



Serving the Greater Portland Metropolitan Area

# 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*

### **Step Two and Tradition Two**

*by Amy B., Sobriety in Stumptown Editor*

Welcome to 2018! The first issue of the year will feature discussion on the first step, first tradition and a poetry submission.

### **Step Two**

*by Kristen D. from Portland, Oregon*

When I arrived at the doors of AA, I had a deep willingness to go to any lengths to get and stay sober. When the time came to work on step two with my sponsor - "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity" - I felt the hope shot. I wasn't entirely convinced a higher power would keep me sober but I was ready to give it a shot if it meant a chance at serenity and sobriety. I had been seeking to fill the hole in my soul all my life one way or another, I just never expected to find what I was looking for in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous.

When I began to do the work around step two, I loved that my higher power could be anything I wanted it to be as long as it was greater than me; it was an attractive concept. My sponsor shared the significance of a higher power and the meaning behind step two. I found awareness around my deep spiritual malady shaped over decades of alcoholic blackouts and resentments. I was taught that my higher power is the defense against that first drink which answered my question of why it needed to be greater than myself. Ah, now the puzzle pieces of this simple program started to fit into place. It took several twenty-four hours before I was able to put step two into a daily practice but as time moved on I came to rely heavily on my newly found higher power.

Today, I have a beautiful relationship that continues to evolve, strengthen and keep me sober - all starting from a tiny glimmer of hope, the size of a mustard seed. All I wanted to do was to stop drinking and AA gave me so much more. I am grateful for my amazing life today and for the

relationship I have with my higher power.

## **Tradition Two**

*by Barbara E. from Portland, Oregon*

*"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."*

Tradition Two contains two lengthy examples underpinning the premise that a Higher Power is AA's only "leader." The rest of us, no matter how much time we have in the program, are servants carrying the message of how we each got sober (fully explained in the Big Book) and our individual maintenance programs.

The *Twelve by Twelve* explanation of Tradition Two contains two lengthy examples, both illustrating that in AA, ego, as well as the urge to control never works.

In the first example, an AA member moved to a new town and started a meeting. As the membership grew, the meeting starter became a possessive "bleeding deacon" dominating sessions for fear it would fold without his "guidance."

In the second, AA's co-founder Bill Wilson turned down a hospital director's offer to become its alcoholic "therapist," thanks to the group conscience strongly indicating his temptation was based on prestige, power, and money instead of being a "fellow among fellows" carrying the message in AA's early days.

Those of us who plunged into service work in *our* early AA days learned to recognize the difference between "bleeding deacons" and "elder statesmen/women." Now in Maryland/DC all the meeting jobs except treasurer, rotated monthly to prevent desperate possessiveness then turning into unhappy boredom or a dictatorship. Whether it was coffee making or finding chairs, doing literature or greeting, anyone could do the job for four meetings a month.

The bleeding "deaconess" at my Monday 10 a.m. meeting was "Bunny Ten Years" (not her real name). It was obvious when she handed me a key that she took a dim view of someone with only six months sobriety volunteering to be coffeemaker and do set-up. I understand that today, but then, I resented her lack of trust and arrived at 9 to "show her." She was already there, starting coffee and set-up. She monitored even how I positioned cups and condiments and positioning the literature. The next Monday, I showed up at 8. There she was, again beginning set-up. I knew by then even if I showed up at 6, Bunny would be there. So on the last two Mondays, I arrived at 9 and deliberately let her do the heavy lifting. I also deduced that "bleeding deacons" are terrified "their" meetings will fold without heavy control.

Now, each of us has a service specialty, and after that experience, mine was starting meetings. My "textbook" was General Services' Group booklet seemingly designed to avert possessive bleeding deacons by strongly advocating all jobs but the treasurer's should be rotated so that all members get a chance to do service work. And meeting-starters need to back away within six months, having spent the previous weeks recruiting replacements.

That's the antidote against possessiveness and a God complex—not to mention a Bunny Ten Year's fear that replacements can't possibly do a good job at perhaps the easiest demands of AA. Equally, no one gets "stuck" and resentful with a year or more of being a secretary, literature person, timer, greeter, coffeemaker, etc. for years.

As Henry the Plumber used to advise when no one volunteered to be secretary, put the key on the table and tell them unless someone "opened" next week, there would be no meeting. Someone always picked up the key, as HP intended.

I have a long record of starting meetings: two in Maryland, three in Corvallis, two in Louisiana, and four in Portland (West Linn, Lake Oswego's Women's Acceptance, 4<sup>th</sup> Dimension, Safe Haven Meditation). And I've experienced "some fly and some die" no matter how much "body English" was invested in keeping them going. HP was in charge and one has to let go of a meeting and let it die. In this past year, those involved in re-establishing all the meetings once held at Philip Neri's Catholic Church to Tabor Space facilities, have also had to learn that ultimately, HP calls the shots. Such an abrupt exodus had to have been superb for humility and the adventure that accompanies change. We simply are not in charge. HP is.

## 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, 6:00 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 March issue: **March 5th**

### **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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