



# Sobriety in Stumptown

[www.pdxaa.com](http://www.pdxaa.com)

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Portland Area Intergroup

825 NE 20th Ave, Portland, OR 97232

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## Serious Responsibility

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*by Dave A., Canby*

Over this past weekend, I was again humbled by the opportunity to play the role of “human being” in the 5<sup>th</sup> step of our 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. The 5<sup>th</sup> step of course states “...Admitted to God, to ourselves and another *human being*, the exact nature of our wrongs.” I have been granted the privilege to serve and be a sponsor to several people in AA. This weekend one of my sponsees did their 5<sup>th</sup> (and 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>) step.

Every time I am involved in this “so very important” step, I am so moved and humbled beyond belief that God (and my sponsees) have entrusted me for such a sacred and emotionally deep event. Given what I perceive as my selfish and untrustworthy past, I am amazed at the turnaround that my life has taken relative to the subject of trust and selflessness. For someone to verbally pour their heart and soul out loud to God in my presence and to trust that it will never leave my head and pass through my lips is almost unimaginable to me. I take the responsibility of confidentiality regarding this step and action more seriously than anything I have ever done in my life.

The duty of verbally walking my sponsees through the physical action of reading and discussing their 4<sup>th</sup> step list and writings, is one of careful and gentle guidance. During our session, I try to be very aware of my sponsee’s emotions when discussing certain people, institutions, things, or events. I attempt to sense whether they are just brazing over that specific item in an attempt to not dive deep and deal with that heavy subject or whether it truly does not merit more than a mere statement of passing. If I feel they are attempting to avoid, I gently ask if there is more that they should speak on that subject in order to purge their feelings.

When it comes to the admission of sex issues and past transgressions, this is where a sponsor must be on a heightened awareness when deciding whether to push the sponsee a little more to truly clean the slate. My first sponsor who took me through the steps gently asked me a few more questions on this topic during my 5<sup>th</sup> step and was able to pull out of me some deep hidden secrets that I was not going to bring out. The reason I state that a sponsor needs to have a heightened awareness when approaching this subject is because one does not want to come across as seeking morbid or twisted curiosity, but rather only as an attempt to allow your sponsees the opportunity to truly purge all during the session. There is a fine line when asking questions that will enable your sponsee to discuss more about their shortcomings or appearing as though you are curious about details.

The emotions that I have experienced from going through this step with a sponsee is one like no other. It is a combination unlike any other. For me, I get an overwhelming sense of honor. An honor that only God could anoint me with. And because it seems to be an honor from my higher power, there is a very huge humble factor. I feel so honored and humbled at the same time. As you can tell, it is hard to describe this rare and dichotomous feeling. I heard from a veteran member of AA that stated you truly have not experienced all the joys and wonderment that AA has to offer until you have performed and participated in a 5<sup>th</sup> Step with a sponsee. I can attest to that being a true statement and fact. ▲

## **Remember...**

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*by Cindy A., Portland*

Remember that feeling.... It was cold and clammy in the darkness of my heart as I held the bottle. I would hold it and drink it straight from the lips on the short, cold neck as fast as I could. "More" was always on my list of things to do and rarely did I get beyond that first duty. Looking down the neck of the bottle, I could see the dark abyss that was my life. And I wanted it, had to have it—the liquid poison (ETOH, by any other name, is still alcohol) flowing into my body felt, to me, like rough waves on the ocean. I swam in it. I treaded water and floated and buoyed on my sea of self-imposed loathing with a vengeance. I looked at my work with blood-shot eyes and brain-altered thoughts. I was saturated--basted and boiled--in the chemical, alcohol ETOH.

Remember crawling on the floor? Too drunk to walk to bed? I do. I remember it was cold and smelly and rough on my hands and knees. The taste in my mouth was awful. I don't know what was worse—the slime or the dirt. My mouth was a toilet. I was raw and exposed, out of control night and day. I knew I was the worst person on earth. I

remember the empty feeling of loneliness and hopelessness. I was hiding from my world. People were mean to me (right?).

I became a different person from what my life was once, to my new life of secrets and disgusting behavior, hiding my inner pain from the world. Always looking around every corner for the police. I hated everyone and myself. I wanted to die. But I didn't deserve the comfort death would bring me.

Alcohol consumed me. King ETOH had captured me, and I was it's prisoner. I will always remember look I gave myself when I was all drunked-up. It wasn't pretty. I needed help and was unable to quit drinking. I was drowning. Really—literally drowning.

Heart wrenching hell was about to kill me (again) when I asked God for the answer. I heard the word "surrender." Surrender everything I knew and everything I didn't know.

What happened next was a miracle for this alcoholic. I can't wait to tell you the rest of my story. Stay tuned for Part II. From hospitals, institutions, rehab and prison to self-love, life, love, and faith in a power greater than myself. ▲

## Your Disease

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*by Anonymous*

Hello,

Just in case you forgot me, I am your disease. I hate meetings, I hate Higher Powers, and I hate your Program. To all who come in contact with me, I wish you suffering and death. Allow me to introduce myself, I am the disease of Alcoholism. I am cunning, baffling, and powerful. I have killed millions and I am pleased. I love to catch you with the element of surprise. I love pretending that I am your friend and lover. I have given you comfort, haven't I? Wasn't I there when you were lonely? When you wanted to die, didn't you call on me? I was there. I love to make you hurt. I love to make you cry. Better yet, I love to make you so numb you can neither hurt nor cry. When you can't feel anything at all, that's my true glory and all that I ask from you is long term suffering.

I've been there for you always. When things were going right in your life, you invited me. You said you didn't deserve these good things, and I was the only one who would agree with you. Together we were able to destroy all the good things in your life. People don't take me seriously. They take strokes, heart attacks, even diabetes

seriously, fools. Without my help these things would not be possible. I am such a hated disease, and yet I do not come uninvited. You choose to have me. So many have chosen me over reality and peace.

More than you hate me, I hate all of you who have a 12 Step Program. Your program, meetings, and Higher Power, all of these weaken me, and I can't function in the manner I am accustomed to. Now I must lay here quietly. You don't see me but I am growing bigger than ever. I am here, waiting, and until we meet again, if we meet again, I wish you suffering and death.

Sincerely, Your Disease ▲

## Monthly Business Meetings

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**Portland Area Intergroup (PAI):** Monthly Business Meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mon, 7:00 PM, 3123 NE 24<sup>th</sup> Ave. (St. Mary Magdalene Church), Portland

**PAI CPC:** Contact Paul C., 503-819-3827

**PAI Public Information:** Open Chair. No current Chairperson. If interested, call Paul C., 503-819-3827

**PAI Treatment Facilities:** Contact Roger W., 503-277-8444

**PAI Bridging the Gap:** Contact Jim H., 503-936-0631

**PAI Corrections:** Contact Jason at (503) 807-1227

**PAI Website:** Contact Roger J., [webservant@pdxaa.com](mailto:webservant@pdxaa.com)

**PAI Newsletter:** Contact Jennifer L., [newsletter@pdxaa.com](mailto:newsletter@pdxaa.com)

**PDAC:** 1<sup>st</sup> Sat, 6:00 PM, 1111 SW Country Club, Lake Oswego

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

**Dist 10:** Last Mon, 7:00 PM, 12555 SW 4<sup>th</sup> St., 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 Church, 19200 SW Willamette Dr., West Linn

**Dist 24:** 1<sup>st</sup> Thu, 6:15 PM, 2800 SE Harrison St., Portland

**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, 4035 SE Rio Vista St., 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, 6:00 PM, 2025 SW Vermont St., Portland

**Dist 37:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Tue, TIME?? 29775 SW Town Center Loop East, Wilsonville

## Meeting Updates

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To find information about new meetings or meetings that have changed since the last meeting schedule was printed, click on **Updates** on the Intergroup website, pdxaa.com.

## Coming Events

Future events include:

**May 10<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>** Annual Celilo AA Spring Gathering; Celilo Campground, Exit 97 off I84

**May 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>** Oregon Area Assembly; Monarch Hotel 12566 SE 93rd Ave. Clackamas, OR 97015 (See website for registration details)

**June 10<sup>th</sup>** – Celebration of Sobriety Dinner; Doors Open 6pm, Dinner 6:30pm, Speakers 7:30pm Monarch Hotel 12566 SE 93rd Ave. Clackamas, OR 97015

**June 16<sup>th</sup>** – Pancake Breakfast, 9am – 12:00; Good Shepherd Lutheran Church 3405 SW Alice St. Portland, OR 97219

**July 27<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup>** - 2012 Campout "Shoulder to Shoulder" ORCYPAA Campout; John Neal Memorial County Park 820 Neal Park Road, Lyons, OR – More details available on website.

For more details on the events above or to post events on the calendar, please visit [www.pdxaa.com](http://www.pdxaa.com). If your group is having an AA related event that they'd like to have posted on the calendar at [www.pdxaa.com](http://www.pdxaa.com) please send an email to [Events@pdxaa.com](mailto:Events@pdxaa.com) with "PLEASE POST TO CALENDAR" in the Subject Field along with the following information in the body of the email:

1. Name of Event
2. Date & Time
3. Location
4. If a flyer has been made please also attach that, preferably in a .pdf format
5. Any other details you'd like to provide, but we need at least 1-3 to be able to post to the calendar. ▲

## Committee News

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**Intergroup committees carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering alcoholic.** Please help with this 12th Step work. Sign up by clicking on **Service** on the Intergroup website.

**Hotline:** Openings for Hotline shifts and for 12th Step volunteers. 12th Step volunteers talk to newcomers who have questions. *Please note: The calls are screened by the answering service and forwarded to the volunteer's home phone; callers never see the home phone number of the volunteer.*

**Cooperating with the Professional Community and Public Information:** The two committees are working together to bring the message of recovery to the public and to the professional community—healthcare, clergy, legal, educators, social workers, and others. The CPC committee meets every first Thursday at 6:30 PM at the Intergroup office, 825 NE 20th Ave, Suite 200, Portland. Email: [cpc.pi.pdx@gmail.com](mailto:cpc.pi.pdx@gmail.com).

**Portland Deaf Access Committee:** The Portland Deaf Access Committee meets on the first Saturday of every month at the United Church of Christ, 1111 SW Country Club Road, Lake Oswego, OR 97034. The meeting starts at 6:00 PM (ish) and usually lasts one-and-a-half hours. We welcome people interested in finding out more about what can be done. You don't need to know sign language to help. Email us at [pdxaccess@gmail.com](mailto:pdxaccess@gmail.com) with questions.

**Bridging the Gap (BTG):** provides a one-time temporary contact for people transitioning from a treatment center to AA meetings. BTG meets the third 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 AA." Please contact Stephanie L. at [pdxbtg@yahoo.com](mailto:pdxbtg@yahoo.com) or call (503) 867-1452 if you are interested.

**Corrections:** Our current focus is to carry the AA message to youths in the Multnomah County Detention Center (JDH). We need many volunteers to help bring AA meetings to the facility on a regular basis. Call the Intergroup Office (503) 223-8569 if you are interested.

**Website:** The Website committee is looking for members. Contact Roger J. at [webservant@pdxaa.com](mailto:webservant@pdxaa.com).

**Newsletter (*Sobriety in Stumptown*):** The Newsletter committee is looking for members. Stump needs your help! Contact Jennifer L. at [newsletter@pdxaa.com](mailto:newsletter@pdxaa.com).

**Events:** If you'd like to receive e-mail messages about upcoming volunteer opportunities for PAI Events, send an email to [Events@pdxaa.com](mailto:Events@pdxaa.com) with "VOLUNTEER" in the subject field. If you are interested in being on the PAI Events Committee, send an email to [Events@pdxaa.com](mailto:Events@pdxaa.com) with "COMMITTEE" in the subject field.

## What Do You Think?

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Tell me what you think about this newsletter. Do you like what you're reading? What else would you like to see? This newsletter is another example of progress, not perfection. There will be changes in future editions, so give me your thoughts. Email Jennifer L., editor, at [newsletter@pdxaa.com](mailto:newsletter@pdxaa.com).

## Become Published

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Submit your article, poem, or artwork to *Sobriety in Stumptown*. Share your message of experience, strength, and hope. You can write about your personal "before and after AA" stories, things that have inspired you in sobriety, a spiritual awakening, a lesson you've learned in sobriety, or even a piece on how the AA promises have manifested in your life. Just tell your story in your own words, written from your heart. Your message is important, and just might save someone's life. And remember, this newsletter would not exist without your input.

Visit the Portland Area Intergroup website, [pdxaa.com](http://pdxaa.com), select the Newsletter section, and send me a MS Word document. I am here to help. Please keep your story to around 800 words. Please include your phone number or email address in case I have questions about your submission. Thank you.

Deadline for articles in *Sobriety in Stumptown* is the end of each month.

*-In service, Jennifer L., editor, [newsletter@pdxaa.com](mailto:newsletter@pdxaa.com)*

## Quotable Quotes

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The poet Rilke said, "Let everything happen to you. Beauty and terror. Just keep going. No feeling is final." Notice everything. Be open to everything and attached to nothing. For there is always more to come. --*Reprinted with permission of Soulseeds.com.*

People are often unreasonable, irrational and self-centered.

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies.

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere, people may deceive you.

Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.

Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today will often be forgotten.

Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough.

Give your best anyway.

because

In the final analysis, it is between you and God.

It was never between you and them anyway. --*Attributed to Mother Theresa*

"To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

--*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

"The addiction to drugs, food, alcohol, etc. is nothing compared to the addiction we humans have to thinking. Sitting quietly in silence is so foreign to most of us that the mind quickly starts thinking of its "problems" simply because it feels more "natural." We say we want peace, but because of our conditioning many of us actually feel more comfortable worrying. Worrying about what? Anything, the mind is not picky." --*Michael Jeffreys, motivational speaker*

"Some luck lies in not getting what you thought you wanted but getting what you have, which once you have got it you may be smart enough to see is what you would have wanted had you known." --Garrison Keillor, American author and humorist ▲

## **Step Five**

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"Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

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## **Tradition Five**

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"Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

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### **Portland Area Intergroup**

**825 NE 20<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite 200, Portland. Open M-F, 9:00AM to 5:00PM, 503-223-8569**

"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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