

Inside: Continuing to Take Inventory



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Volume 14 Issue 6

June 2012

From the Beginning

I believe I was destined to be an alcoholic from the start. You might say it was already in the genes. I have heard some say "If you had the life I had, you would be, too!" In looking back, my life was messed up – but in reality, it wasn't the life that made me an alcoholic but rather my *reaction* to it that made me an alcoholic.

I was born to a large family that was horribly dysfunctional in about every way, but the funny thing is I very rarely saw my parents drink; and when they DID drink, I was kinda glad, because they were nice. Most any other time, I sought escape from a very young age. At four years old, I used to fantasize about being drinking, to get away from the neglect, abuse and just plain feelings. I tried running away from home many times, and the one time my brother and I actually got anywhere, we ran into a skunk and dropped everything and ran home. This is about the time when I was discovered cigarettes and started smoking but that is another story and battle I fought 20 odd years later.

I had my first real drink when I was six. During Christmas our parents gave us all a tiny bit of wine in a glass. Well, being the second to the youngest and the last boy in the line, they poured it all in one glass and guess who got it? It was about the only time I was grateful for a large family. I did not have another drink for four more years, til I was ten. Now when you are ten, they don't sell alcohol to you but being a clever boy, who needs money? We would steal it, walking out of a store with a half-gallon of wine or a bottle of red rocket. Rot-gut, yes, but we were not picky!

Then we would break into houses. Now this we did for fun, because we lived in a vacation community where most houses were empty for most of the year. I'm sure the police figured it was kids, because we stole spare change, and other random things. My brother took a blow dryer once, and I got a box of those long sticked matches.



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New York, NY 10164-0371

While God and the fellowship was raising me, I was raising my kids.



The one time I actually felt bad, though, was when we broke into a neighbor's house that was really good friends with my mother and stole a bottle of wine. My mom looked me straight in the eye and asked if I stole it; I looked back at her and flat-out said "No". She stood up for me, insisting that I would always tell the truth -- Sorry Mom, I was beyond guilt trip and staying out of trouble with a lie didn't seem that big a deal. I continued to lie for many years after that, and crazily started believing my own lies.

At this point in my story, I started smoking pot, also getting into other things like aerosol. We would steal hair spray, Pam or Drishti spray. I even did propane, and once, while high, I opened up a 300 gallon tank and lit it on fire. It shot a flame pretty far and I only got some hair singed. They began locking the tanks up in the community after that. Life got a little crazy, with alcohol, and aerosol, and just about anything else, until the one time my little sister told my biggest brother what we were doing. He dragged us into the house and in a somewhat violent way told us the harm that can come from what we were doing. He would lift us up to the ceiling and shaking us telling us "is this high enough for you"? As scary as this was, it was not the fear that stopped that train; it was that someone actually gave a damn about us that made me stop. This idea did not stick, but it was this cared about feeling that later made the difference to me.

My Dad, for all his faults, got me into a treatment center where I got sober and stayed sober for many years. The problem was I did not take advantage of the program and became a bitter suicidal codependent dry drunk who sought anything else to fill that emptiness and find hope. In the weird concept that one sick person deserves another, I got married and had two kids. In my view, who needs the meetings or a sponsor? The steps seemed okay, though, and if making amends would get me something, cool ! And as for praying, my plan: Hey God, how you doing. Save Me, talk to you later.



Blessings come in many guises. She went out to party one day, and I was left with the kids. Having no other options, I got sober but was royally messed up in the head, mind, spirit and heart. We moved in with my dad and step mom. I sent the kids to bed, kissed them, then got in my car and started to drive. I had a gun in my ex's apartment and my mind was no where near sobriety. There were a few prayers but I was no longer scared and just wanted to be rid of all this. For some unknown reason, I turned the car around and went back to my parents house. I can't say that I have ever seen lightning bolts come down from the sky and write in concrete what God's will is for me, but as I checked on my daughter, she came out of a dead of sleep, looked up at me and said "thank you daddy" . She then closed her eyes fell instantly back to sleep. My children were two and four at the time.

I started all over. At first I lied to myself, and said I knew the program and it doesn't work. I was right, it is a bicycle you have to get on and pedal. It is a tool, that only goes when you put it in motion. I knew I needed the program and this time for real ! I didn't know how to raise the kids without doing what my parents did -- and that didn't seem to turn out all that well, so I always say that I was only one grade ahead of my kids. While God and the fellowship was raising me, I was raising my kids.

They are now twenty and twenty two. We had our difficulties, but they turned out pretty good and I love them with all my heart. I still work my program every day and it keeps me going. I am nowhere perfect, and anyone that knows me can attest to that! But Thank God I am nowhere near what I use to be and God or HP willing, will never have to be that person again. My best and only chance is if I keep doing what I have been taught in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

When I got sober I thought God would plow the mountains and pave the path but instead I got a pair of hiking boots.



Mike Seeley, Alcoholic

CONTINUING TO TAKE INVENTORY : Types of Meetings



When we take a serious look at the Program of Alcoholics Anonymous, it becomes clear that it is still as effective as it was from 1939 to 1955; very effective with at least a 75% success rate. That is being reproduced today in groups and institutions around a good portion of the world where emphasis is placed on the study and application of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous as outlined in the basic text "Alcoholics Anonymous" rather than on meetings. To say that our Program is not successful would be about as intelligent as walking into the headquarters of Microsoft and say, "Bill Gates isn't successful". Not too smart.

No, our Program is very solid, but the Fellowship is quite a different matter. Many segments of our Fellowship are so far removed from our Program (the life giving Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous protected by the life saving Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous) that it is impossible to recognize why they are there. It seems that in our Fellowship today, there are three basic types of AA meetings.

First, there is the AA meeting that is "Alcoholics Anonymous". In these meetings, we hear recovered alcoholics talk about what they were like, what happened and what they are like today. Or the meeting is a study of the Big Book, the Steps or the Traditions. Particular attention is directed toward the newcomers. These groups adhere to the Fifth Tradition. Also these groups take a "Group Inventory" periodically to assure that they are adhering to all of our treasured Traditions. Group Conscience meetings normally have to do with what the group can do to better attract and help suffering alcoholics. These groups are always successful.

The 2nd type of AA meeting is the "Almost Anything" meeting. There will be a few recovered alcoholics who talk about the Program of Alcoholics Anonymous, but there will be some "andas" and the discussion of issues, expression of ideas and opinions and isolated but unrelated experiences. These groups believe they don't need a "Group Inventory" and their Group-conscience meetings normally revolve around how to get enough money to pay the rent. These groups last for a period of time and then vanish from the scene.

The 3rd type of AA meeting is the "Absolutely Awful" meeting. These are normally discussion meetings about problems, my day and/or my way. Non-alcoholics not only sit in the meetings, but are permitted to participate. Very often these groups are bedeviled with folks who think the Big Book is antiquated needs to be replaced with one that would agree with their ideas. But you will hear little if anything about our Program (the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous). These groups seldom survive more than a few months.

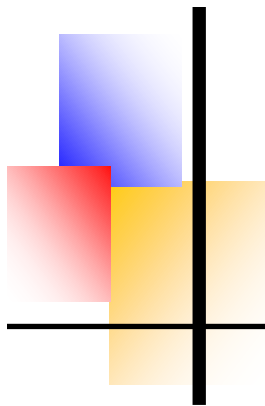
The 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous were the result of the failure of many groups. We claim to be intelligent people, but one must ask, "If we are so intelligent, why are we so stupid?" All of the problems with the Steps and Traditions were resolved before most of us arrived here. No one has been able to demonstrate a more reliable or effective method of avoiding death or permanent insanity from drinking than the through taking and living by the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. And no one has demonstrated a more effective way for a bunch of egotist, intellectuals, gurus, and spiritually sick people to band together and work together effectively than those who stay within the boundaries of the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Bill W. wrote,

"In the years ahead A.A. will, of course, make mistakes. Experience has taught us that we need have no fear of doing this, providing that we always remain willing to admit our faults and to correct them promptly. Our growth as individuals has depended upon this healthy process of trial and error. So will our growth as a fellowship.

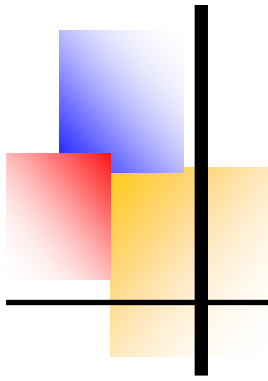
Let us always remember that any society of men and women that cannot freely correct its own faults must surely fall into decay if not into collapse. Such is the universal penalty for the failure to go on growing. Just as each A.A. must continue to take his moral inventory and act upon it, so must our whole Society if we are to survive and if we are to serve usefully and well."
(A.A. Comes of Age, pg 231)

We now know what the problem is and we know what the solution is. Unfortunately, we have not remained willing to admit our faults and to correct them promptly. We have been and are plagued with large doses of apathy and complacency. The problem we are trying to live with is needlessly killing alcoholics. The solution promises recovery for those who are willing to follow the clear-cut directions in the Big Book.



JUNE 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm JANE W/ PRICILLA	2 Redmond pot- luck, speaker mtg—6 pm;
3	4	5	6	7 OCHOCO CAMPOUT	8 OCHOCO CAMPOUT	9 OCHOCO CAMPOUT
10 District 5 GSR mtg 4 pm TEC	11	12 Madras birthday Mtg-7:30 pm	13	14	15 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm CARLOS/ GWEN W	16 Beginning of Summer Picnic Sam Johnson Park 10 am spkr Potluck noon
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 Potluck Speaker Meeting, La Pine 6 pm	28	29	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	



JULY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Tuesday night Speaker mtg 7pm	4	5	6 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm Speakers: Bill B/ Shari A	7 Hee Hee Spirit Fest Warm Springs Redmond pot- luck, speaker mtg—6 pm;
8 District 5 GSR mtg 4 pm TEC	9	10	11	12	13 As Men See It Campout	14 As Men See It Campout
15 3rd Annual Softball Tour- nament	16	17 Madras birthday Mtg-7:30 pm	18	19	20 CO speaker mtg- 7 pm Speakers: Carrie B/ Darla B.	21
22 IGR Advisory Board mtg-5 pm IGR mtg-5:30	23	24	25 Potluck Speaker Meeting, La Pine 6 pm	26	27 Bend Milestone- Meeting TEC 7p	28 Intergroup Pot- luck TEC Brooks Hall 6pm
29	30					
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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.

More Announcements

Intergroup Office MOVED:

337 W Antler Ave
Redmond (in the
Alano Club)



Joan C is the new office manager
hours are Monday to Saturday 9
am to 1 pm. Jack M will be help-
ing out on Fridays and Saturdays.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to help out
with the intergroup office. Please
call 541-923-8199 if you would
like to help!!

SUMMER IS HERE !!!!

June 7-10
Ochoco Campout



As Men See It Campout
July 13-15th



July 7th Hee Hee
Spirit Fest



3rd Annual Sober Softball
Tournament
Sunday July 15th,
2012



Questions: Call
Eric J 541-610-9507

JUNE Sobriety Milestones

Attitude Adjustment

Frankie B. 6/23/99 13 years

New Horizons

Erin B 6/3/08 3 years

Joe West 6/16/83 29 years

Lee B 6/11/07 4 years

Randy N 6/7/07 4 years

John S 6/29/82 28 years

As Men See It

Patrick K 6/10/87 25 years

Doug G 6/4/92 20 years

Jim L 6/24/92 20 years

Greg B 6/13/11 1 year

24 and Alive

Renee 6/25/07 5 years



ANNOUNCEMENT:

Conscious Contact to be ONLINE only

The intergroup has voted
to discontinue printing
the Conscious Contact
(CC), to save money. The
last PRINTED CC will be
the JULY issue. IGRs will
need to print the CC from
the PDF file posted to the
COIGAA website each
month for their home-
group's use. Subscribers
will be notified about
their subscriptions at a
later date.

Upcoming Events

Intergroup Entertainment Committee Presents:

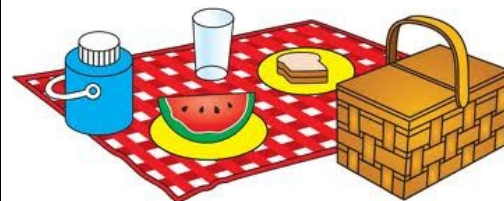
The Sam Johnson's Park
Corner of SW 15th &
SW Evergreen, Redmond

Beginning Summer Picnic

Saturday, June 16th

A.A. Meeting Starts @
10:00am

Potluck Starts @ 12:00pm
Hamburgers & Hot dogs
will be supplied



Last names that begin with :
A-P ~ Bring Salads or Side Dishes
Q-Z ~ Bring Desserts

Come Join the Fun

~Volleyball, Croquet &
Raffle~

For More Information Please Call:

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Heidi S. (541)728-5463

Kevin K. (541)610-3060

Mark L. (541)350-5194

Lurlyne (541)504-1343



TREASURER'S REPORT DONATIONS SUMMARY

2012 Group	15-Apr to 14-May	Year to Date
24 and Alive		515.00
As Men See It		130.00
Attitude Adjustment		260.00
Back to the Big Book		43.00
Burns Group		-
Chicks with Chips	130.79	272.59
Culver Nuts & Bolts		6.00
Eastside Earlyrisers		274.05
Easy Does It		40.00
First things First		-
Going to Any Lengths		-
The Nooner		300.00
High Noon BB		50.00
Issues & Tissues		16.66
Living in the Solution		17.00
Madras Oasis Group		250.00
Make My Day		-
Meditation Meeting		-
Men's Book Study		75.00
Men's Stag Meeting		50.00
Men's Straight Talk		40.00
New Horizon		199.10
Not a Glum Lot		790.00
Primary Purpose		84.32
Redmond Rebels		-
Rule 62 Group		-
Safe Harbor	101.09	270.78
Saturday Morning Alive		-
Saturday Nite Live		-
Sisters in Sobriety		187.58
Sober Desire		131.79
Serenity Group		50.00
S.O.S. Group		80.00
S.O.B. Group		12.50
Spiritual Awakening		-
Step Sisters	114.47	192.62
Steps to Sobriety	125.00	225.00
Sunriver Open Group		-
Terrebonne Trudgers		40.00
Thursday Womens Group	114.86	1,996.60
Tuesday Nite AA-Bend	120.00	144.00
Wednesday Stag Meeting		-
WFS		90.00
Anonymous		200.00
C.O. Speaker Meeting		100.00
		-
		-
Total Contributions	706.21	7,133.59
Potluck	49.25	457.98
Total	755.46	7,591.57

GRAPEVINE is

We asked: "If you had just one word to describe Grapevine, what would it be?"

You answered: Close to 1,000 responses were received after the "Grapevine Is..." contest debuted on our website in February 2009.

The top 10 most popular responses were:

Lifeline.....61

Hope.....38

Connected, connectedness, connecting or connectivity.....26

Inspiration, inspirational or inspiring.....24

Fellowship.....16

Life or my life.....16

Serenity.....12

Comfort or comforting.....10

Recovery.....10

US.....10

Other popular words included: Awesome, Empowering/Empowerment, Encouraging/Encouragement, Enlightening, Fantastic/Fantastical, Fruit/Fruitful/Fruit-bearing, Gratitude/Gratifying, Indispensable, Insight/Insightful, Necessary, Real/Reality, Relevant, Serendipity/Serendipitous, Sobering, Sobriety, Spiritual/Spiritually Uplifting, Unity/Unifying, Uplifting, Wisdom/Wise.

Credit goes to the creative readers who came up with: De-Vine, Gratefulishious, Sober-licious, A Hug in Print, Ginormous, Juicy, Neat, The Root and A Meeting in my Pocket.

CHECK IT OUT FOR YOURSELF:
www.AAgrapevine.org





337 W Antler Street
Redmond, OR 97756



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Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

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Subscription Rates: One Year \$18.00

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Newsletter 754 S.W. 11th Street, Redmond, OR 97756

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