

Inside: What exactly is "crosstalk"?



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LESSONS FROM NEWCOMERS

"Remember that we deal with alcohol—cunning, baffling, powerful!" This sentence has been read thousands of times to me in meetings. Sadly, I haven't truly heard these words as often as they've been read. The truth is that I've been guilty of resting on my laurels—banking on staying sober on yesterday's actions or the dangerous illusion of sober time. When I do hear this sentence read, it sends a chilling reminder down my spine. I have lost countless friends to this insidious disease—temporarily and permanently.

When I drift away from the "spiritual program of action," I need look no further than the nearest newcomer to be reminded of what works to keep me sober and grateful. That's a great irony that I've found in AA—sometimes the people with the greatest quality of sobriety are those with the *least* amount of time, not the most. The newcomer's frantic desperation, spiritual exhaustion, and limitless hope are unmistakable. It is those exact feelings that propel me into taking action after periods of complacency which I've experienced over the years.

As a newcomer, I was desperate, exhausted and hopeless. People at meetings gave me lots of instructions; in fear of relapse, I clung to them all. I was told to keep coming back, to attend one meeting per day for ninety days. I was told to pray every morning and every night on my knees—to ask my Higher Power to relieve me of the obsession to drink. AA's directed me to read the Big Book, to call other women every day, and to show up early and to stay late at meetings. They told me to take the first three steps every morning before my feet even touched the floor; to get a sponsor and call her every day. I was told to reach out to others—that I had something to offer to women with less time than me (after all, I knew how to get 30 days when they couldn't even get one). Today when the pain gets great enough or I find myself questioning, "Is this all there is to being sober?" I go back to doing the "silly, simple things" I was taught in my early AA days.



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"Sometimes the people with the greatest quality of sobriety are those with the least amount of time, not the most"



Lessons from Newcomers, continued

In May, I reached a milestone in Alcoholics Anonymous and celebrated 10 years of sobriety. The anniversary sparked mixed feelings in me. I felt moments of pride and relief (two feelings that can be dangerous to this alcoholic); fortunately, I experienced an even greater sense of healthy fear and urgency to practice AA's way of life. When I need to get back into the middle of the AA herd, I start small...but I start. I call my sponsor more frequently. I attend more meetings, and arrange to give rides to newcomers or sponsees. I take service positions or say I'll be somewhere (and don't back out). I hit my knees first thing in the morning, and read pages 84-88 while enjoying my morning coffee. I reach out to those who struggle to stay sober—I help them, and they undoubtedly help me.

Now, by nature I am a great starter and a horrible finisher! So I no longer set unrealistic goals that aggravate my perfectionism. Instead, I remember that I cannot stay sober on yesterday's work. I focus on what I'm doing today to maintain my sobriety. And when I am most troubled to move forward, I recall the first sentence in the Big Book's Working with Others: "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics." I focus on the last half of the primary purpose as outlined in the AA Preamble—helping others achieve sobriety. Sobriety, which was so freely given to me when I was a newcomer.

Jensine L.

Quote of the Month

"The soul would have no rainbow had the eye no tears."

Ray H Santa Cruz, CA Grapevine, November 1988



The AA Way

"The methods used by Alcoholics Anonymous are not medical methods. They are not scientific procedures. They are not professional activities. No one has anything for sale. No one pretends to be objective. The methods are the voluntary expression of love, sympathy and concern, by those who have suffered, for another who is suffering. They depend upon the mutual stimulation and example of group feeling in workers toward a common high purpose."

Dr. Karl Menninger



AN OLD-TIMER'S WISDOM:

Years ago I was taught by those who preceded me that I must ever be on guard--that I'd always be an alcoholic--Thank God I've always remembered it.

When we find envy, jealousy, resentments, creeping into our thinking, let's weed them out. The simple way, it seems to me, is to review our actions each day. Check where we could have been a little more understanding, or tolerant to someone else--whether the time we blew up was really as important as we tried to make it. Let us try to recapture the wonderful feeling we had when we first came into A.A.

We'll usually find, as always, that the fault is within us. So let's talk the misunderstandings out. Let's give the other fellow the word of encouragement that he needs. It is good to get away by ourselves and think things through, honestly, humbly, as we'd advise a newcomer to do.

Dick S, New York, New York, 1948

What is all this “Crosstalk” business anyway?



This article is combined from several different sources regarding the issue of “crosstalk” . We have all heard it mentioned at the start of meetings, sometimes forbidding it, sometimes encouraging it, but what exactly is “crosstalk” and what does it have to do with our primary purpose?

The word has been with us at least since 1887. Webster’s 10th edition defines crosstalk as “unwanted signals in a communication channel caused by transference of energy from another circuit” — as when, for instance, two members sitting side by side at an A.A. meeting carry on a private, yet not so quiet, conversation... or when one member interrupts another rudely or inappropriately. But this is not the type of crosstalk members are asking about; specifically it is traceable to a list of guidelines for behavior at A.A. meetings — *erroneously* attributed to “World Service” that appears in 1992 in a central office newsletter and has since been reprinted and circulated more widely.

The guidelines state, in part, that “Any comments, negative or positive, about another’s share, experience, life, program, or remarks are crosstalk—that is interference.” “The only appropriate comment about anyone else’s share — a speaker’s or another member’s, is “Thank you for your share”. “A member may talk about his or her own experience as it relates directly or indirectly to another share, but should not refer to that person’s share. Even comments such as ‘When you talk about... it reminded me of my own experience..’ are possibly inappropriate.”

The so-called guidelines did NOT emanate from the General Service Office. What random investigation reveals is that they may have filtered into some A.A. groups through members who also attend other Twelve Step recovery groups. Other such groups include printed literature with “suggested announcement regarding crosstalk and feedback”, and other organization asks attendees “to please not interrupt someone else’s sharing, not to make comments about other people’s statements..; and to talk only about yourself” . Says Anne T, of Rome, NY who belongs to A.A. and also attends meeting of another fellowship “From the very beginning, one drunk talking to another has made the A.A. program go round. But in the meetings (of the other fellowship), I feel, it makes sense to refrain from crosstalk. People are trying to free themselves from extraordinary shame. When someone shares in response to something I’ve said, that’s okay, but only so long as there’s not even a hint of censure, belittlement, scolding or preaching, all under the guides of sharing. Knowing there’s no risk of judgment makes me feel safe.”

So what does this mean in relation to crosstalk in meetings? Generally speaking, there is no rule in A.A. against “crosstalk” although it is avoided as a matter of strong custom in many areas. Typically crosstalk refers to people speaking out of turn, interrupting someone while they are speaking or giving direct advice to someone in a meeting. How it is accepted and dealt with varies from group to group and region to region. The ultimate arbiter of the subject is the individual group which is free to follow its own customs. What is considered quite proper in one meeting may cause quite a stir in others, but there is no rulebook for it.

Locally, this topic has come up at business meetings, in relation to whether to include comments or suggestions about crosstalk in meetings. Interestingly, the topic has elevated discussion on many levels, from considering learning about crosstalk being akin to learning manners, to having a comprehensive definition of crosstalk given at the same time it is discouraged, so that members understand. The topic has been tabled for further discussion twice, due to lengthy responses and need for further consideration.

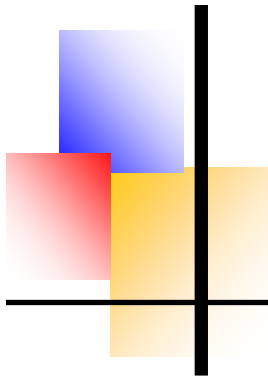
The Big Book does give some good advice on not giving advice, and explains why people should consider sticking to their own experience and not lecture others. From page 125:

We find it better, when possible, to stick to our own stories. A man may criticize or laugh at himself and it will affect others favorably, but criticism or ridicule coming from another often produces the contrary effect. Members of a family should watch such matters carefully, for one careless, inconsiderate remark has been known to raise the very devil. We alcoholics are sensitive people. It takes some of us a long time to out-grow that serious handicap.

So the jury is still out, apparently, as to exactly what crosstalk is, and whether or not it is appropriate to allow or censure it in meetings. It is clear, however, that each group has the right to define and enforce handling of crosstalk as they wish. It is also clear that the General Service Office is NOT the source of, nor the judging party for, taking a stand on the issue of crosstalk. Perhaps the most amusing take on crosstalk comes from past Chicago delegate Don B: “When I came to A.A. in 1981, I joined a group led by an oldtimer who was nearly 20 years sober at the time. There were two basic ‘guidelines’ — only we called them rules:

- (1) You cannot interrupt the guy who is interrupting.
- (2) If you look up and you are the only one left, lock the door when you leave. You talked too long.”

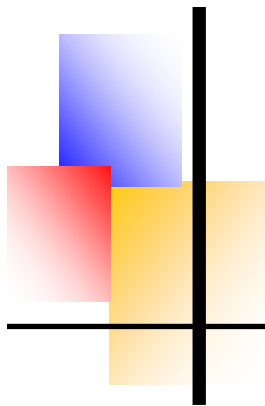




JULY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm	2 Redmond pot- luck, speaker mtg—6 pm;
3	4	5 Tuesday night Speaker mtg 7pm	6	7	8 Spirit Fest Warm Springs Campout	9 Spirit Fest Warm Springs Campout
10 Spirit Fest Warm Springs Campout District 5 GSR mtg 4 pm TEC	11	12	13	14	15 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm	16
17 2nd annual SOFTBALL Tournament	18	19 Madras birthday Mtg-7:30 pm	20	21	22	23 Intergroup Potluck Speaker mtg 6pm
24 IGR Advisory Board mtg-5 pm IGR mtg-5:30 31 Newberry Campout	25	26	27 La Pine Living Sober Birthday Mtg at P&R 7pm	28	29 Bend Milestone- Meeting TEC 7p Newberry Crater Campout	30 Newberry Crater Campout
Bend Mileston Meeting Central Oregon Speaker Meeting District 5 GSR Meeting Intergroup Advisory Board Meeting Intergroup IGR Meeting Intergroup Potluck Speaker Meeting La Pine Potluck Speaker Meeting Madras Birthday Meeting Redmond Potluck Speaker Meeting Tuesday Speaker Meeting Tumalo Speaker Meeting Pine Forest Grange Hall (PFGH)		Trinity Episcopal Church (TEC) Environmental Center TEC TEC TEC St. Helen's Room La Pine Park & Rec Building Jefferson Cnty Library Rodriguez Annex Redmond Community Church Nazarene Church Fellowship Hall PFGH			469 NW Wall Street 16 NW Kansas, Bend 469 Wall Street, Bend 469 NW Wall Street, Bend 469 NW Wall Street, Bend Idaho Street, Bend 16405 12 1st Street, La Pine 134 S.E. E Street, Madras 10 & Cedar, Redmond 1270 NE 27th, Bend Bruce Avenue, Tumalo 63214 Boyd Acres Road, Bend	

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AUGUST 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm	6 Redmond pot- luck, speaker mtg—6 pm;
7	8	9 Tuesday night Speaker mtg-7 pm	10	11	12	13
14 District 5 GSR mtg 4 pm TEC	15	16	17	18 SUTTLE LAKE CAMPOUT	19 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm SUTTLE LAKE CAMPOUT	20 SUTTLE LAKE CAMPOUT
21 High Desert Round Up Planning Mtg TEC 3pm SUTTLE LAKE CAMPOUT	22	23 Madras birthday Mtg-7:30 pm	24	25	26 Bend Milestone meeting 7 pm	27 Intergroup Potluck Speaker mtg 6pm
28 Intergroup Advi- sory Board mtg- 5 pm Intergroup IGR mtg-5:30 p	29	30	31 La Pine Living Sober Birthday Mtg at P&R 7pm	30		
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MEETING
ADDITIONS/CHANGES/
DELETIONS

MEETING CHANGES !!

La Pine Wed nite "Living Sober"
CHANGED from potluck/speaker
to Open Discussion until further notice

WARM SPRINGS meetings
MOVED to Family Resource
Bldg, 1144 Warm Springs Street
Tuesday noon
Wednesday 7 pm
Saturday 10 am

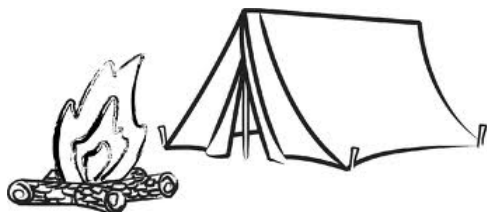


**CAMPING AND
FELLOWSHIP !!!**

Spirit Fest Warm Springs Campout
HeHe Longhouse
July 8th, 9th, 10th
Salmon Bake, Talking Circle,
Pow-Wow, Music, Crafts
\$10 registration



Newberry Crater Campout
Paulina Lake
July 29th—31st
\$15 per person for the weekend



Visit www.coigaa.org for more info

**JULY
Sobriety
Milestones**



Attitude Adjustment

Shannon M	7/23/09	2 years
Ann M	7/25/08	3 years
Fred B	7/12/86	25 years
James B	7/1/07	4 years

Redmond S O S

Scott H	7/22/07	4 years
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A B C

Matthew F	7/22/90	21 years
Elizabeth R	7/27/00	11 years

W F S

Anna M	7/5/01	10 years
Autumn A	7/19/99	12 years
Steve G	7/23/89	22 years
Joel S	7/23/00	11 years
Josh M	7/29/03	8 years
Kate M	7/7/88	23 years

As Men See It

Bob K	7/4/10	1 year
Dave W	7/4/92	19 years
Tom	7/5/05	6 years
Rick G	7/8/09	2 years
David C	7/11/10	1 year
Robert P	7/15/10	1 year
Greg H	7/20/85	26 years
John C	7/20/05	6 years
Daryl P	7/22/10	1 year
Matt C.	7/27/87	24 years

Primary Purpose

Brent H	7/25/06	5 years
Bill M	7/4/04	7 years
Emily H	7/8/05	6 years
Mark M	7/11/07	4 years
Michelle B	7/31/06	5 years
Matt B	7/23/08	3 years
Steve D	7/26/10	1 year
Teena W	7/08/01	10 years
Tony E	7/20/02	9 years



**Upcoming
Events**

2nd annual
HIGH DESERT ROUND UP
Fundraiser
coming September 23-25, 2011

**SOBER SOFTBALL
TOURNAMENT
And Picnic
July 17, 2011**



**Come join the fun!
Bring the Family!**
Skyline Park 9 am to 6 pm

Hamburgers, hot dogs, drinks and
condiments available for a small
donation

Slow pitch 10 person co-ed teams, at
least 4 women playing at all times

Info: Bill O. 541-771-5145



"... grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage
to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

**TREASURER'S REPORT
DONATIONS SUMMARY**

**2011
Group**

**16-May
to
15-Jun**

Year to Date

24 and Alive	150.00	900.00
As Men See It		80.00
Attitude Adjustment	155.00	347.00
Back to the Big Book		137.42
Culver Nuts & Bolts		35.00
Eastside Earlyrisers		345.70
Easy Does It		200.00
First things First		45.00
High Noon		145.00
Issues & Tissues	33.00	33.00
Madras Oasis Group		150.00
Make My Day		40.75
Meditation Meeting		30.67
Men's Book Study		92.40
Men's Stag Meeting		125.00
Men's Straight Talk	50.00	100.00
New Horizon	300.00	736.50
Not a Glum Lot		417.60
Primary Purpose	82.19	260.85
Redmond Rebels		139.58
Safe Harbor		239.64
Saturday Morning Alive		170.00
Saturday Nite Live		100.00
Sisters in Sobriety		52.33
SOB Group	20.00	170.00
Sober Desire		123.00
S.O.S.		100.00
Spiritual Awakening		194.98
Step Sisters		242.89
Steps to Sobriety		206.00
Tuesday Nite AA-Bend		281.00
WFS		251.85
Potluck	53.95	222.97
Total Contributions	844.14	6,716.13

Waking Up Sober

P.M. Toronto, Ont.

I ASKED, "Why am I still sober when three of my young friends died, tragically, drunk?" One of my dear Irish AAs answered, "We must be willing to listen, as only the dying can hear".

Thank God that, when I arrived at the doors of AA in Ireland, I was so sick that I took every word as gospel. Desperation made me do what the members *told* me to do; they weren't in the business of suggesting. They said, "Stay away from the first drink, and pray if you can." When I said I couldn't get a job in "my field," they answered that "my field" had been not to work at all-- "Get a *job*," they said, "and later the *career* will come," I wanted to talk about all my other problems, but I was told that the only problem I had was alcoholism and that everything else was a situation. And these kinds of answers gave me a strong foundation in sobriety.

After I had lost everything through drinking--including husband, home, and mind--they told me that being sober was the full reward and everything else was "icing on the cake," After one year's sobriety, I was still living on my own and had experienced very little material gain. But I was contented. When I hear new members complain about the things they don't have, I thank God for the people who gave it to me straight. One said, "When you wake up sober in the morning, you better believe that's the best you're going to do all day." Rough stuff, but so true.

I'm three years sober now, very much by the grace of God, the Fellowship of AA, and my own efforts. When things get tough, I remember being told that my standards of toughness are behind me--drinking all day, crying all night, suicide attempts--and that whatever I'm feeling now is a marked improvement.

Sunday, July 31, 2011

1-4 pm TEC

District 5 presents:

Anonymity Mythbusters and 7th Tradition

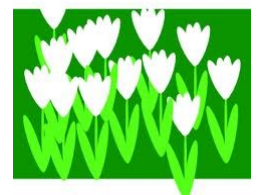
By Oregon Area officers Chase and Gus

Info: Kathi C 541-280-6980



I was so frightened when those three AA friends picked up the first drink and died that I wondered, "Is it only a matter of time before this happens to me?" But by going to many, many meetings, I have learned that if I continue to do as the program tells me, I will be sober all the days of my life.

***There's a catch to
dying sober: First, we
have to live sober.***





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