

Sobriety in Stumptown

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Portland Area Intergroup
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Monthly Business Meetings

Portland Area Intergroup: 2nd Monday, 7:00 PM, 3123 NE 24th Ave., Portland
PAI CPC: 1st Thursday, 6:30pm, 825 NE 20th Ave., Portland (board room)
PAI Public Information: 1st Thursday, 6:30pm, 825 NE 20th Ave., Portland (board room)
PAI Treatment Facilities: TBA
PAI Bridging the Gap: 3rd Monday, 6:30pm, Daily Reprieve Center, 16641 SE 82nd Dr., Clackamas
PAI Corrections:
PAI Outreach:
PAC: 1st Saturday, 6:00 PM, 1111 SW Country Club, L. O.
Dist. 9: 1st Wednesday, 6:30 PM, 24th and Kearney, Portland
Dist. 10: Last Monday, 7:00 PM, 12555 SW 4th St., Beaverton
Dist. 11: Last Thursday, 6:00 PM, Glisan Terrace Clubhouse, 17440 NE Glisan, Portland
Dist. 12: 1st Tuesday, 6:30 PM, 235 SE 80th, Portland
Dist. 15: 1st Wednesday, 6:45PM, 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, 7:00 PM, 14100 SE Sunnyside Rd., Clackamas
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 Saturdays, 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, 825 NE 20th Ave., Suite 200, Portland

The Story of David

We don't have to drink to die.

We buried him yesterday. The County Coroner had published the required notices for next of kin and nobody had claimed the body. It was just I and his sponsor, no preacher even; the county doesn't pay for those.

Not much of a send-off, and not the one David had asked for. A cheap coffin, backhoe dug a hole, and that was it - another old AA gone.

He had been sober over 20 years and in AA over 30, a stern and rigid man who tried to soften his edges and never could.

He was a loner, a fringe-er, an isolated man at the edge of life's good things. He hung in there, and in the end hung himself. I don't know why; I can't know.

I know there had been a diagnosis of senile dementia, and I know that the doctor had added cancer to the list. But, I've seen AA's deal with such things before. I don't know why David decided he couldn't.

It isn't the first time I've been through this in Alcoholics Anonymous. I've known several over the years who just up and walked out life's door one day. Sober, but not happy. Sober, but not at peace. Sober, but they died of alcoholism.

Our disease doesn't need us to drink in order to kill us. I wish more folks knew that, and appreciated it.

Alcoholism is the only disease that is entirely capable of fighting back, of taking care of

itself, and of emerging in new places and new forms when it isn't properly treated. That's because of the spiritual malady.

Most people think that has something to do with prayer or with God. It doesn't. It has to do with 'our spirit' - that force which animates, motivates and propels us.

As an alcoholic, my spirit is ill. It is flawed. My character, or basic nature, doesn't work right. At its root, it is a fundamental and unresolvable insecurity, a hole that can't ever be filled.

It is an instinct run rampant, a desperate need for acceptance and love that cannot be met. It hurts. It fills one with fear. The selfishness and self-centeredness of the alcoholic lies here. We are totally preoccupied with what is going on with ourselves on the inside.

The slings and arrows of experience warped by this need drive us to the fringe, and the voices of the committee in our head keep us there.

We are obsessed with ourselves, and from this condition of mind - the insanity of feelings gone haywire, we become self-medicators eventually.

We discover alcohol or something else, and the stuff quiets the voices, provides the relief we've never been able to find in any other way. It isn't any wonder we drink, or drug the way we do.

And some of us don't develop an addiction. In attempting to meet these crying demands of our spirit become ill, we develop other malformations of behavior, and suffer in a hundred different ways.

(The Story of David, cont.)

God broke David's obsession to drink. But, I don't think David ever truly understood his disease. I say that because I watched him struggle with those old unresolved issues of his heart for years.

His rigidity, coldness, aloofness, isolation and difficulty with other people were a reflection of the pain in his heart, of the disease of alcoholism gone deep inside, and still active.

Alcoholism didn't need David to drink in order to continue trying to kill him, and in the end, it succeeded. In the end, instead of self abandonment, David abandoned hope, and discovered a bitter end.

Our recovery from alcoholism through the Steps must be a three-fold process. It is not one dimensional. When we say in AA, that we have a triangle - recovery, unity, service - we mean it.

In working the Steps, I clear a pathway for two purposes. - first, to come into a group of human people and away from the fringe of society where I have spent most of my emotional life.

Secondly, to discover 'belonging' through service to the people within that group. It is only this entire, threefold process that heals. It is especially true for those of us who suffer from the spiritual malady to a great degree.

Perhaps the 12th Step says it best:

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps (recovery), we tried to carry this message to other alcoholics (service) and practice these principles in all our affairs (unity)."

You see, I cannot hold back. I must not continue to suffer that shyness, aloneness, that overwhelming sense of self, in my affairs. I must get involved in a group of people to practice these principles in all my affairs.

Only the total approach is healing. Anything less is little more than driving my disease deep. And if I do that, it will continue to eat away, trying to destroy me.

It destroyed David. This is a memorial to an old AA who gave his best shot - and I think David ended up on the plus side. It wasn't his fault; he seemed to have been born that way.

There were a lot of old ideas about self that David could never muster the willingness to let go of. He is at rest now.

But it says somewhere that "no matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others."

David cannot speak to his experience any longer; I am speaking in his memory. And I think that if David could talk to us today, he'd say, "Understand your disease thoroughly, and work the complete program of recovery!"

God Bless!

-Author Unknown

Notes from My Desk

I want to bring to everyone's attention that our out-reach committees are a fantastic way for AA members to get involved with 12 step work beyond what you do at your home group. Keeping First Things First, we must be present at our meetings with our hand out to the newcomer and making sure our group has enough volunteers to run smoothly and be self supporting.

When we feel the inspiration to do more there are many opportunities. With-out detailing each committee in this article, I will call them by their name. PI (public information), CPC (cooperation with the professional committee), CCF (cooperation with correctional facilities), BTG (bridging the gap). These committees are in contact with people who may not know that AA exists at all. Our purpose is to educate the general public about the AA program and how AA can be reached.

Some of the committees will be in contact with people who are in the process of finding recovery. BTG is a perfect example. BTG makes available to treatment centers and their patients, an AA contact that will assist a newly sober person in finding AA in their neighborhood when returning home after treatment.

All of our committees are duplicated at Intergroup, District, and Area level, but we do not necessarily do the exact same things. At the intergroup level we like to do our best to keep districts and groups aware of each opportunity. We, collectively as AA members carry the message. We do not compete with each other to complete assignments. On the contrary, we work together to help make sure we have AA's to volunteer period, to carry the message! We are all in the same program doing the same thing.

If you are a committee chair for your group or your district and you do not know what to do next, please contact central office so we can tell you about the next committee meetings that are being held. There is more work in AA to do than we have time and volunteers to do. We are all more effective when we work together in Unity.

In Loving Service,
Garry B.

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: 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.

Bridging the Gap: BTG is a one-time temporary contact for people transitioning from a treatment center to meetings. Bridging the Gap meets the third Monday of each month at 6:30pm at the Daily Reprieve Center, located at 16641 SE 82nd Dr., Clackamas, OR 97015 (in the old Tombstone building).

"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 or call at 503-867-1452 if you are interested.

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 6pm (ish) and usually lasts one-and-a-half hours. We welcome people just interested in finding out more about what we do. You don't need to know sign language to help. E-mail us at pdxaccess@gmail.com with questions.

Corrections: Currently our 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 if you are interested.

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.

Become a Published Writer

The deadline for articles in *Sobriety in Stumptown* is the end of each month. Please keep stories to 500 words maximum. Submit to Erica M. at newsletter@pdxaa.com.

Portland Area Intergroup, 825 NE 20th Avenue, Suite 200 is open Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM.

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.

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