

SOBRIETY IN STUMPTOWN

www.pdxaa.com
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Portland Area Intergroup
1212 SE Division, Portland, OR
503-223-8569

April, 2008
Volume 1 Number 4

Monthly Business
Meetings

Finding a Professional Relationship

Portland Area Intergroup: 2nd Monday, 7:00 PM, 1212 SE Division St, Portland
PAI CPC: 1st Saturday, 11 AM, 1212 SE Division, Portland
PAI Public Information: 1st Saturday, 11 AM, 1212 SE Division, Portland
PAI Treatment Facilities: Friday, May 9, 1212 SE Division, Portland
PAI Bridging the Gap: ?
PAI Corrections: ?
PAI Outreach: ?
PAC: 1st Saturday, 6:00 PM, 47 N State St, Lake Oswego
Dist 9: 1st Wednesday, 6:30 PM, 24th and Kearney, Portland
Dist 10: last Monday, 7:00 PM, 5th and Hall, Beaverton
Dist 11: last Thursday, 6:00 PM, 186th and Division, Portland
Dist 12: 1st Tuesday, 6:30 PM, 235 SE 80th, Portland
Dist 15: 1st Wednesday, 6:45 PM, 710 6th St, Oregon City
Dist 18: 1st Saturday, 9:30 AM, 215 N 6th St, St. Helens
Dist 23: 1st Tuesday, 6:00 PM, Lake Grove Fire House
Dist 24: 1st Thursday, 6:00 PM, SE 16th and Division, Portland
Dist 26: 2nd Thursday, 7:00 PM, 8926-A N Lombard, Portland
Dist 27: 1st Monday, 6:30 PM, 1212 SE Division St, Portland
Dist 31: 2nd Tuesday, 7:00 PM, 937 NE Jackson School Rd, Hillsboro
Dist 34: 3rd Saturday, 5:00 PM, 485 Portland Ave, Gladstone
Dist 35: 2nd and 4th Saturday, 7:00 PM, 18926 SW Shaw St, Suite A, Beaverton
Dist 36: 2nd Thursday, 6:00 PM, 2025 SW Vermont St, Portland
Dist 37: 2nd Tuesday, 29775 SW Town Center Loop East, Wilsonville
DCM Portland Area: 3rd Monday, 6:30 PM, 1212 SE Division St, Portland

In 1983, I made a career change from a history professor to a marriage and family therapist. Part of my training had been at a family-based drug treatment program; addiction was a “family systems” problem and AA and other 12-Step programs were misguided and unnecessary. The staff saw nothing wrong with partying hard on weekends with lots of pot and booze. We were making up for what we missed in the Sixties—sex, drugs, and rock n’ roll. Soon I was using pot and alcohol every day. On my walk home (I had given up owning a car because it was too much trouble to maintain), I often wished there was someone I could talk to about how much I was using.

That year I made the (geographical) move to Portland from Philadelphia, and I was a single parent of twin teen-age boys. A few weeks later, I met a woman who would be a good professional contact to have. I didn’t know it then but I was ready to hear why my life was so unhappy and what the solution to my problems would be. While I talked about my professional background, she talked about the disease of addiction and the necessity for abstinence. She struck me as the sanest and wisest person I had ever met.

I began to suspect that maybe, just maybe, I was addicted to pot. After some reading about the disease concept of addiction, I had to admit that there might be something to it.

A couple of weeks later I decided to stop smoking pot but I didn’t need any 12-Step program. There was no need to stop drinking alcohol because I rarely got drunk if I wasn’t stoned first. And there wasn’t any need to tell my new friend any of this. I did think it would be a good idea to develop more of a relationship with her as a professional colleague. She clearly had a lot to teach me about addiction and recovery, things I had somehow missed in six years working in treatment programs.

Soon, my professional colleague and I were going to the movies and social events and we realized we were dating. On a Sunday drive, she casually mentioned that according to her understanding of addiction, recovery meant abstaining from all mind-altering drugs. She did not insist I give up alcohol; in fact, she made no reference to my drinking. But I heard her comment as an ultimatum and immediately began backing away. I saw nothing wrong with wine with dinner. I wasn’t getting drunk, so what was the problem?

In truth, I had a “slip” with pot and recovery wasn’t quite as easy as I thought it would be. My friend wasn’t asking any questions or making comments about my recovery, but I was sure it would be an issue in the future. She told me she had been involved with Al-anon for many years but I didn’t know that she knew and accepted the fact that she had no power over my addictions.

Finding a Professional Relationship, cont.

I decided it was time to stop dating and go back to a professional relationship. She calmly accepted my unilateral decision, neither becoming angry and calling me a stupid jerk nor becoming tearful and imploring me not to leave. She was disappointed we were no longer going to be involved with each other, but if that was my decision, she wasn't going to try to change my mind.

While my friend took the end of the relationship well, I sure didn't. I quickly spiraled down into a deepening depression. No surprise that I tried to relieve my depression with pot. It didn't help, and I once more resolved to stop using the stuff. I did continue to drink more and more to numb the emotional pain. Some months later, I had dental surgery and four pain killers to be taken "as needed." I took one immediately and bought a six-pack of beer "just in case." In a few hours, the pills and the beer were gone. Late at night, I left my sons alone and I went out to buy some pot but I was unsuccessful. I woke up hung over, knowing, absolutely knowing I was an alcoholic and addict who was powerless and whose life would continue to be unmanageable if I didn't stop drinking and using altogether. I surrendered without reservation and haven't been drunk or loaded since.

A few weeks later, I called my friend and suggested that we get back together again. She listened graciously and didn't hang up. But when I suggested we should go away to the beach for a weekend, she gently replied that maybe we should go a little more slowly; going to a movie might be better. And thus we started a relationship in recovery that has lasted nearly twenty-four years.

Allen W-E, Saturday Morning Live, Beaverton

Notes From My Desk

As many of us in the Portland area know, the International Women's Conference held their 44th annual event at our very own Convention Center. I must say that speaking for the many women here in Portland, this was one heck of an event! There were women flying in to Portland from virtually every state in the union. Every report we have been given spoke very highly of our local Gals and how this was a first class event!

The conference had a surplus of a few different items that they have donated to Portland Area Intergroup. Over the next couple of months you will be hearing about some of these items being for sale at the office. The intent is to sell these items at or below cost and take ALL PROCEEDS and deposit them into our local "Prudent Reserve Fund!" None of the money collected from the sale of these items will be used for any other purpose.

The items are:

1. Bottled water, 20 oz and 24 to a case. Cost is \$10.00 a case. If you buy water anyway, why not put your dollars in the prudent reserve?
2. A wonderful red umbrella that is spring loaded to deploy with a push of the button! Also it will collapse with a second push. You gotta see it to believe it!
3. Clear glass mugs—we are not sure yet how to price or otherwise disburse these but if you know anyone in the business that can help us re-print on them we would love to talk to them.

In any event, we appreciate the generosity from the IWC committee and we will look forward to your visit to the office to pick up YOUR preferred items.

In Loving Service,

Garry B., Office Manager

Meeting Updates:

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, www.pdxaa.com.

Coming Events:

To find information about coming events, click on [Events](#) on the Intergroup website.

Reaching Our Goal for Prudent Reserve

As of the end of the March, we are 16% of the way toward rebuilding our prudent reserve with \$4,909.61 toward the goal of \$30,000. Celebrate your birthday by contributing one dollar for each year of sobriety.

Committee News

Intergroup committees carry the message of recovery to the still suffering alcoholic. Please help with this Twelfth 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.

Cooperating with the Professional Community and Public Information: holding a Q and A panel and potluck workshop “Speaking at Non-AA Meetings,” a nuts n' bolts panel presentation by past Oregon delegates and CPC/PI volunteers about bringing the Traditions with you when speaking to professionals and the public on Saturday, May 3, 2008, 11AM – 1PM at the Portland Intergroup Office.

Bridging the Gap: BTG is a one-time temporary contact for people transitioning from a treatment center to meetings.

Portland Access Committee

The Portland Access Committee meets on the first Saturday of every month at the Starbucks in Lake Oswego, 47 N. State St. Lake Oswego, OR 97034. The meeting starts at 6 pm (ish) and usually lasts 1.5 hours. We welcome people just interested in finding out more about what we do. You don't need to know sign language to help. Email us at pdxaccess@gmail.com with questions.

March 2008 Financial Summary

Beginning Cash on Hand: \$4,330.25

Income: \$22,787.89

Expenses: \$24,511.37

Ending Cash on Hand: \$2,606.77

Become a Published Writer

Deadline for articles in Stumptown Sobriety is the 20th of each month.

Portland Area Intergroup, 1212 SE Division, is open Monday through Friday, 9 to 5.