



Sobriety in Stumptown

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

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February Stories and Art

February Thoughts

by Amy B., Sobriety in Stumptown Editor

In the February issue, members discuss their philosophies for working the steps and what they have received from the program.

AA Abandons the Low-Bottom Drunk

By Bill A. from Portland, OR

AA was founded on low-bottom drunks—our pioneers. The spiritual awakening produced by the 12 Steps was their only hope for avoiding an early death. Today, many low-bottom drunks desperately cling to life by staying sober on meetings without ever getting the message embodied in our Twelfth Step. They continue to suffer from untreated alcoholism. This is my observation and the observation of many of my fellow old timers. How did this happen?

When Bill W. suggested that we carry the message to high-bottom drunks and potential alcoholics, I don't think he could have envisioned what we are seeing in AA today. We are seeing a second wave of sobriety based on meetings and will power rather than on spiritual awakenings.

On p. 34 of the Big Book, Bill W. writes, "Whether such a person can quit upon a nonspiritual basis depends on the extent to which he has already lost the power to choose whether he will drink or not." It is possible that many of our sober members are staying sober by placing more dependence on meetings, fellowship, and service, than by depending on a Higher Power. Unlike the low-bottom drunk, who absolutely must have a spiritual awakening to live on, I believe many of our sober members still had enough will power to quit on a nonspiritual basis when

they arrived, regardless of how much they had suffered. I am referring to our members who do not have sponsors or have not taken the 12 Steps.

Although this is not the program of recovery contained in the Big Book, it brings relief to the suffering alcoholic. However, many of these individuals continue to suffer greatly as they still have an alcoholic mind. They are afraid of alcohol. If some event causes them to stop going to meetings, many relapse.

So as AA moves ahead into the future offering sobriety to high bottom drunks and potential alcoholics through meetings, fellowship, and service, the low-bottom drunk gets left behind. The message of “90 meetings in 90 days” and “Meeting Makers Make It,” along with fellowship and service is not saving many low-bottom drunks. They are not receiving the message of recovery contained in the Big Book—*“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”*

Without an earnest presentation of our spiritual program of recovery, many of our low-bottom drunks suffer on through relapses year after year for more than 10, 20, and 30 years. The Doctors’s Opinion in the Big Book states: “Frothy emotional appeal seldom suffices. The message which can interest and hold these alcoholic people must have depth and weight. In nearly all cases, their ideals must be grounded in a power greater than themselves, if they are to re-create their lives.”

We all have the opportunity to discuss this issue in our group inventories when evaluating how well our home groups follow the Fifth Tradition: *“Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.”* Let’s reach out to the low-bottom drunk and the chronic relapser.

Once more, many of our members who struggle to stay sober have not received the message. The low-bottom drunk needs a spiritual awakening to recover. He has lost the power of choice in drink. Only a spiritual awakening can save him.

Nine Months of Sobriety in AA

by Bill S. from Portland, OR

Now that I have nine months of sobriety I reflect upon that span of time and learn from it.

When I joined up with AA I came in on a giant pink cloud and everything was just great. I noticed immediate change in my composure and how people reacted to me in a more positive fashion. In my pink cloud enthusiasm I also stepped on a lot of toes and made some people angry with me.

The first 90 days were the most chaotic and that's what people told me to expect. The night I took my 90 day coin a trusted friend came to me and said that my share was "The sanest thing he had ever heard me say" After that life became more stable.

After some time had elapsed the pink cloud began to recede and I became discouraged and did not know what action to take. I began doing the step work and service work and that gave me the direction and stability I needed to go on with the program.

Like many people new to AA I hung out on steps one two and three before starting to work my way up the ladder. With a lot of help I managed to work my way up to step twelve in slightly less than nine months.

I was introduced to prayer and meditation by a friend in the program. We would do a guided meditation over a cell phone before the noon meeting. As the weeks went by I started doing guided meditations every morning at home. Morning Prayer, meditation and reading became one of the cornerstones of my recovery.

A friend in the program suggested that I set up and secretary a meeting which I did. I thought it was an important job and I took a lot of pride in doing it. After a month I added a second meeting that I set up for and became GSR for it.

One day I got a phone call from a friend in the program. He suggested that I begin working on improving my conscious contact with God. He was speaking of 11th step work. Right after the phone call, in meditation, I realized that God had done many things for me that I could have not done for myself. I was more conscious of God's will in my life. I was on my way to an improved conscious contact with God and I use prayer and meditation to get there.

A friend in the program suggested that I talk to a specific person and find out what was going on with him. The next week later I found him after a meeting and we talked. In talking we understood each other on a deep level and afterward I felt a great love that lasted all evening and into the early morning hours. Although I did not realize it at the time I had just done my first twelfth step. I later became this man's sponsor.

After nine months I have got many things through AA. I have friends I thought I would never have. I have purpose and direction and less confusion about what I want for myself. I have God back in my life and that miracle called sobriety.

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

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

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

Dist 9: 1st Wed, 6:30 PM, 24th 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: 1st Tue, 6:30 PM, 12x12 Club, 7035 NE Glisan, Portland
Dist 15: 1st Wed, 6:45 PM, 710 6th St., Oregon City
Dist 18: 1st Sat, 9:30 AM, 215 N 6th St., St. Helens
Dist 23: 1st Tue, 6:00 PM, Emmanuel Presbyterian, 19200 SW Willamette Dr., West Linn
Dist 24: 1st Thu, 6:00 PM, 5441 SE Belmont St., Portland
Dist 25: 4th Tue, 5:30 PM, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 39901 Pleasant Street, Sandy, OR
Dist 26: 2nd Sun, 5:00 PM, St Charles Church, 5310 NE 42nd Ave., Portland
Dist 27: 1st Mon, 7:00 PM, 11631 SE Linwood Ave., St. Paul's Methodist, Milwaukie
Dist 31: 2nd Tue, 7:00 PM, 937 NE Jackson School Rd., Hillsboro
Dist 34: 3rd Sat, 5:00 PM, 485 Portland Ave., Gladstone
Dist 35: 2nd & 4th Sat, 7:00 PM, 18926 SW Shaw St., Suite A, Beaverton
Dist 36: 2nd Thu, 7:00 PM, St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, 2201 SW Vermont St, Portland
Dist 37: 2nd 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 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, 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, 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 12th Step work. The committee meets monthly at 6pm, before the Portland Area Intergroup meeting. If you have questions, please email 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, 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

Events: The Events Committee needs committee members. Send an email to 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

Deadline for the March issue: **February 3rd**

Step Two

"Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

Tradition Two

"For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

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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