



Conventionally Sober

I started smoking pot for many reasons, one being to fit in, to belong. I never felt comfortable in my own skin or with my family. So when I started using I found others in my High School who used and felt less lonely. I believed I had found my family. Later at my job I found more people who used and felt less lonely there too, but I never quite fit in, no one I knew smoked pot like I did. The first time I met anyone who smoked like I did was at an MA meeting.

As welcoming as they were, I was afraid. What did they want from me? I wondered if they would still like me if they knew the real me? Over the years I found out the answers to these and many more questions, and the answer is YES!

But I had to get involved to find that out and getting involved is scary. I had not done anything sober for several decades and even then I didn't do much that concerned having to deal with people. At my job sitting in front of a computer all day was fine, talking with people was difficult. Going somewhere I had never been before to meet people I did not know, impossible. Or so I thought.

I was three years sober before I dared to get involved and it was at an MA convention. I had met someone and with her encouragement I took the risk. I wasn't sure what a convention was, or what I was going to do there. I had heard the words the GSR's and the people who had been to one before said: workshops, gender specific meetings, fellowship, buffets, dances; But how they related to MA, or to me I didn't have a clue.

To my surprise as I pulled into the parking lot of the hotel I saw someone I knew from my home group. I began to feel a little better. As I registered and saw more people from my local MA meetings I began to feel like I had "come home to a place I had never been before" to paraphrase John Denver. The workshops were great and I learned a lot about my recovery, the Steps and MA. Being able to go to a meeting, in my case of men, was eye opening and fun. The fellowship of potheads across the state and country was mind blowing. I over stuffed myself at the buffet and danced for the first time sober. I even won a \$25 gas card to get me back home. This was a few years ago and that was a lot more gas than now. I knew I had finally found my family, a place where I belonged.

My life has never been the same since that MA convention. It could be that my wife and I have not been apart for very long since then, but that is another story.

Jeff MAUser

Warm Welcome

I smoked my first joints age 12, under the bridge near my school, skipping swimming class. The excitement at the time was doing something that my parents wouldn't have approved of and being "cool". It worked, I got high, I felt cool and like I had gotten away with doing something bad. Hey, it didn't seem that bad, I still went out and did things, in fact I started doing daring and exciting things. I started hanging out with the "cool" crowd and doing fun exciting things. By age 15 I was smoking everyday, and by 16 I was selling it at school to support my daily use. Still, I was coherent and could get 60-70% grades without even trying, I made new friends easily and started dating, a lot! This "success" felt great. I was the centre of my social circle, always had a cool girlfriend, made money and was able to get and keep real jobs too. Even after being lured into a sex predator's trap with Marijuana, 2 stints in jail for possession for the purpose and a few sexually transmitted diseases, I still thought I was doing okay...I was not making the same wage as my peers but I could make up for that by dealing on the side. I was politically pro marijuana and thought I was making a lifestyle choice of my own free will. Little did I know that it was my dependence on weed that was fueling me to rationalize my addiction as a "free choice".

After many failed relationships I finally had a child with my second wife. During pregnancy she quit smoking dope and I kept doing it. By



a new leaf

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The purpose of *A New Leaf* is to carry the message of recovery from marijuana addiction. It is through the written experiences of recovering addicts and their stories that we may find experience, strength and hope.

Articles submitted should reflect recovery, unity, and service.

The articles contained in *A New Leaf* are the sole opinions of the authors and do not reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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A New Leaf
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Torrance, CA 90504

or submit online:
www.marijuana-anonymous.org
and click on the Newsletter tab.

this time I had a desire to quit too, but always failed to keep promises I made to myself about cutting down or quitting. Finally, I was laid off of a job I'd had for 10 years and enjoyed. During my third month of unemployment my severance had run out, I had drained most of my RSP and my line of credit was maxed. I had no money to keep smoking everyday so I was mooching off friends who I knew would happily smoke with me. I snuck out twice to smoke at my friend's house after my wife and little girl had gone to bed...after the second time I felt overwhelming guilt. The next day while job hunting online I looked up Marijuana Anonymous on the net and found that there was a meeting that night near my home. I decided to go and when I tentatively walked in was greeted by an old pot smoking friend who was chairing the meeting. The warm welcome, from someone I knew and respected that had been clean for 3 years really broke the ice for me. I was lucky. I started attending the meetings weekly and stayed clean from that night on. The first few months were a whirlwind of withdrawal and detox symptoms, but I stuck with it. With the help of fellow addicts sharing at the meetings, my sponsor and working the steps I was able to maintain my sobriety.

I still have bizarre dreams on a nightly basis but they don't freak me out nearly as much and I have now just celebrated my 1 year of being marijuana free. I'm working the steps and helping others by sharing my story at meetings and helping out as much as I can. I'm back working and enjoying a new found freedom from marijuana. I still have a lot of work to do, but with the help of MA, I've achieved what I could not do alone. I have quit smoking pot after 35+ years of daily, constant smoking and I am on my way through life again.

Adam E. -- Toronto



The Roving Reporter Asks:

“What do you do when a sponsee does not take direction?”

Please submit your answers by March 16th for publication in the April issue.

**DO YOU WANT TO ANSWER THE ROVING REPORTER
BUT DON'T KNOW HOW?
There are four really good ways!**

1. If you're in a District, you can give your answer to your Bureau Chief.
 2. You can write to anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org and tell us what your answer is. Make sure to include "Roving Report for March" in the subject line.
 3. You can go to the Marijuana Anonymous website, and you can submit your answer there. Point your browser to <http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org/literature/newsletter/talk-to-the-roving-reporter> and fill out the form.
- or*
4. You can write by U. S. Mail to:

**A New Leaf Publications
PO Box 6482
Torrance, CA 90504**



News on the MARCH



This month, Carol McD (otherwise affectionately known as MotherMA) and Susan C. step down from their respective positions as ANLP Bookkeeper and Secretary. Their long years of service have been invaluable to us, and we are grateful to them for all they have done for the publishing arm of Marijuana Anonymous.

Mark I., too, has resigned as Publishing Editor, and we thank him for his term of excellent service.

As a result of these departures, we now have the vacancy of Secretary and Publishing Editor available to be filled. Those interested in taking these service positions can contact the Office Manager at anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org for information on the needs and requirements.

We would like to welcome Lisa H. as our new Bookkeeper, and Debra M. as our Story Editor. We thank them for stepping up to these positions.

Step Two

Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

Tradition Two

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority, a loving God whose expression may come through in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Meditatively Yours

Following is an excerpt from the MA Meditation Book, a work in progress. If you would like to contribute to the Meditation Book, please forward your text to the Office Manager at anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org or write to:

ANLP
PO Box 6482
Torrance, CA 90504

“We go through what we go through to get to where we are going.”

Sometimes we feel like “why me? Why does stuff happen to me?”

I know that the experiences we go through only help us become stronger, better people. We learn through our experiences. We have to go through these times of trials & tribulations just to get to the point we are trying to reach.

Is there strength in your faith to get through the situation?

The Twelve Steps of Marijuana Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over marijuana, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, *as we understood God*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, *as we understood God*, praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to marijuana addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs. ▲

marijuana anonymous worldwide

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District 10 LA County East PO Box 94400 Pasadena, CA 91109	626.583.9582	For a complete listing of all meetings visit www.marijuana-anonymous.org	

A NEW LEAF NEEDS YOUR STORY!

We are always looking for stories, and want to hear from you! Keep in mind that we a recovery newsletter, and the emphasis is on experience strength and hope, rather than on style, and we like to avoid drugalogues. Although the state of your life prior to recovery is important, the balance should tip in favor of how your life has improved.

You do not have to tell your life history, and you don't have to fill the issue! Anything you feel is worthwhile saying in a meeting is worth submitting to the newsletter.

We do edit for grammar, punctuation, and the message of hope, but if we feel your story should go in we do everything to keep it as intact as possible. ANLP is YOUR voice!

Submit your story online at <http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org/literature/newsletter/submit-a-story>, or write to anl.editor@marijuana-anonymous.org. Our mailing address is PO Box 6482, Torrance, CA, 90504.

Birthdays

Celebrating 219 years of sobriety in this issue!

Want your sobriety date published? If you're in a District, inform your **Bureau Chief**.
If not, write anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org, or submit online at
www.marijuana-anonymous.org/literature/newsletter/submit-anniversary-birthday.
Birthdays accepted for the current month issue are ones that fall in the 45 days previous to the current month. Birthday for this calendar month will appear in the next issue.

District 4		
Andy F.	1/26/81	32 Years
District 5		
Robert M.	12/11/11	1 YEAR!
Layne	1/18/10	3 Years
John S.	1/5/07	6 Years
Jon C.	1/7/07	6 Years
Tony R.	1/1/04	9 Years
Melody C.	1/16/89	24 Years
District 7		
Mike M.	1/3/10	3 Years
Karen S.	12/28/07	5 Years
Jeremy	12/29/06	7 Years
Keith G.	1/16/09	4 Years
Rob H.	12/30/00	13 Years
Debra M.	1/3/95	18 Years
Mike LB	1/10/87	26 Years



District 8		
Deidre C.	1/1/12	1 YEAR!
Lucy D.	12/17/10	2 Years
Ar A.	12/31/08	4 Years
District 13		
Kevin S.	12/29/11	1 YEAR!
Aja	1/12/12	1 YEAR!
Paul	1/8/11	2 Years
District 15		
Chris S.	12/26/11	2 Years
Joe J.	1/4/08	5 Years
Marilyn J.	12/17/04	8 Years
Lou S.	12/25/03	9 Years
Jimmy B.	12/19/00	12 Years
Micah S.	12/22/87	15 Years