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Volume 10 Issue 4

April 2010

## Step Four

**“Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves”.**

Ok, lets get real. The first time I saw this Step I thought, “what the heck does that mean and why would I want to do such a thing?” My next thought was “my morals are just fine, thank you very much.” Of course I needed to get my court slipped signed before leaving that first meeting. Besides, I didn't have a drinking problem – I had a legal problem. Then it occurred to me that I could have a drink. So by golly, I went to the nearest bar and that's just what I did. I quickly discovered that did not work to well. In no time my life was even in bigger shambles and it was- n't getting any better. At least the parts that I could remember. But that's another story.

I managed to get a little dry time in the program. 30 days, 60 days – then another drink. Even managed to have a year. Then another drink or was it fifty? I finally managed to have 23 months without a drink – unbelievable. Me – not drink? So one day I had an argument with my girlfriend and my mom. I was going to daily meetings. As I headed for the 5:30 meeting I had this great idea – well, actually a crazy idea – that if I stopped at a particular bar and made amends on a old bar tab – then everything would be better – and I would not be so angry. I paid the old tab – and then drank until I finally passed out 12 hours later. That was my last drink or was it fifty? But that's another story.

Why do I tell you this in relation to Step Four? The steps are a funny thing – they really work best if taken in order. To kind of do Step One, maybe glance at Two and Three then skip to Nine takes either a giant leap of faith – or in my case, a bit of alcohol induced insanity. Not doing the Steps correctly and in order increased the likely hood of drinking. I apparently proved that. You don't have to.

After that last drink and another week in the hospital with alcohol poisoning I was ready – boy was I ready. I asked Jim S. to be my sponsor. He agreed under one condition – that I would sit down with him and take a Step a week. This meant that I would go through all the Steps in 12 weeks. Both terror and joy ran through my veins. Terror that I would have to face all my feelings and joy that I finally just might get some real recovery. I was desperate – so I agreed. →

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Jim showed me how to take the Steps – from the beginning and in order. Step One. Step Two. Step Three. Then the fourth week – Step Four. The terror showed up again. But Jim reassured me. He showed me on page 64 how Step Four was just like a business which takes a regular inventory – and that if it didn't it would go broke. I could understand what a business inventory was. He said perhaps if an alcoholic doesn't take an inventory – they just might drink again. So I got to work.



Jim gave me a week. I made the list as described on page 65 (funny how the first 164 pages of the Big Book works in order). My list was detailed and reveling. By the end of the week I had written endless pages about my flaws, resentments, grudges, anger, sexual behavior, selfishness, dis-honesty and so on that I care to discuss here. I was directed to read through page 71 and ask Jim questions. I did. I found more behaviors and actions that I had not seen at first. Jim showed me how to expand my list. He also made sure that I noted my “positive attributes”. It all went on paper.

Now I was beginning to understand just what I had done to my life. How my feelings, thoughts and actions had contributed to my crazy alcoholic behavior. And even more importantly how finally taking the Steps in order - and taking the Fourth Step inventory was helping me get out of the destruction of my behavior and life. Then one day I let go of all my “unusable inventory” by taking the Fifth Step with Jim. But that and the rest of the Steps is another story.

Today I am grateful that Higher Power through the 12 Steps, Jim's early guidance and all the members of the program have laid a foundation in my life that works. A life where I now follow HP's guidance to the best of my ability, help others and practice the principals in all my affairs. I am especially grateful that I have not had a drink since December 13, 1988. My first day of sobriety is December 14, 1988.

May HP bless all of us that We never need another drink.

Michael H.



## Heard at a meeting.....

"Most of us can read the writing on the wall, we just assume it's addressed to someone else."

"It is easy to sit up & take notice. What's difficult is standing up & taking action."

"What most of us need is a good kick in the seat of our cants!"

"People who say it cannot be done should not interrupt those who are doing it."

"Blessed are those who can laugh at themselves, for they shall never cease to be amused."

"Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there."

"Don't say the world owes you. The world owes you nothing. It was here first."

"Prayer is not asking. It's a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one's weakness. It's better in prayer to have a heart without words, than words without heart."

"Don't worry about what people think of you. They rarely do!"

"My experience has been that when I am unwilling to ask for help, and I insist that I can do it all myself, I'm just a drunk talking to a crazy person."

## Food for Thought:

Old-timer: "Every morning I ask God to help keep me sober that day, and every night I thank Him for helping me stay sober."

Newcomer: "How do you know it was God that helped you stay sober?"

Old-timer: "He was the only one I asked!"

# Autonomy Is Not an Excuse

## Tradition Four - Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.

The Fourth Tradition seems to me to be one of the least understood and most misinterpreted. During discussions of Tradition Four I've heard opinions expressed all the way from "Autonomous means we can do whatever we want" to "AA as a whole is affected by everything a group does--it's just a matter of degree." In my experience, the truth lies somewhere in between these two.

The idea that a group is autonomous has been used to justify breaking other Traditions (such as affiliating with a club or a treatment facility or failing to be self-supporting by accepting gifts of money or services or rent-free meeting places from other organization), and to justify failure to participate in AA as a whole through the service structure. Disunity has been seen as independence, and self-will has been justified, all in the name of autonomy.

Familiarity with the long form of Tradition Four has helped me understand the principle involved. The long form reads: "With respect to its own affairs, each AA group should be responsible to no other authority than its own conscience. But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted. And no group, regional committee, or individual should ever take any action that might greatly affect Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole without conferring with the Trustees of the General Service Board. On such issues our common welfare is paramount."

In the long form, the emphasis is on responsibility to the group conscience, and independence from outside influence. No mention is made of separation from other groups or AA as a whole. Instead, emphasis is placed on concern for the welfare of other groups and of AA as a whole: "On such issues our common welfare is paramount."

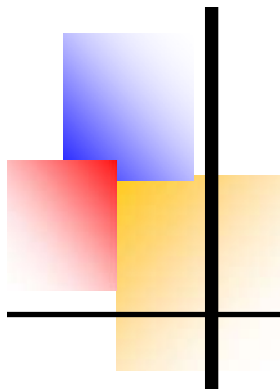
On matters affecting only my group we have unlimited freedom. No other group can say when, where, or how often our groups should meet. Our format, meeting length, room setup, and internal business affairs concern only the members of our group. We are guided by all of the Twelve Traditions in making our group decisions, but they are our decisions to make. And no other individual or organization has a right to dictate to a group regarding these matters. We ensure our autonomy from outside influence by applying the other Traditions--we are self-supporting; we do not endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to other organizations or causes; we avoid public controversy; we remain nonprofessional.

When the actions of our group affect other groups, however, we are told those groups ought to be consulted. Such situations might include scheduling conflicts, public information efforts, carrying the message into local treatment and correctional facilities, and directing the activities of our local central office. Our group has found that these matters can best be handled in cooperation with other groups through participation in the AA service structure at the district level.

And what about matters affecting AA as a whole? Our group feels strongly that any public anonymity break, solicitation of funds from outside our Fellowship, affiliation with other organizations or institutions--in short, any violation of the Traditions has the potential to affect AA as a whole, and in these matters it is essential to confer with the General Service structure through our area delegate.

We also have a responsibility to share with our delegate, and through him with the entire Fellowship, any bright and shining idea for improvement of Alcoholics Anonymous we may come up with. Do we have a more effective way to carry the message? Have we found the answer to encouraging better communication and participation? Are we aware of a strong need for an additional service committee, pamphlet, video, or other tool for carrying the message? We have not only the opportunity, but the obligation, to share our ideas and information.

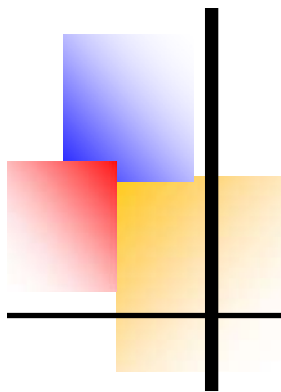
*Mickey H.  
Springville, Utah*



# APRIL 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 CO Speaker Mtg- 7 pm Environ Center  Tumalo Speaker Mtg-7 pm	3 Redmond Potluck, Speaker Mtg Potluck 6 pm Speaker 7pm
4 Hi Desert Round Up Planning Committee Mtg 3:00-4:30 TEC	5	6  Bend Tuesday Night Speaker 7 pm Nazarene Church	7	8 Firing Line Bethlehem Inn 7:00pm	9  Tumalo Speaker Mtg- 7 pm Fellowship Hall	10
11  District 5 GSR Mtg 4 pm TEC	12	13	14	15 Firing Line Bethlehem Inn 7:00pm  Entertainment Committee 7pm	16 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm Environ Center  Tumalo speaker mtg -7 pm	17
18	19	20 Rule 62 Group Spkr Mtg 7:30pm Presbyterian Church, Bend	21 WFS 50th Birthday Potluck Potluck at 6pm Speaker 7pm Discovery Church	22 Firing Line Bethlehem Inn 7:00pm	23 Bend Milestone Mtg 7pm Trinity Church Brooks Hall	24 Intergroup Potluck/Spkr Mtg Potluck 6pm Speaker 7pm  PRINEVILLE
25 Intergroup Advisory 5pm IGR 5:30pm TEC Open to All	26	27	28	29 Firing Line Bethlehem Inn 7:00pm	30 Tumalo Speaker Mtg- 7 pm Fellowship Hall	
Bend Milestone Meeting Firing Line Central Oregon Speaker Meeting Entertainment Committee District 5 GSR Meeting Intergroup Advisory Board Meeting Intergroup IGR Meeting Intergroup Potluck Speaker Meeting La Pine Potluck Speaker Meeting Redmond Potluck Speaker Meeting Rule 62 Speaker Meeting Tuesday Speaker Meeting		Trinity Episcopal Church Bethlehem Inn Environmental Center Call for directions: Tanya 541.410-9910 TEC TEC TEC Prineville La Pine Park & Rec Building Redmond Community Church Presbyterian Church Nazarene Church			469 NW Wall Street 3705 N Hwy 97, Bend 16 NW Kansas, Bend  469 NW Wall Street, Bend 469 NW Wall Street, Bend 469 NW Wall Street, Bend  16405 12 1st Street, La Pine 10 & Cedar, Redmond 230 NE 9th Street, Bend 1270 NE 27th, Bend	

**Note:** The Central Oregon Intergroup Newsletter is a monthly newsletter of the Central Oregon Intergroup Office. It is about, by and for members of Central Oregon Alcoholics Anonymous. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to AA as a whole. Quotations from AA books, pamphlets, or other literature are reprinted with permission of AA and World Services, Inc. Any internet links or other citations are provided as a courtesy only. No specific endorsement is intended or should be inferred.



# MAY 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Redmond Potluck, Speaker Mtg Potluck 6 pm Speaker 7pm
2	3	4 Bend Tuesday Night Speaker 7 pm Nazarene Church	5	6 Firing Line Bethlehem Inn 7:00pm	7 CO Speaker Mtg- 7 pm Environ Center  Tumalo Speaker Mtg-7 pm	8
9 District 5 GSR Mtg 4 pm TEC	10	11	12	13 Firing Line Bethlehem Inn 7:00pm	14 Tumalo Speaker Mtg- 7 pm Fellowship Hall	15
16	17	18 Rule 62 Group Spkr Mtg 7:30pm Presbyterian Church, Bend	19 La Pine Potluck/ Speaker Mtg Potluck 6pm Speaker 7pm Park/Rec Bldg	20 Firing Line Bethlehem Inn 7:00pm	21 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm Environ Center  Tumalo speaker mtg -7 pm	22 Intergroup Potluck/Spkr Mtg Potluck 6pm Speaker 7pm  BEND—TEC
23 Intergroup Advisory 5pm IGR 5:30pm TEC Open to All	24	25	26	27 Firing Line Bethlehem Inn 7:00pm	28 Bend Milestone Mtg 7pm Trinity Church Brooks Hall	29
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## MEETINGS

### ADDITIONS/CHANGES/

New Meeting Schedules are now available—check your home group meetings for copies

## **HOTLINE NEWS**

### **12 Step Phone Lists Are being updated.**

*This is a great way to be of service.  
Calls will be handled by two people,  
one with some time  
and a newcomer.*

*Check with your group IGR to  
have your name included on the  
new listings available for hotline  
volunteers*

### **WFS 50th Birthday Potluck/Speaker Meeting Wed April 21**

Join us for this Annual event  
to celebrate Central Oregon's  
oldest meeting!

*Main Course Provided  
Bring Salad, desert or soda*

6pm Potluck  
7Pm Speaker

**Discovery Church**  
334 NW Newport Ave  
Bend

## **MARCH Milestones**



### **Steps to Sobriety**

Tom M	03/07/94	16 years
Ray M	03/27/08	2 years
Deric G.	03/03/08	2 years
Justin O.	03/16/09	1 year

### **Redmond SOS**

Greg M.	03/25/83	27 years
Dexter S.	03/26/95	15 years

### **Eastside Early Ris-**

Jeff K.	03/14/86	24 years
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Charlie	03/23/87	23 years
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### **Madras Oasis Group**

Larry S.	29 years
Mark S.	5 years

### **Attitude Ajustment**

Mark M.	03/03/08	2 years
Spurge C	03/10/85	25 years
Joe M.	03/11/01	9 years
Wildog	03/12/80	30 years
Ellen T.	03/16/01	9 years
Paul V.	03/17/08	2 years
Larry		
McG	03/20/00	10 years
Liz T.	03/27/02	8 years

### **Sisters**

Jan M.	03/26/89	21 years
Peter K.	03/17/85	25 years
Robbie R.	03/16/83	27 years

## **APRIL Milestones**

### **Steps to Sobriety**

Kathryn	04/24/89	21 years
Brian B.	04/02/02	8 years
Darla B.	04/15/05	5 years
Jonny L.	04/15/08	2 years

### **Redmond SOS**

Jerry C.	04/06/97	13 years
Pat H.	04/20/81	29 years

### **Sisters**

Bill M	04/22/96	14 years
David G.	04/23/84	26 years
Emil S.	04/11/08	2 years

Secretaries: Submit your Home  
Group birthday lists  
to coaanewsletter@aol.com  
by the 3rd Monday of the month  
to be  
included in the next month's issue

### **Central Oregon Hi Desert Round Up Planning Committee Needs Your Help!**

**Theme:** Unity in Action  
**Location:** Bend Armory  
**Dates:** September 24, 25, 26

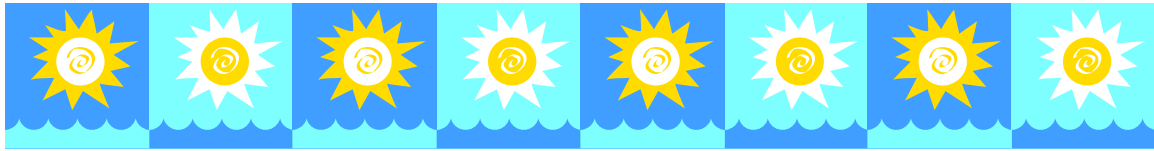
Monthly Meetings—See how you can help!

Contact:  
Carrie S. @ 541.419.4159

## **Central Oregon AA Website**

**Thanks to our new Website Chair the site has been totally revised!**

**Check it out! Your source for up to date info**  
**[coigaa.org](http://coigaa.org)**



# **Monthly Potluck**

***St. Joseph's Catholic Church  
150 E Street Main  
Prineville***

***Saturday, April 24***

***Potluck: 6pm***

***Speakers: 7pm***

***Karen R 21 years in AA***

***Pam T 8 years in Al-Non***

***Lots of great food & fellowship!***

***A to L — Main Dish***

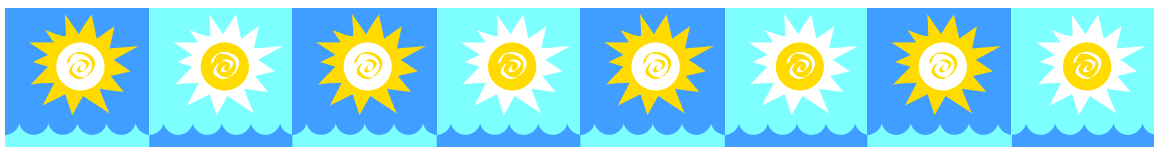
***M to Q — Desert***

***R to Z — Salad***

***Setup at 4:30pm***

***Help with clean up appreciated!***

***Call Mark or Linda L for info: 541.447.1577***



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