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Volume 14 Issue 5

May 2012

Central Oregon's Conscious Contact

Knowing and Doing

My first AA meeting was July 9th 1998. I was battered and bruised when I showed up. I mean that literally. It was the summer between my junior and senior year of high school and while most people my age were enjoying their time off from school I was in rehab. It turns out that as per usual, I was enjoying my time off a little too much.

It was a typical summer night in Michigan, and I was engaging in a usual activity -- drinking. In many ways, it was like every other summer night, but this one ended very differently. I had grown somewhat accustomed to waking up in strange places, not knowing how I had gotten there. I had even woken up in my car before.



This was the first time I had woken up in my car, however, when it was upside down; and certainly the first time it was upside down in a swamp! →

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"If there is one thing I have learned in my time in the program it is this -- an intellectual understanding does not necessarily translate into an ability."



It can be a sobering experience to wake up in your car upside down in a swamp. Not for *this* alcoholic, though! Since it was 2am and on a back-country road, I didn't have to worry about getting caught. When I woke up I did what I thought was right -- I fled the scene. I walked to my house a couple miles away, and woke up my sister and I told her I needed help. She immediately called a nearby rehab facility and got me checked in. My first AA meeting was in that rehab facility.

I really wanted to get sober and had considered it a few times before my accident. I learned a lot in rehab; I identified with everyone in there with me. All of it made sense; And yet, I hadn't had enough. My entire drinking career was only about five years long, and despite flipping my car into a swamp during a blackout, a stint in rehab and a couple of various alcohol related offenses in the past – I still wanted to do it my way.

From July 1998 to February 10th of 2000 I spent time in limbo, not really wanting to drink, but not really wanting to stay sober either. I stayed alcohol free for nine straight months I even went to about four AA meetings after rehab. I figured I knew the basics so I didn't need to go to AA meetings ALL the time.

If there is one thing I have learned in my time in the program it is this -- an intellectual understanding does not necessarily translate into an ability. I knew I was an alcoholic long before I woke up in the swamp. Simply knowing didn't give me the ability to do anything about it. I had to learn that the hard way.



My last drink was February 10th, 2000. I was 19 years old, and a freshman in college. I swore over and over that I was going to quit between my rehab and my sobriety date and I sincerely meant it every time. Sobriety stuck for me when I made back into the rooms and took directions. I got a sponsor, went to 90 meetings in 90 days, worked the steps to the best of my ability and I stayed sober by doing what was directed.

When I moved from Michigan to Central Oregon in 2006 it took me a long time to get comfortable in the AA community here. And again, I knew I needed the fellowship, but I lacked in the *doing* part. And I suffered from my alcoholism as a result. After a couple of years doing the minimum, I came to the conclusion that I didn't need meetings. I am sure I don't need to explain that that plan didn't work out too well: I went crazy. And as an alcoholic, I am the *last one* to know when I go crazy.

One thing that has become crystal clear to me is that I don't need to take a drink to suffer from alcoholism. In fact alcohol has not been a problem for me in more than 12 years. My alcoholism, however, has never left me. I have had to learn (the hard way) that my recovery from alcoholism has a lot less to do with *knowing* than it does with *doing*.

I have learned that the solution to my alcoholism is the same at 12 years as it was at 12 days. *Knowing that* is only PART of the solution; actually *doing what works* is the OTHER part. I have had to relearn over and over something I heard when I first got sober and that is, "I can't think my way into better acting, I have to act my way into better thinking".

-Griff



Excerpts from: **The Professor and The Paradox; Alcoholics Anonymous, 1st ed.**

In connection with this idea, let me pass on what I consider the four paradoxes of how A.A. works. (A paradox, you probably already know, is a statement which is seemingly self-contradictory; a statement which appears to be false, but which, upon careful examination, in certain instances proves to be true.)



We SURRENDER TO WIN. On the face of it, surrendering certainly does not seem like winning. But it is in A.A. Only after we have come to the end of our rope, hit a stone wall in some aspect of our lives beyond which we can go no further; only when we hit “bottom” in despair and surrender, can we accomplish sobriety which we could never accomplish before. We must, and we do, surrender in order to win.

We GIVE AWAY TO KEEP. That seems absurd and untrue. How can you keep anything if you give it away? But in order to keep whatever it is we get in A.A., we must go about giving it away to others, for no fees or rewards of any kind. When we cannot afford to give away what we have received so freely in A.A., we had better get ready for our next “drunk.” It will happen every time. We’ve got to continue to give it away in order to keep it.

We SUFFER TO GET WELL. There is no way to escape the terrible suffering of remorse and regret and shame and embarrassment which starts us on the road to getting well from our affliction. There is no new way to shake out a hangover. It’s painful. And for us, necessarily so. I told this to a friend of mine as he sat weeping to and fro on the side of the bed, in terrible shape, about to die for some paraldehyde. I said, “Lost John”—that’s his nickname—“Lost John, you know you’re going to have to do a certain amount of shaking sooner or later.” “Well,” he said, “for God’s sake let’s make it later!” We suffer to get well.

We DIE TO LIVE. That is a beautiful paradox straight out of the Biblical idea of being “born again” or “losing one’s life to find it. When we work at our Twelve Steps, the old life of guzzling and fuzzy thinking, and all that goes with it, gradually dies, and we acquire a different and a better way of life. As our shortcomings are removed, one life of us dies, and another life of us lives. We in A.A. die to live.

Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible, and achieves the impossible.

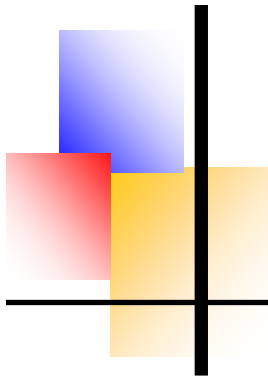
MYSTERIOUS PARADOXES

Such is the paradox of A.A. regeneration: strength arising out of complete defeat and weakness, the loss of one's old life as a condition for finding a new one.

A.A. COMES OF AGE, p. 46



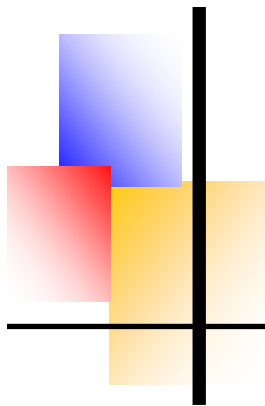
What glorious mysteries paradoxes are! They do not compute, yet when recognized and accepted, they reaffirm something in the universe beyond human logic. When I face a fear, I am given courage; when I support a brother or sister, my capacity to love myself is increased; when I accept pain as part of the growing experience of life, I realize a greater happiness; when I look at my dark side, I am brought into new light; when I accept my vulnerabilities and surrender to a Higher Power, I am graced with unforeseen strength. I stumbled through the doors of A.A. in disgrace, expecting nothing from life, and I have been given hope and dignity. Miraculously, the only way to keep the gifts of the program is to pass them on.



MAY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Tuesday night Speaker mtg 7pm	2	3	4 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm Speakers: KIM T/ MARK T	5 Redmond pot- luck, speaker mtg—6 pm;
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 ART SILENT AUCTION BROOKS HALL 6-8 pm
13 District 5 GSR mtg 4 pm TEC	14	15 Madras birthday Mtg-7:30 pm	16 Potluck Speaker Meeting, La Pine 6 pm	17	18 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm Speakers: SHARIE B/ CODY M.	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 Bend Milestone- Meeting TEC 7p	26 Intergroup Pot- luck TEC Brooks Hall 6pm
27 IGR Advisory Board mtg-5 pm IGR mtg-5:30	28	29	30	31		
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 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.



JUNE 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm	2 Redmond pot- luck, speaker mtg—6 pm;
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 District 5 GSR mtg 4 pm TEC	11	12 Madras birthday Mtg-7:30 pm	13 Potluck Speaker Meeting, La Pine 6 pm	14	15 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm	16
17	18	19	20	21	22 Bend Milestone meeting 7 pm	23 Intergroup Pot- luck TEC Brooks Hall 6pm
24 IGR Advisory Board mtg-5 pm IGR mtg-5:30 TEC	25	26	27	28	29	30
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More Announcements

NEW MEETING:

Monday Night Living Sober
7:00 pm - 8:15 pm
Redmond Community Church,
corner of 10th and Cedar

SUMMER IS COMING !!!!

Lineup of ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS:

June 7-10 Ochoco
Campout



June 16th: Beginning of Summer
Picnic Sam Johnson Park



July 7th Hee Hee Spirit Fest

Stay tuned for more information

Questions: Call Entertainment Chair,
Eric J 541-610-9507

MAY Sobriety Milestones

Attitude Adjustment

Kim A.	5/14/06	6 years
Suzie L	5/28/03	9 years
Carlos W	5/23/89	23 years
Heidi F	5/26/11	1 year
Reed K	5/31/03	9 years

24 and Alive

Levy J	5/7/09	3 years
Cheryl	5/1/04	8 years

New Horizons

Dan B	5/11/11	1 year
Palmer N	5/13/08	4 years
David Y	5/28/11	1 year
Kasey Z	5/25/11	1 year
Pilar	5/8/11	1 year
Chris P	5/3/04	8 years

Redmond SOS

Molly Z	5/1/04	8 years
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Intergroup Office Moving:

NOTICE TO ALL GROUPS:

The Intergroup office is in transition.
It is temporarily located at 214 NW
6th Street Redmond, OR 97756 .
New location will be identified soon.

Upcoming Events

First Annual "Artful Sobriety" SILENT AUCTION



Saturday, May 12, 2012

6:00 to 8:00 pm
Brooks Hall, TEC

Silent Auction of Fine Arts,
Textiles, Crafts and Food

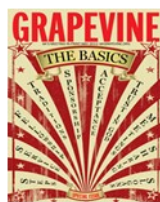
Raffles, Door Prizes
\$5 donation at the door

Proceeds to support the AA
September 2012 General
Assembly, Redmond, OR

Contact: Bonnie
theartfulbird@gmail.com

The May 2012 Issue has Arrived!

What helps us stay sober today? Is it that morning prayer? That phone call to our sponsor? Finishing that Fourth Step? Or how about that crazy share we blurt out at our home group? For each of us, it's different, depending on the day. But one thing we do know ... if we trust our Higher Power and pick up the basic tools of AA, we have a good chance of not picking up that drink today.



In this special May "Back to the Basics" issue, we feature stories about some of the great tools that keep us on the beam. In "[Learning to Walk](#)," working the Steps helped a man finally become an adult. In "[We Open Up](#)," a member tells how sharing keeps him sober and grateful. The power of a loving, firm sponsor is featured in "[Stitch and Giggle](#)." And a new guy gets pulled into his home group through fun times and fellowship in "[Pool Party](#)."

You can find these stories and many more on the [AA Grapevine Web site](#).



TREASURER'S REPORT DONATIONS SUMMARY



2012 Group	15-Mar to 14-Apr	Year to Date
24 and Alive	120.00	515.00
As Men See It	70.00	130.00
Attitude Adjustment	38.00	260.00
Back to the Big Book		43.00
Burns Group		-
Chicks with Chips		141.80
Culver Nuts & Bolts		6.00
Eastside Earlyrisers		274.05
Easy Does It		40.00
First things First		-
Going to Any Lengths		-
The Nooners		300.00
High Noon BB	50.00	50.00
Issues & Tissues		16.66
Living in the Solution		17.00
Madras Oasis Group	100.00	250.00
Make My Day		-
Meditation Meeting		-
Men's Book Study	75.00	75.00
Men's Stag Meeting		50.00
Men's Straight Talk		40.00
New Horizon		199.10
Not a Glum Lot	280.00	790.00
Primary Purpose		84.32
Redmond Rebels		-
Rule 62 Group		-
Safe Harbor		169.69
Saturday Morning Alive		-
Saturday Nite Live		-
Sisters in Sobriety		187.58
Sober Desire	131.79	131.79
Serenity Group		50.00
S.O.S. Group	40.00	80.00
S.O.B. Group		12.50
Spiritual Awakening		-
Step Sisters		78.15
Steps to Sobriety		100.00
Sunriver Open Group		-
Terrebonne Trudgers		40.00
Thursday Womens Group		1,881.74
Tuesday Nite AA-Bend		24.00
Wednesday Stag Meeting		-
WFS	90.00	90.00
Anonymous		200.00
C.O. Speaker Meeting	100.00	100.00
		-
		-
Total Contributions	1,094.79	6,427.38
Potluck	78.11	408.73
Total	1,172.90	6,836.11

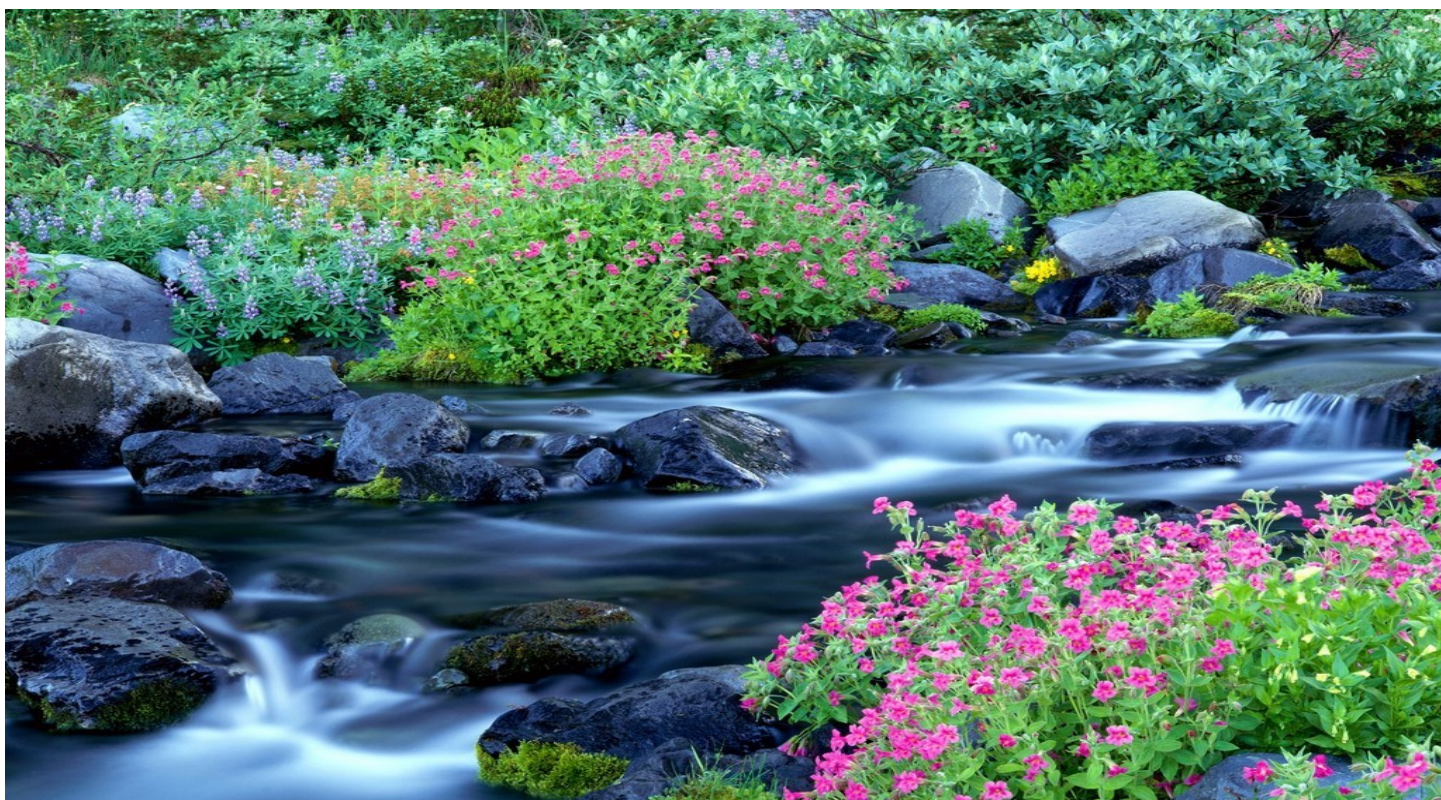
Heard Around the Rooms

- ◇ Some A.A.'s are so successful that they turn out to be almost as good as they used to think they were when they were drinking.
- ◇ Sobriety delivers everything alcohol promised.
- ◇ Every recovery from alcoholism began with one sober hour.
- ◇ Be nice to newcomers one day they may be your sponsor.
- ◇ Where do I find sobriety? Twelve steps past any lengths.
- ◇ I love you, God loves you, and there's nothing you can do about it.
- ◇ There's safety in numbers. One through twelve.
- ◇ When I start wondering if everything's okay, it's probably not.
- ◇ My sponsor says I'm trying. Very trying.
- ◇ You can't speed up your recovery, but you sure can slow it down.





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