



Sobriety in Stumptown

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Portland Area Intergroup
825 NE 20th Ave,
Portland, OR
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February Stories

Step Two and Tradition Two

by Eric K., Sobriety in Stumptown Editor

This month's newsletter submissions are focused on the Second Step and Second Tradition, inspired by the Big Book and the meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Step Two

by George D. from Portland, OR

I was raised in a God-fearing Christian family, on a farm out in the sticks, hometown USA. One might think this Indiana farm boy would know a little bit about god.

That was a spell ago; as the years went by, the further I ran from home and the further I ran from god. From bar town to bar town, drinking in and out of churches, somewhere I came to believe that if there was a god, he didn't like me and I wasn't too fond of him.

Days into months, months into years, year after year, I ran through life self-willed and running wild. I stopped one day, only for a rest, not intending to stay. I awoke to find myself a long time resident of Portland, Oregon.

It didn't take long to make new friends and find myself riding the fence; good friends on one side and bad ones on the other. It seemed to myself and others that but the slightest of winds I would find myself falling to one side or the other.

It was on such a fall Sunday two years ago I found myself sitting in a church pew, listening to a friend of mine who was telling me that there was a God. Whether it is the creator god, the god of nature, it only had to be a god of my own understanding. I took a moment to speak with him afterwards. I confessed to him step one and inquired about step 2. The questions he asked seemed simple enough, "George, do you believe there is a power greater than yourself?" The

next question, simple for him, but a decision I had to make. “George, do you believe, not ‘yeah, maybe,’ but truly believe in a power greater than yourself?”

Looking intently at a cross, my answer was yes. It had to be yes! I had to stop the path I was on; it lead only to death and what I know now as incomprehensible demoralization.

Gary is now my sponsor. He, the Steps, and the Fellowship of AA has taught my soul a new way of life and a new outcome on life.

Step Two

by Terry M. from Portland, OR

Insanity was a way of life for me, and the concept of being restored to sanity did not have any meaning to me. As I moved from Step One to be introduced to Step Two, I was told that I needed to find some power greater than myself to move away from the crazy lifestyle that I was living. I was lucky to have people in my life that were able to point out insane behavior, and to point me in the direction of sane behavior. All I needed now was a power to help me move towards it.

Water became a power greater than me, because when I was around water, I felt calm and peaceful. I saw how powerful water was when I was at the Oregon Coast, watching the waves as the tide rolled in and out. Water falls became a second example of a power greater than myself; trickles of water, slowly creating gentle grooves, which over the decades became water falls.

Once a power greater than myself was established, I started having my own personal experiences. One example was my friend and I were building a retaining wall and we were at Home Depot piling 50, 10 pound bricks onto the platform trolley. One brick at a time was easy, 500 pounds later was a challenge to move the cart anywhere, let alone to the cashier. So, my friend and I combined our strength and were able to push the cart to the cashier, as well as to out truck. I experienced at that point the saying, “What you can’t do by yourself, we can do together.”

As the years have gone by, this power greater than myself has become limitless and beyond words or definition. As I experience life in the moment, I have new experiences that show me that this power greater than myself can become larger as I become older. I am grateful for the part in the book that says to enlarge our spiritual life, and Step 2 is intrinsic to my growth.

Tradition Two

by Mike B. from Portland, OR

"There is but one ultimate authority,"... and it's not me. Let's get that understood right now. You know what they say, "my best thinking got me here... No one ever gets here on a winning streak..." That's what happens when you try to run your own life. It sounds so simple and so profound, so how come we can't figure it out until after our life has turned to shit? Remember, it wasn't a meteor falling out of the sky that rocked our world, it was our own genius.

Ok, now that's understood, how do we turn it around, how do we shift the paradigm? Because that's what it takes – a shift in our thinking. For me, it wasn't quick or easy. There was a lot of banging my head against the wall, making the same mistakes over and over. Coming to these rooms as often as I could, listening to people who had walked the path before me, I came to realize that surrender didn't mean giving up; it meant ditching the old thinking and being open minded and willing.

And that's not always easy for selfish, self-centered people. But that's what it takes. I tell you, I'm not an ascended master yet. I'm still a work in progress, but my life is SO MUCH easier that I've realized that it's not me that rules the universe, or even just runs MY little old life. For me, GOD is a concept and a principle, and a force in the universe, and that's better because that's something that you can't bargain with. You have to accept it.

Tradition Two

by Riley S, Portland, OR

When I first got sober I went to a lot of meetings. Then I quit my job and went to a lot more; about fourteen a week. I looked for men's meetings with a strong emphasis on fellowship. Hanging around the Alano Club I started hearing about one described as a cross talk meeting. I imagined men in a circle giving each other feedback like what I'd seen in group therapy. The first person who told me about the meeting said how great it was, the second person asked when I would start going—apparently, I didn't have an option. I learned what they meant by crosstalk, and I assumed the second person wanted me to go so he could tell me everything I was doing wrong. I reluctantly showed up and discovered that both guys just wanted to share an excellent meeting that was helping to connect some bull-headed men to the program of AA.

I came to love the meeting because of the excitement. I liked how people would get upset and vent their anger towards others. Turns out this wasn't the best for my sobriety. I've always been judgmental, but I assumed since the meeting was helping me so much—my other close AA friends would benefit from it as well. I became a member of the meeting, and started to carry it out into the world. I was practically a missionary. I wanted to convert the rest of my AA friends into members of this meeting. If he wasn't willing to come to the meeting, I took the meeting to him, by criticizing his program and informing him of all the mistakes he was making. Then I got a new sponsor and worked the steps again, and I realized that this judgement wasn't serving me well. I became bored with the meeting, drifted from the center of the group, and became cynical of the format.

Looking back, I realize that it was my problem and had nothing to do with the meeting. I became convinced that they weren't following tradition two, because they weren't using Robert's Rules to make decisions. Granted that might be true, but that has nothing to do with why I left the meeting. The truth is it no longer helped me, and that is okay. I've committed to and left several meetings in my two short years of sobriety; and I'm starting to learn there are countless ways to conduct meetings and they're all perfect in their own way. Whether it's right or wrong to use Robert's Rules, or whether it's right or wrong to have a steering committee isn't up to me to

decide. My job is to find a meeting I like, get a service position, and then commit to showing up each week.

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, 6:00 PM, St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, 2201 SW Vermont St, Portland

Dist 37: 2nd Tue, 6:30 PM, 29775 SW Town Center Loop East, Wilsonville

Committee News

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 AA 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 AA." Please contact the PAI office via phone, 503-223-8569, or email 1212@pdxaa.org, if you are interested.

AA Hotline: The AA Hotline keeps the Portland phone number for AA active 24 hours a day, every day of the year. The way this is accomplished is by volunteer support. Calls to the AA

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.

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 AA 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: March 1st.

Step One

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

Tradition One

"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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