

drugs," Huxold says. "I get up in the morning, do the first three steps. I pray; I meditate. Usually I do two meetings a day just to stay grounded. I talk to my sponsor daily. My life revolves around recovery. It has to."

Treatment is different for everybody," says Kat Barrett, an alcohol and drug specialist at Outside In. "I've known kids who got through without treatment because they found the right support system. But for most, treatment is a long road. Sometimes it takes years of work. But you can get better."

Lawson indicates, "25 some years ago, there was no recovery groups for gays and lesbians. Now there are 12-step programs: AA, Meth Anon. Today there's a variety of support systems."

"Meth changes your way of thinking. You must have a grasp of your balls if you do not want it to take away your life."

—Charles

ASAP's Triangle. Project has gay, lesbian, bi and trans outreach programs, queer groups and HIV support groups and counseling. Why gay-specific groups? "What I've seen with gay clients in nongay groups is that they don't divulge much," says Lawson. "It's very hard to get clean and sober if you have to hide things."



"Being gay is really hard on people going into treatment," affirms Huxold. "Maybe it's the macho thing. I'd really like to begin a gay meth meeting here in Portland. We need more gay-friendly options."

"Components of our programs are oriented directly toward the LGBT community," says De Paul's Moonshine. "We have a trained staff who are familiar with LGBT issues and aspects of sexual diversity. Addiction is a chronic relapsing disease, but treatment is effective and cost-efficient. Treatment works. Everyone has the ability to live a healthy life."

Injecting into a vein is one of the most common—and dangerous—ways to use meth. Common "works" (inset) include syringe and needle; a tourniquet; "cots" used to soak up and filter impurities; and a small metal "cooker."

For some of our friends in Portland's sexual minorities community, that healthy life has not yet arrived.

"I need to quit," says Wade. "But I want to get high because it's really fun. Right now I still use because it's easy to get. My friend gives me what's left over when he gets high."

Wade looks out the window, deep in thought. "I have guilt because I use. I have guilt because of all the shitty things I do when I use. And I should stop using. But I haven't yet."

GLENN SCOTFIELD WILLIAMS writes prose, poetry, plays, periodicals and porn in Portland.

PHOTOS BY MARTY DAVIS



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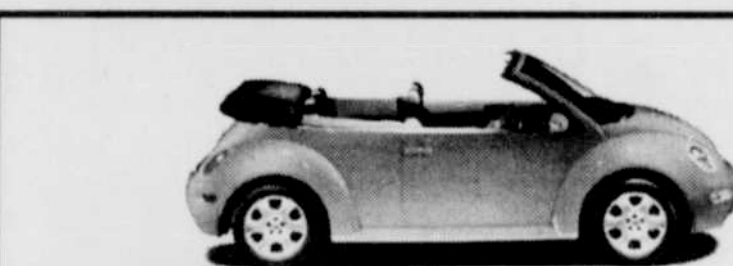


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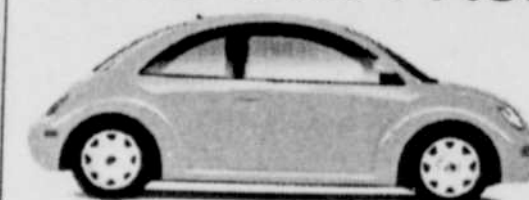


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