



Volume 13 Issue 9

September 2011



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## *Ten pounds of Rice in a 5 lb Bag*

I always knew it from the time I first drank alcohol. I was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, went to a High School football game, met up with some lads who had booze and we consumed all of it. That evening I passed out in a big patch of Poison Oak and missed several weeks of school while I recovered from the consequences of my first drunk. I found myself in a boarding school the next year, freedom gone. As a 10<sup>th</sup> grader I went downtown on a three hour pass. We got some *old* guy to buy us a bottle of Rum and consumed all of it. I rode my bicycle erratically in traffic back to school where I became extremely queasy, sitting cross-legged in the dormitory shower fully clothed. Because of the restrictions imposed in boarding school life I was able to drink effectively only every fifth week when we were released for a three day weekend. And I did. How to get as much as possible was my overwhelming mission during these brief absences from school. In between the long weekends I found drugs which were more easily concealed and consumed at school.

Finally graduation and off to college with a fake ID, my most cherished possession. Actually, it wasn't fake; it just wasn't me, nor did it resemble me in statistics or eye color, yet no one seemed to mind each and every time I tried to use it. I flunked the first quarter of college and spent the next three months devising a new skill; how to become a functional alcoholic. For the next three decades I drank daily, drove drunk daily, and achieved a moderate level of success. I had earned a BS and an MBA degree, employment positions of responsibility, a beautiful wife, and lots of stuff (new cars, big house, etc...). I had become the functional alcoholic just as I'd hoped. Never did I question my copious consumption nor did I realize the damage it caused to others. It must be noted that drugs also remained a big part of my daily life. Actually, I tried everything on the menu, in excess.

My life was measured ineffectively with alcohol; six beers to Bend, four to Eugene and an ice chest for every road trip. Road trips were a beloved way to occupy time off, often driving aimlessly all the while retarding my reflexes with carefully disguised "road pops".

In 1996, I bought a beautiful boat and got a BUI (Boating Under the Influence) my second time out in it. This conviction led me to lie about my usage in 'Alcohol Evaluation' which produced the "Informational Only Program". I did manage to stay clean and sober for 60 days, feeling quite good actually. However, upon completion of my 60 day program, I was well rested and deserved large quantities of everything once more. Let me note of great importance, I was given a Big Book



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“Sometimes I *need* a meeting, but usually I go for maintenance and fellowship.”



by a co-worker at this time. Though I never opened it, I did manage to retain it; and there it sat on my bookshelf for ten years while I went out for more research with the varsity squad. (Yes indeed, the solution was just that close and I didn't know it.)

Then one day, much to my surprise, my loving wife of 18 years left me. I found solace in the bottle and the bag and 'friends'. At the age of 49 I got my first DUI. Within a year I had been handcuffed and jailed six times for various things, all related to my 'lifestyle'.

I made feeble attempts to break free of my 'issues', preferring to rely mostly on the "Tomorrow Theory of Recovery". Inevitably though, something had to change if I was to ever escape the legal system. My driver's license would never reappear without completion of the alcohol rehabilitation program offered by any one of the local "caregivers". Still I rescheduled treatment time and again with a variety of excuses. My probation officer who required 'action', suggested that serving the balance of my probation in jail might be the answer; notwithstanding: I was slowing dying while simultaneously engaging in acts that might actually bring about my rapid demise. I went to AA meetings for signatures, said nothing (occasionally sobbing), talked sparingly to a few who tried to engage me after the meeting, and never opened the Big Book. I had no idea what the steps were and thought "Service Work" was community service imposed by the courts; and I was sure glad the judge didn't give me any. I also drank and / or drugged in between meetings.

Miraculously one morning I reached out for help; calling my mother whom I hadn't seen in two years. The very next day she retrieved me from the devil's playground and brought me to Bend, Oregon and allowed me to stay in her house, even though friends counseled her against this. "He will steal from you and maybe even kill you." I proved them wrong and developed a new way of life because of the lessons learned in the program of AA; and here's how.

After 'controlled' daily drinking for three decades; drinking till I slept daily; driving Impaired daily; occasionally falling down and often appearing foolish in public; I'd finally had enough. So, I set about the simple task of changing everything. New playmates, new playgrounds and new playthings were all that was required. I did my 120+ meetings in 90 days supplemented with a new job. I hadn't worked in three years, but welcomed the discipline and routine. My ears heard that I never had to drink again, even if I wanted to. That was the good news. They said the bad news was that members of AA

were now my new friends. This too I relished, as I knew no one in Bend except my mother. If I was to stay sober it was only going to happen by surrounding myself with people in the program. That was the easy part. Care and concern was expressed at every turn. I was now a member and desired to act accordingly. My first service position came at two months sober. It was a three month commitment which I relinquished after nine months (so much for the spirit of rotation, which I learned more of later). Cleaning COFH bathrooms, ashtrays, mopping floors and picking up cigarette butts were also part of my regular regimen. Additional service positions have come my way, and the experience helps me to stay right sized. Let's also mention the benefits of AA approved literature, step work and regular interaction with my sponsor to discuss situations and solutions. Meetings were and still are a colossal hit with me. Sometimes I *need* a meeting, but usually I go for maintenance and fellowship. Six meetings a week is not unusual, once attending five meetings on a single Saturday some three years ago.

Today, I appreciate others in a manner that rarely had I experienced in my previous state of 'self'. I still ride 'inventory point' but the conclusions are frequently positive. I've learned much in AA about myself, my character defects and what is important to me. No longer must I be the one who is *understood*, 'where my opinion is always the best course of action'; rather to *understand* others and their right to exist, chose and progress without my insane influence. On occasion I share suggestions from my tool box, remembering that I'm not qualified to give advice; because, "Who am I to say?"

Today I'm still a bit nutty, sometimes even full of crap, but continue to strive for progress as an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous. AA has blessed me with a new way of life and I am eternally grateful.

JB



*A man was attending the funeral of an old acquaintance he had not seen for some time and spoke to the deceased's widow, who sadly informed him that death had resulted from a drinking problem. The man said "I'm sorry to hear that. Did he ever try AA?" The widow recoiled in horror and exclaimed "Oh no! He never got **that** bad!"*

# SLIPS AND HUMAN NATURE

By William D. "Silky" Silkworth, M.D.

**The mystery of slips is not so deep as it may appear.** While it does seem odd that an alcoholic, who has restored himself to a dignified place among his fellowmen and continues dry for years, should suddenly throw all his happiness overboard and find himself again in mortal peril of drowning in liquor, often the reason is simple. People are inclined to say, "There is something peculiar about alcoholics. They seem to be well, yet at any moment they may turn back to their old ways. You can never be sure."

**This is largely twaddle.** The alcoholic is a sick person. Under the technique of Alcoholics Anonymous he gets well -- that is to say, his disease is **arrested**. There is nothing unpredictable about him any more than there is anything weird about a person who has arrested diabetes. **Let's get it clear, once and for all, that alcoholics are human beings. Then we can safeguard ourselves intelligently against most slips.** In both professional and lay circles, there is a tendency to label everything that an alcoholic may do as "alcoholic behavior." The truth is, it is simple human nature. It is very wrong to consider any of the personality traits observed in liquor addicts as peculiar to the alcoholic. Emotional and mental quirks are classified as symptoms of alcoholism merely because alcoholics have them, yet those same quirks can be found among non-alcoholics too. **Actually they are symptoms of mankind!** Of course, the alcoholic himself tends to think of himself as different, somebody special, with unique tendencies and reactions. Many psychiatrists, doctors, and therapists carry the same idea to extremes in their analyses and treatment of alcoholics. Sometimes they make a complicated mystery of a condition that is found in all human beings, whether they drink whiskey or buttermilk. To be sure, alcoholism, like every other disease, does manifest itself in some unique ways. It does have a number of baffling peculiarities that differ from those of all other diseases. At the same time, any of the symptoms and much of the behavior of alcoholism are closely paralleled and even duplicated in other diseases.

**The slip is a relapse!** It is a relapse that occurs after the alcoholic has stopped drinking and started on the A.A. program of recovery. Slips usually occur in the early states of the alcoholic's A.A. indoctrination, before he has had time to learn enough of the A.A. techniques and A.A. philosophy to give him a solid footing. But slips may also occur after an alcoholic has been a member of A.A. for many months or even several years, and it is in this kind, above all, that often finds a marked similarity between the alcoholic's behavior and that of "normal" victims of other diseases. No one is startled by the fact that relapses are not uncommon among arrested tubercular patients. But here is a startling fact -- **the cause is often the same as the cause that leads to slips for the alcoholic.**

It happens this way: When a tubercular patient recovers sufficiently to be released from the sanitarium, the doctor gives him careful instructions for the way he is to live when he gets home. He must drink plenty of milk. He must refrain from smoking. He must obey other stringent rules. For the first several months, perhaps for several years, the patient follows directions. But as his strength increases and he feels fully recovered, he becomes slack. There may come the night when he decides he can stay up until ten o'clock. When he does this, nothing untoward happens. Soon he is disregarding the directions given him when he left the sanitarium. Eventually he has a relapse.

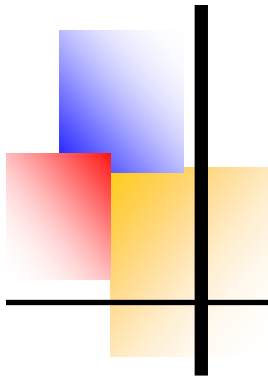
The same tragedy can be found in cardiac cases. After the heart attack, the patient is put on a strict rests schedule. Frightened, he naturally follows directions obediently for a long time. He, too, goes to bed early, avoids exercise such as walking upstairs, quits smoking, and leads a Spartan life. Eventually, though there comes a day, after he has been feeling good for months or several years, when he feels he has regained his strength, and has also recovered from his fright. If the elevator is out of repair one day, he walks up the three flights of stairs. Or he decides to go to a party -- or do just a little smoking -- or take a cocktail or two. If no serious after effects follow the first departure from the rigorous schedule prescribed, he may try it again, until he suffers a relapse. In both cardiac and tubercular cases, **wrong thinking preceded** the acts that led to the relapses. **The patient in each case rationalized himself out of a sense of his own perilous reality.** He deliberately turned away from his knowledge of the fact that he had been the victim of a serious disease. He grew overconfident. **He decided he didn't have to follow directions.** Now that is **precisely** what happens with the alcoholic -- the arrested alcoholic, or the alcoholic in A.A. who has a slip. Obviously, he decides to take a drink again some time before he actually takes it. He starts **thinking wrong before** he actually embarks on the course that leads to a slip. There is no reason to charge the slip to alcoholic behavior or a second heart attack to cardiac behavior. **The alcoholic slip is not a symptom of a psychotic condition.**

There's nothing screwy about it at all. **The patient simply didn't follow directions!**

For the alcoholic, A.A. offers the directions. A vital factor, or ingredient of the preventive, especially for the alcoholic, is sustained emotion. The alcoholic who learns some of the techniques or the mechanics of A.A. but misses the philosophy or the spirit may get tired of following directions -- not because he is alcoholic, but because he is human. Rules and regulations irk almost anyone, because they are restraining, prohibitive, and negative. The philosophy of A.A. however, is positive and provides ample sustained emotion -- **a sustained desire to follow directions voluntarily.** In any event, the psychology of the alcoholic is not as different as some people try to make it. The disease has certain physical differences, yes, and the alcoholic has problems peculiar to him, perhaps, in that he has been put on the defensive and consequently has developed frustrations. But in many instances, there is no more reason to be talking about "the alcoholic mind" than there is to try to describe something called the "cardiac mind" or the "TB mind." **I think we'll help the alcoholic more if we can first recognize that he is primarily a human being -- afflicted with human nature.**



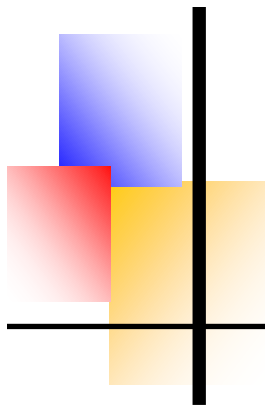




# SEPTEMBER 2011

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 ELECTIONS! District 5 GSR mtg 4 pm TEC	12	13	14	15	16 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm  GENERAL ASSEMBLY MCMINN- VILLE	17 GENERAL ASSEMBLY MCMINN- VILLE
18 GENERAL ASSEMBLY MCMINN- VILLE	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	

**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.



# OCTOBER 2011

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

**MEETING**  
ADDITIONS/CHANGES/  
DELETIONS



**MEETING  
CHANGES !!**

Redmond Rebels  
Monday/Thursday 7:30 pm  
CANCELLED

La Pine Sunday 7pm "Sunday  
Serenity" changed to 5pm

Wednesday 7pm Spanish Meeting  
CANCELLED

Sunday WFS Mtg time CHANGED  
mtg held 7-8 instead of 7-8:30

Thursday "Chicks with Chips" new  
location: Bend Honda 5:30pm  
Hwy 20 & Purcell (upstairs)

Meditation Meeting 6pm Wed  
CANCELLED

**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. **VOLUNTEER**

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



**SEPTEMBER  
Sobriety  
Milestones**

**Attitude Adjustment**

Dale T	9/13/05	6 years
Evan T	9/19/09	2 years
John M	9/25/08	3 years
Mike B	9/2/85	26 years
Sue H	9/4/07	4 years
Tony M	9/7/09	2 years
Vera F	9/18/89	22 years

**W F S**

Kai R	9/7/10	1 year
Alan A	9/9/92	19 years
Brittany L	9/27/10	1 year

**Primary Purpose**

Meredith J	9/8/07	3 years
Terry J	9/13/88	23 years
Kay R	9/21/03	8 years

**New Horizons**

Amanda D	9/21/10	1 year
Debra K	9/13/04	7 years
Donna B	9/17/08	3 years
Sherrill H	9/17/06	5 years
Zoe C	9/19/09	2 years
Brad B	9/9/08	3 years
David S	9/15/00	11 years
Greg E	9/18/09	2 years
Jeremiah	9/17/02	9 years

**24 and Alive**

Albert A	9/25/06	5 years
Sherry	9/11/08	3 years
Jan G	9/8/04	7 years
Jack K	9/29/08	3 years
Pat S	9/1/91	20 years
Toni M	9/23/02	9 years
Gordon S	9/22/90	21 years
Michael O	9/1/05	6 years

**Upcoming  
Events**

**SENSATIONAL SPEAKERS AND  
FABULOUS FELLOWSHIP!**

17<sup>th</sup> 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



Hospitality Room and Food Dona-  
tions wanted! Please call Dave W  
at 541-610-6624

**For more information contact:**

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



**General Assembly**

September 16-18th

Yamhill County Fairgrounds

2070 Lafayette Ave, McMinnville

**SERVICE WORKS: The Pathway to Recovery**

The Area Assembly is a mtg of GSR's and committee members to discuss  
area affairs and to elect officers and a delegate to the General Service Con-  
ference in New York . All members of AA are encouraged to participate !!

**TREASURER'S REPORT**  
**DONATIONS SUMMARY**

<b>2011 Group</b>	<b>16-Jul to 15-Aug</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>
24 and Alive	150.00	<b>1,200.00</b>
As Men See It	180.00	<b>355.00</b>
Attitude Adjustment	142.00	<b>489.00</b>
Back to the Big Book		<b>137.42</b>
Culver Nuts & Bolts	39.00	<b>74.00</b>
Eastside Earlyrisers	391.05	<b>736.75</b>
Easy Does It		<b>200.00</b>
First things First		<b>45.00</b>
Going to Any Lengths	50.00	<b>50.00</b>
High Noon		<b>145.00</b>
Living in the Solution		<b>48.00</b>
Madras Oasis Group	100.00	<b>350.00</b>
Make My Day		<b>40.75</b>
Meditation Meeting		<b>30.67</b>
Men's Book Study	116.70	<b>209.10</b>
Men's Stag Meeting		<b>125.00</b>
Men's Straight Talk		<b>100.00</b>
New Horizon	79.00	<b>885.50</b>
Not a Glum Lot	156.00	<b>808.60</b>
Primary Purpose		<b>260.85</b>
Redmond Rebels		<b>139.58</b>
Safe Harbor	170.18	<b>409.82</b>
Saturday Morning Alive		<b>170.00</b>
Saturday Nite Live		<b>100.00</b>
Sisters in Sobriety		<b>113.48</b>
Sober Desire		<b>123.00</b>
S.O.S. Group	20.00	<b>310.00</b>
Spiritual Awakening		<b>194.98</b>
Step Sisters		<b>328.99</b>
Steps to Sobriety	100.00	<b>306.00</b>
Sunriver Open Group	56.00	<b>56.00</b>
Tuesday Nite AA-Bend		<b>281.00</b>
WFS		<b>251.85</b>
Potluck	27.50	<b>286.02</b>
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>1,777.43</b>	<b>9,361.36</b>

I began to wrestle with a couple of small ego issues. Just how good should I feel about this giving? Just how public should I be with it? Should I tell myself that I am so wonderful and generous that I should be honored? Sure disaster, that, for an alcoholic. Should I allow others to see that I am giving more than the suggested amounts? Would that be self-serving? Even this article has risks.

Well, this past fall I attended a gratitude dinner/fundraiser in my area and the person with the most sober time was the keynote speaker. Among all of the wise and humorous remarks she made, she touched on donations and brought up the same idea of giving what your last drink cost. I felt relieved that I wasn't the only one to arrive at this notion. I would only have added to her remarks that with 40-plus years, her last drink was a lot cheaper than one drunk by someone recently sober.

So, here's what I have concluded. We all might reconsider how long we've been giving the same dollar (or two) and how much the costs to AA groups have risen. Perhaps we all could consider giving at least the current cost of one of the drinks we would have drunk had we not joined Alcoholics Anonymous and taken up sober living. Not only will it benefit the groups' survival, thus helping other alcoholics find our path, but it will also provide an inner warmth without the drink. I suggest trying just once to give the cost of a drink and see what that does.

By the way, I have decided that I would not fold the higher bills but allow whomever might notice to do so. Perhaps it will serve as a model and attract others to donate the same, and I'll keep trying not to feel too good about it.

**Basket case: A former  
binge drinker contributes more to his group's Seventh  
Tradition collection, and doesn't hide it**

I HAVE yet to be at a meeting that didn't pass the basket. It has come at different moments during the meetings but it has always come. In most meetings the first line of the Seventh Tradition is read as a brief explanation of the purpose of the expectation: "Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting. . . ." However, it does not say AA groups should be struggling for financial survival, as is happening currently to one of the largest and most influential groups in my area.

When I last joined AA, 21 years ago, everyone was dropping a dollar in the basket. No amount was mentioned or suggested; it just seemed that the most common rate was a buck. In the last decade or so some groups have taken to making a suggestion of \$1 and, more recently, \$2.

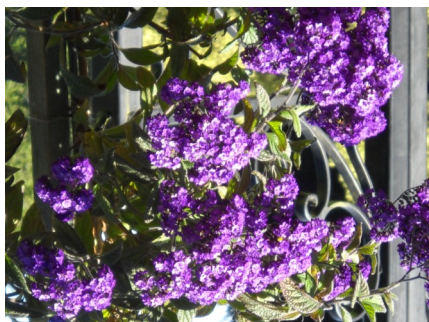
In the last couple of years, I have reconsidered my position on the basket and the amounts. I have realized that I had been stingy. Here's my newer thinking: If I had been drinking on any given day, I would have surely spent more on alcohol than a dollar or two. Even as the binge drinker that I was, I had a daily average that was several dollars higher than the current Seventh Tradition suggestions. so, I have been thinking that if I paid more than \$2 to poison myself, soul and body, why am I being so stingy with paying for my sobriety? Hmm.

Well, then, how much should I toss into the basket? I tipped the last waiter who served me \$9 to do little more than carry a piece of paper to the chef and a couple of plates to my table. That was more than the \$2 suggestion and far less important to my life. I've paid more for frivolous purchases than two dollars. Why have I been so tight with money for the basket? Don't know.

One week I started to give what my last restaurant tip was, but that seemed a bit high. Then I decided to put in the current price of one bar drink. Heck, that's not so much to pay for sobriety.

I've tossed in a five or a 10 or a 20 (that's been my maximum) and I had this wonderful sensation. I told myself that perhaps I had covered for those poorer souls who couldn't give a buck. I reminded myself that the rent on the clubroom had surely risen over the two decades of my sobriety. I reminded my wife that she would surely have left me had the same amounts been poured down my throat. I felt really pleased--perhaps a bit too pleased--with myself.





754 SW 11th Street  
Redmond, OR 97756



**Conscious Contact Subscription / Address Change Form (Please Print)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Check ☐ Renewal ☐ New Subscription ☐ Address Change

Subscription Rates: One Year \$10.00 Two Years: \$18.00  
Make Checks Payable to: Central Oregon Intergroup and  
mail to:  
Newsletter 754 S.W. 11th Street, Redmond, OR 97756  
Check ☐ Renewal ☐ New Subscription ☐ Address  
Change