. First, we must admit that we are powerless over alcohol. This was not the most difficult part for me or most of the men I have sponsored. We came into the rooms because, at the very least, we thought we had a problem with drinking. We knew alcohol was the culprit of our problems in some way or form.

It is the second part of this step, admitting that our life has become unmanageable, that has proven difficult. We are masters of control, we like to think that everything surrounding us is just under our thumbs. If we want to succeed in sobriety, we must accept that we are not the end all, be all of the universe. There is something bigger, regardless of what you choose to call it. In order to even consider that, we have to first admit that we have lost all control of our lives.

“Unmanageable” is a term that makes sense when we think about it. We were the managers of a store that is now out-of-stock of all its my popular products and absent of any cashiers. The freezer is broken and the meat is rotting. All of the carts are broken. In some of our stories, a fire has broken out.

We loved drinking. We loved it so much that none of the goods things in life could stop us from doing it. We don’t end up in this program because things were going well. Step One is simply the recognition of that; the real work begins later. The first step to a spiritual awakening is taken pushing a wobbly shopping cart into a meeting and removing our manager name tag.

## **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 February issue: **February 3rd**

### **Step One**

*"Admitted that we were powerless over alcohol, and that our lives had become unmanageable."*

### **Tradition One**

*"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity."*

### **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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