

Inside: Is Sobriety "Boring"?



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Central Oregon's Conscious Contact

Young People Hit Bottom, Too

I looked around the large meeting hall trying to take it all in without having to make eye contact with any of the dozens of people sitting around the room. My survey confirmed that at seventeen I was a good decade younger than any of these pathetic alcoholics. Sure, people had told me I was an alcoholic, and sometimes I wondered if they were right, but I refused to admit it. My dad was in recovery and I knew that once a person confessed they were an alcoholic they had to stop drinking and go to these stupid meetings for the rest of their life. And drinking was the only thing in life that I looked forward to....if I didn't have alcohol, I would have nothing. Yes, it was my rapacious creditor, and I was still in high school.

I had dressed up for this meeting, and imagined these alcoholics were probably as confused as I that such a stylish, together young person as myself was in their midst. I was so busy telling myself how much better I was than these people, and how desperate they looked compared to me that I didn't hear a word that was said during that first meeting until a woman turned to me after the Lord's Prayer and said, 'Oh, my goodness, honey, you're shaking like a leaf. You must really be hurting.' The fact was that my hands had been trembling constantly since I turned twelve and started drinking. I normally hid them in my lap, but these people had grabbed my hands without even asking and started saying their prayer.

The woman continued talking to me and ended by giving me her phone number, telling me to call her anytime at all.

I did call her once, and she offered to take me to a meeting, but I wasn't ready to give up my only hobby. I kept drinking another year. I tried drinking only wine, limiting myself to only one drink, only drinking once a week...but all these resolutions failed. I just kept getting drunk in spite of my best intentions. I even tried dating a sober member of AA in hopes that I would drink less. What a surprise that attending midnight AA meetings with him (him sober, me buzzed) didn't fix me!

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“Thousands of meetings have passed since that first one at age seventeen, but I will always remember the first woman holding out the hand of AA to me, even though I wasn’t ready to take it. “



During this year my parents became fed up with me for making unauthorized charges (stealing) on their credit cards and they cut off contact with me. I had dropped out of high school. My employer told me I was unemployable and just didn’t possess the life skills needed to hold a job. He suggested I enroll in a Salvation Army job training program. Of course, I was shocked he would suggest something so beneath me.

Taking the classic geographic escape route, I moved out of state. My supposedly sober boyfriend went with me. However, not only did he not get me sober through osmosis, he went back to shooting heroin. Even so, he told me if I didn’t join AA and quit drinking he would throw me out on the streets. I was eighteen years old, but had hit bottom as surely as anyone.

Alcohol is cunning, baffling and powerful. My disease told me that I was not an alcoholic, just crazy, and that AA would be a crutch that I didn’t even deserve since insanity, not alcoholism was my real problem.

But the people in the meetings told me to give this program a chance and to attend 90 meetings in 90 days, and to not drink between meetings. If I then decided I was not an alcoholic, they would refund all my pain and misery.

Those 90 meetings turned into at least one a day for a couple years.

I made amends to my parents which included making financial restitution to them. I moved back to my hometown and worked my way into a job which I loved. I made friends with a group of sober young people and re-discovered those interests I had enjoyed before I found alcohol; skiing, horses, travel and many others.

Thousands of meetings have passed since that first one at age seventeen, but I will always remember the first woman holding out the hand of AA to me, even though I wasn’t ready to take it. The gifts of the program have been so much greater than anything I would have asked for. And somewhere along the road of sobriety, I quit shaking.

Sarah R.

Heard around the rooms:

I heard about the scientific pill that might cure alcoholism; I wonder what would happen if I took ten?



When going on vacation, I used to pack two suitcases, one for clothes and one for alcohol. It wasn’t until I came to AA that I found out that wasn’t normal.



Do not fear the winds of adversity.

Remember:

A Kite rises against the wind rather than with it.



Unknown

Sober but Bored

If it happens to you, take another good, hard look at the Twelve Steps. Sharing and service can be the answer

RECENTLY, I found myself passing judgment on a member who was celebrating her sixteenth year of sobriety. As she accepted the group's congratulations, she mentioned that she had not attended a meeting for a year. I said to some AA friends that she was depriving me of her presence by not attending meetings and making herself available to all newcomers. In fact, I rather hotly declared that the Big Book says we share our experience, strength, and hope--and how could she do this if she wasn't at meetings?

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"The last thing I remember, I was sitting in my condo meeting. Apparently, I died from boredom."

Among my AA friends are wonderful people who shoot me down every time my thinking goes awry. I was promptly asked who *I* was to say how many meetings someone else should attend, and that led me to some quiet reflection on attendance at meetings and active participation or involvement in AA functions. Although I do have some years of continuous sobriety, I realize I have but a toehold on the long path ahead of me. From this vantage point, I look around and see that many times lately I have been bored at meetings. I have been performing duties perfunctorily. The thrill of leading a meeting or giving a talk has abated. Many of my contemporaries on the program also seem to be experiencing boredom. A friend with two years of sobriety has returned to patronizing the local gin mills, sober, to have some "fun." Another friend attends only one or two meetings a month, "because I'm tired of hearing the same stories." Maybe the woman with sixteen years of sobriety had stopped attending meetings because she was bored.

Boredom, I discovered, was a topic rarely mentioned from the podium; but when I asked other members whether they were ever bored, the answer was usually in the affirmative. I went to the dictionary to find out what Webster had to say. One definition of the verb bore that seemed to fit was "make one's way laboriously." Other words for boredom were ennui or tedium, and ennui was described as "a feeling of weariness and dissatisfaction."

These definitions crystallized the vague discontent I had noticed lately. It had started with a ho-hum detachment toward some of my favorite meetings, and a general diminishing of enthusiasm and anticipation had followed. Life has become good for me in sobriety. My close personal relationships seem to have good balance, and my drinking past seems remote. I had reached a point where, when I was asked to talk at a meeting and began to say what I used to be like, I felt as though I was talking about someone else. Now, almost three years sober, I was bored. I could sum up my attitude in the words "Is this all?"

An explanation of my feelings came from my sponsor, who believes that a major character defect of many alcoholics is an inability to make a long-term commitment. We are all great in the fifty-yard dash, she says, but then we find out that life is not one short race, but a continuing, daily call for effort. This inability to commit ourselves explains our history of being job-hoppers, apartment-hoppers, marriage-hoppers, to name just a few instances. We avoid commitment because we keep thinking that *the* answer will be found tomorrow in a new career, different friends, or any something-new. We are haunted by the nagging thought that we are missing out on something somewhere. We are forever dissatisfied with reality.

Now that I no longer seek solutions to my problems in alcohol, I know I have to look elsewhere for the answer to my boredom. I also know that, for me, a slackening of attendance at meetings, with its consequent loss of personal identification as an alcoholic, plus the creeping and sometimes strangling tedium of life, will provide fertile soil to nourish the thinking that will return me to drinking.

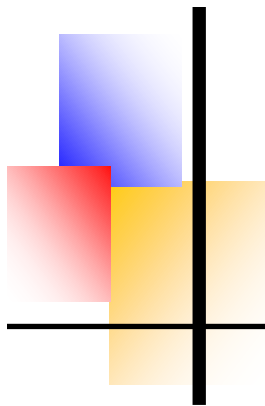
My personal solution to boredom has been, first of all, to become aware that this feeling exists and threatens to take over all my attitudes. I cannot seek a solution to any problem until I am aware of its existence. Second, I try to be involved in as many different AA activities as are available to me. In simple terms, this means being active in my home group, making Twelfth Step calls, participating in Institutions Committee panels, calling newcomers and driving them to meetings, as well as washing the cups and emptying the ashtrays after a meeting.

Since boredom has a way of infecting every area of life, I try to remember to be grateful that I am now able to be a responsible woman and wife. I find a daily joy in maintaining a clean, comfortable home. I also try to avoid routine in whatever free time I have. It isn't necessary for me to do the laundry *every* Saturday morning. If the weather is nice, I pack a lunch and we go off to the beach or explore a different road or town. One of my gifts of sobriety is a new and loving husband, and when the two of us get out of our self-made ruts, we discover a special companionship as we share these breaks in our routine.

Truly, my answer to boredom was stated very simply many years ago when Step Twelve was formulated. It's the two-part answer of action--carrying the message and trying to practice the principles in all my affairs. I believe my sobriety is a God-given gift, as is everything else that has come to me during my AA years. When I forget to be grateful for these gifts, when I treat them as something I have earned, when I forget where I came from and where I could end up if I returned to drinking, then I become bored. Practicing the Twelfth Step on a daily basis is my recourse when I find myself enjoying many of the fruits of sobriety, yet wondering, "Is this all?" Some days all I may have is my sobriety; some days I am catapulted into high adventure; but on all days carrying the message and practicing the principles remain the first order of business.

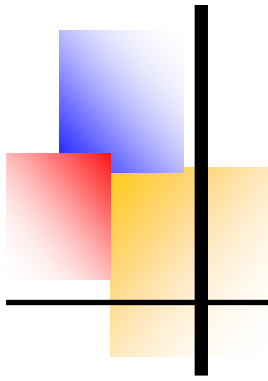
As someone once said, if you are bored, it's because you are a bore. So, if I am a bore, I am the only one who can do something about it. It's still an inside job.

Anonymous, Los Angeles



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		
Bend Milestone 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		Trinity Episcopal Church Environmental Center TEC TEC St. Helen's Room La Pine Park & Rec Building Jefferson Cty Library Rodriguez Annex Redmond Community Church Nazarene Church Fellowship Hall			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	



SEPTEMBER 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm	3 Redmond pot- luck, speaker mtg—6 pm;
4	5	6 Tuesday night Speaker mtg 7pm	7	8	9	10
11 District 5 GSR mtg 4 pm TEC	12	13	14	15	16 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm	17
18	19	20 Madras birthday Mtg-7:30 pm	21	22	23 HIGH DESERT ROUND UP	24 Intergroup Potluck Speaker mtg 6pm HIGH DESERT ROUNDUP
25 HIGH DSERT ROUND UP IGR Advisory Board mtg-5 pm IGR mtg-5:30 TEC	26	27	28 La Pine Living Sober Birthday Mtg at P&R 7pm	29	30 Bend Milestone- Meeting TEC 7p	
Bend Mileston Meeting Central Oregon Speaker Meeting District 5 GSR Meeting Intergroup Advisory Board Meeting Intergroup IGR Meeting Intergroup Potluck Speaker Meet- ing 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 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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MEETING ADDITIONS/CHANGES/ DELETIONS

AUGUST Sobriety Milestones



Upcoming Events



MEETING CHANGES !!

Crooked River Ranch
Tuesday 7 pm
CANCELLED



MORE CAMPING FUN!!!!

Suttle Lake Campout
August 18th to 21st

Come Join Us!!

For more info:
Heidi S 541-728-5463

Attitude Adjustment

Sharon K	8/09/04	7 years
Andy T	8/24/09	2 years
Forest J	8/21/07	4 years
Paul J G	8/26/08	3 years
Judy S	8/3/09	2 years
Julie L	8/2/09	2 years

A B C

Jennifer P	8/10/97	14 years
Jim B	8/24/99	12 years

New Horizons

Linda W	8/28/86	25 years
Mel C	8/08/07	4 years
Zoe C	8/19/09	2 years
Bob T	8/09/07	4 years
Daryl S	8/30/06	5 years
Kevin T	8/5/09	2 years
Jade B	8/17/05	6 years

24 and Alive

Bob B	8/08/88	23 years
Cindy J	8/4/09	2 years
Ray	8/7/09	2 years
Sheri	8/10/09	2 years
Don F	8/5/08	3 years
Maria R	8/27/08	3 years
Donna H	8/6/10	1 year
Carol W	8/4/05	6 years
Peggy R	8/11/93	18 years
Meri R	8/11/03	8 years
Paul Willis	8/2/10	1 year

SENSATIONAL SPEAKERS AND FABULOUS FELLOWSHIP!

17th Annual High Desert
Roundup
September 23, 24 & 25



Speakers:

Bill C - Torrance CA
Sylvia A - Portland, OR
Linda D - Portland, OR
Lorraine K - Seattle, WA
Bob R - Wilsonville, OR

Not to miss SKIT

"The Yellow
Brick Road of
Happy Destiny"
Starring The
Central Oregon Primetime Players



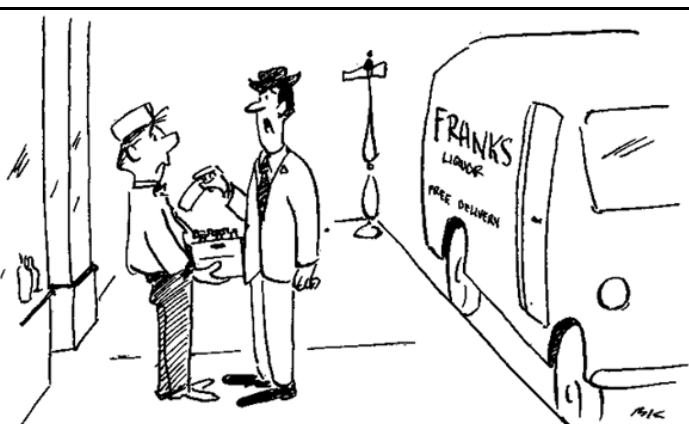
For more information contact:

Pattie 541-771-5452
Carrie 541-419-4159

SERVICE OPPORTUNITY !

District 5 Elections for
District Committee Member
(DCM), District Treasurer,
and District Recording
Secretary' will be during the
September 11, 2011 District
meeting 4:00pm at TEC
downtown Bend.

If interested contact Kathi C
for job descriptions, sobriety
requirements and term of
commitment:
peaceinbloom@gmail.com
541.280.6980



"Deliver a case of orange soda every Friday. I don't want
the neighbors to know I'm in AA."



TREASURER'S REPORT
DONATIONS SUMMARY



2011	16-Jun to	Year to Date
Group	15-Jul	
24 and Alive	150.00	1,050.00
As Men See It	95.00	175.00
Attitude Adjustment		347.00
Back to the Big Book		137.42
Chicks with Chips	36.25	36.25
Culver Nuts & Bolts		35.00
Eastside Earlyrisers		345.70
Easy Does It		200.00
First things First		45.00
High Noon		145.00
Living in the Solution	48.00	48.00
Madras Oasis Group	100.00	250.00
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		100.00
New Horizon	70.00	806.50
Not a Glum Lot	235.00	652.60
Primary Purpose		260.85
Redmond Rebels		139.58
Safe Harbor		239.64
Saturday Morning Alive		170.00
Saturday Night Live		100.00
Sisters in Sobriety	61.15	113.48
Sober Desire		123.00
S.O.S. Group	20.00	290.00
Spiritual Awakening		194.98
Step Sisters	86.10	328.99
Steps to Sobriety		206.00
Tuesday Nite AA-Bend		281.00
WFS		251.85
Potluck	35.55	258.52
Entertainment		-
Intergroup 7th Tradition		-
Total Contributions	937.05	7,620.18

What a Bargain!

It is as difficult to describe a spiritual awakening as it would be to tell of a lovely flower by means of a logarithm. Sometimes, there are no words, only feeling. But suddenly, I rejoiced that I was an alcoholic and that being so had brought me to AA. Deeply sorry for the harm done, I still know that if it had not been thus, even if I had never encountered alcohol, I would have lived and died like a vegetable, with never a glimpse of the incredible world of the spirit.

Until I can say and do no more, my prayer is to be allowed to tell all this good news to alcoholics and to others, by word, by action, by example. And this last way is the most effective of all.

In my drinking days, I was a seven-day, around-the-clock toper. Now I know that in the Twelve Steps and especially in the final phrase, "in all our affairs," I have something to fill each day of my life just as completely, around the clock.

All I need do is listen a little, read a little, do a little, and think a little. In all history, was there ever such a bargain?

Bill C., Hull, Massachusetts

A. A. Tradition Seven (long form):

The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.





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