



Sobriety in Stumptown

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

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June stories and Art

Step Six and Tradition Six

by Amy B., Sobriety in Stumptown Editor

The fifth issue of the year will feature entries on topics exploring modern sobriety as well as the fifth step and tradition of the AA program.

What is "willingness"?

by Anne B. from Oregon City, Oregon

What does it mean to "become willing"? How do we achieve such an abstract thing? As a newbie trying desperately to grasp this program, Step Six introduced a whole new dimension of sobriety, one that would echo in the rest of my life as I got further and further away from my life of addiction.

Chaos was king when I was drinking. I never knew what would happen when I drank, and towards the end, I drank every day. There was no being prepared for anything, because my future, even to the end of the current week, was nothing but a murky abyss. It was like driving through the night in thick fog. When I stopped drinking, the fog began to clear, and I could start looking ahead and preparing myself. Planning and making goals. Step Six was the beginning of my usage of these tools in my life.

I prepared myself for the act of letting go of my defects, the things that had, until that point, been the fog in the night. I dared to imagine a reality without those distractions and hinderances, of a road to a bright future completely unobstructed. It was just the hope for that future someday being my life that made me surrender and truly become willing.

Vow of Poverty

by Henry R. from Portland OR

The message in this tradition is AA's pledge to remain poor. In fact, one could say AA pioneered the

concept of corporate poverty.

The accumulation of money, property, power has been the downfall of many an organization. The most well-intentioned group eventually gets into a massive bickering session, and the slide begins. But then again, lots of organizations do a lot of good with lots of money. I have a friend who works for an organization that gives Bill Gates's money away to third world nations for healthcare projects. What could be a better cause than that?

The fact is, money is not the lifeblood of AA. We need just enough to cover expenses, any more than that is a nuisance. Just attend a GSR meeting in your district and whenever the subject turns to money and watch the complaint session begin.

Let's see what Bill has to say about this whole thing about money.

"The core of AA procedure is one alcoholic talking to another, whether that be sitting on a curbstone, in a home, or at a meeting. It's the message, not the place; it's the talk, not the alms. That does our work. Just places to meet and talk, that's about all AA needs. Beyond these, a few small offices, a few secretaries at their desks, a few dollars apiece a year, easily met by voluntary contributions. Trivial indeed, our expenses!"

- *From The Grapevine, May 1948*

Keeping AA poor means keeping AA cheap for its users and that means attracting many more struggling alcoholics into meetings who may be deterred by a need for donations, whether that be a requirement or simply an uncomfortable implication. Tradition six is the protection that keeps AA accessible for all.

Life 101

by Katherine H. from Portland, OR

In early sobriety, I found that certain ideas or quotes stuck in my head, following me around as they swirled in my head. I felt like a student again, a forty-year-old freshman in life, studying what it meant to be a functioning person in this world. As I came up on Step Six with my sponsor, one quote seemed to ruminate endlessly for me, "The things we fear the most have already happened to us."

Here I had spent weeks compiling all my fears and resentments and had seen them there in black and white on paper then heard them as I recited them to my sponsor and religious leader and through it all, I felt like I was a freshly bleached shirt being spun again and again in the dryer. Everything that I was afraid of was part of some pattern that had persisted and shown up over and over in my life. Every relationship, job, whatever, was sabotaged by the same old devices re-emerging consistently.

But now that I knew this, what was there to do about it? I tried to imagine being that shirt again, shiny white again from the bleaching, all my stains removed. It was possible to remove the old and create a clean slate, but how do we keep this precious thing, this brand-new life, away from the forces that tarnished our old one?

As with all things in this program, the answer to that question is found within these steps and within these texts. We work Step Six and Step Seven. We identify our flaws through our inventory, we see our beloved defects that have had us on repeat like zombies dancing to the beat of a skipping CD. For some of us, myself, for example, it takes four decades of this dance before we even realize what we are doing.

Step Six, for me, was about this realization. It wasn't yet time to have the patterns taken away. It was just a time to stop the dance and come to terms with our past. A step of first reflection, then projection. A step appropriately placed halfway in between our days as a drunk zombie and our future in the fourth dimension.

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 July issue: **July 2nd**

Step Six

"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

Tradition Five

"An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose."

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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