



Too Afraid to Quit

For the last few years I've been conscious that I've had a problem with pot. I tried to stop on my own but part of me just didn't want to quit. I know that it affected me negatively in so many ways - my energy, memory, clients, motivation, work, finances, family, and relationships. It became a negative cycle. I would try and stop but my fears and cravings would get the best of me and I would pick up again because it made me fearless. I did not really know about MA but I would go to other 12 Step meetings high and not share or work the Steps. It got to the point where I had enough. When I walked into my first MA meeting, I felt at peace and found a home.

So much to say and so little time.

I started smoking at the age of 16. I was attending a Grand Funk concert and joints were being passed around. Me and buddies were debating on whether to try it or not and we did. Felt nothing, went home; forgot about it. The next week I had one of my buddies bring a lid to school. The memory of seeing a plastic bag full of marijuana is still vivid in my mind. I'll never forget it. I felt a little nervous, but couldn't wait to smoke it. Well, that was the start of my career in marijuana. We smoked it whenever we got together. We ditched school to smoke. My grades fell. I grew my hair and was getting in trouble. I didn't know if I was addicted at the

time, but I truly enjoyed it. I was constantly getting bullied at school and it was a way I could escape and numb my fears. We had a blast smoking pot, playing cards, and eating munchies.

After I finally graduated my buddies and I got a 2-bedroom apartment with 4 guys. It was the hang out and every night we

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partied until 3 AM. I would go to work at a gas station, come home, and smoke pot. At that time I was only smoking at night to party. As I got a career in real estate in my early 20's, I continued to smoke. I cut my hair, wore suits, but every night on my way home I would smoke a joint to help me relax and relieve the stress. I would fantasize about my life, always grandiose thinking. I always had a grand plan of making a lot of money, having a bunch of girls at my disposal even though that wasn't the case. I did make money, but I spent it partying. I drove a cool car but I

was always living hand to mouth – sex, drugs, work, and Rock & Roll. I was having a blast even though I was constantly in fear. Fear about money, fear about work, girlfriends. I became obsessed with work, pot, and sex.

There came a point in my late 20's that I had enough and wanted to find someone to settle down with. I got close with a girl that used to come into my office and eventually ended up marrying her. During the time we were dating she knew I smoked but I never smoked around her. As things got more serious she made me stop. And also stop hanging with my friends. She didn't use drugs or smoke and her father was an alcoholic so she was paranoid even though he had been sober for many years and was going to a 12 Step program. I never heard of 12 Step programs until I met her. She wanted me to go, but I wouldn't. I told her I'd quit on my own. So I did. I white knuckled it, but my nerves were shot. I broke out in hives and I would scratch until I bled. I went to a psychiatrist. He gave me Xanax, which calmed my nerves. In time I got off of that and I quit smoking or drinking for the next 10 years. We had children. I was raising a family on commission sales, so I was always under stress. The stress mounted as the market went to shit and I went heavily into debt. So to relieve my stress, I relied on my old friend marijuana. I started smoking again and kept it from her for a while until she found out and this time she demanded I go to a 12

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a new leaf

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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www.marijuana-anonymous.org
and click on the newsletter tab.

A New Leaf
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It Works If We Work It!

A Marijuana Anonymous Daily Meditation Book is in the works. We're looking for YOUR writing to fill a year's worth of daily meditations, focused on MA's principles of recovery from marijuana addiction. The writings should be approximately 250 to 500 words, and focused on recovery. What would you want to read everyday? Or on your sobriety birthday? It helps to find a quote or saying that inspires you to get started.

Send your submission and we'll print it on YOUR recovery birthday. If you feel so moved, send in more than one. If you need inspiration, take a look at daily meditation books from other fellowships.

Below is a recent submission – be sure to write yours now and reserve the date for your submission.

Send submissions to: smilingheart9@yahoo.com

A Sample Entry

May 18th

The Gifts of Recovery

While life without weed is on the whole so much better, there are still times when my addict mind tells me I'm missing out. I find myself wishing I could just smoke a joint or drink a beer like a "normal person."

When this happens, I've found it helpful to get myself to a meeting and to remember all I've gained in recovery, rather than what I've lost.

I remember I'm grateful for:

- A clear conscience
- Less anxiety and paranoia
- Being able to look neighbors in the eye
- A clearer, less foggy mind
- A healthier body
- The confidence my Higher Power is present in my life.

Acknowledging these gifts of recovery brings me peace and reminds me I wouldn't trade them for any amount of weed in my life.

New Meetings Start-Up
All The Time
Check your local district's
website for updated
information!

or

Get listed on the
MAWS website.
For details contact:
office@marijuana-anonymous.org

**Surrender Your
Stories to
The New Leaf!**

Share Your
Experience
Strength &
Hope

🌀 IN SPIRIT OF SERVICE 🌀

"We do not have any governing authority, but we do have informal rotating service committees" (and commitments). Give freely of what you have found. Choose service to A New Leaf.

Shift Happens

Most of the time my life is good, really good, and I am keenly aware of all the gifts I have received in sobriety. But I am not always aware, certainly not every hour of everyday. Shit happens. That phrase, that choice of words, is exactly what trips me up and causes me to lose sight of all the good in my life.

"Shit" does not happen. Events happen. Challenges are presented to me. Schedules change and

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unexpected things occur. It is my choice how to label it all. It is my choice to see "shit" or another opportunity to grow and learn. I have found that it is often easier to see in retrospect how an event I labeled as "shit" or even simply "not what I planned" ended up being the exact right thing at the exact right

time for my good, and even the greater good. I can look back and say, "Wow, my Higher Power was really working in my life when that happened."

But what about in the moment, how do I maintain my serenity while the "shit" is happening? How can I stay in touch with how good my life is when things, in the moment, appear to be falling apart?

This is what works for me: First I ask myself, out loud if possible, "Who is in charge?" I then answer "God," because that is my truth today. If I can truly own that truth, I have nothing to worry about. "Shit" isn't happening. God's plan is happening. God's plans always result in my greatest good.

Next I ask myself, "What is the next thing I need to do?" Not, "What are the next ten things I need to do?" Just do the next thing. This is doing the footwork. The next thing may be as mundane as going to the post office. It could also be something more difficult for me, like making an amends. The key thing is to just do it, remembering that the outcome is out of my hands. Who is in charge? God is in charge.

The final ingredient is gratitude. When I am in gratitude, I see past the "shit." I try to think of at least five things I am grateful for. This is a day changer for me.

By doing these things I have made a conscious connection to my Higher Power. I have made a decision to trust my Higher Power by taking action and I have changed the way I see the world. I am in a place of gratitude again for how really good my life is and for all the gifts I have received in sobriety.

Melody C.

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Step program. So I did. I felt like shit until I finally got a sponsor and worked the Steps. The program worked. I had a sense of peace that I never had before.

I started a business and I started making a lot of money. I was sober for another 10 years until 2006 when my mom died suddenly. I was devastated. My cousins came down for her funeral with pot and I was off and running again. Keeping it from my wife. I left her in 2007. It destroyed my kids and family but all I wanted was to be free to do whatever I wanted. I had plenty of money, girlfriends, and fun. Self will run riot. My marijuana use got progressively worse from smoking it only in the evenings, to in the afternoons and evenings, to mornings, afternoons, and evenings – to every 2 hours to catch a buzz. I tried quitting on my own, but I would always relapse. I would go 3 days, a week sometimes; the longest was six months. But always relapse. My relationships suffered, my business suffered, my finances suffered. I had stress with my coworkers, which caused greater resentment and fear, which accelerated my pot smoking.

I kept telling myself I don't want to be a pot head but I couldn't stop. I went to other 12 Step meetings but I was high and never shared or worked the steps.

I finally went online and found an MA meeting and went to my first meeting high almost 2 months ago. I felt at home and finally found what I was looking for. I called my old sponsor whom I love. I am now working the Steps again and seriously working the program. My first 30 days were hell. I now have 41 days today. I am truly grateful I found MA.

Fred

marijuana anonymous worldwide

For a complete listing of all meetings visit www.marijuana-anonymous.org

MA World Services

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www.marijuana-anonymous.org
 email: office@marijuana-anonymous.org

District 1 San Francisco

www.ma-sf.org 415.325.4785

District 2 East Bay

PO Box 20484 Oakland, CA 94620 510.287.8873

District 3 South SF Bay Area

PO Box 551 Saratoga, CA 95071 408.450.0796

District 4 Western Washington

PO Box 17452 Seattle, WA 98107 206.414.9270

District 5 Orange County

1439 W. Chapman Av. PMB#215 Orange, CA 92868 714.999.9409

District 6 LA County No.

PO Box 2433 Van Nuys, CA 91404 818.759.9194

District 7 LA County So.

PO Box 3012 Culver City, CA 90231 323.943.9228

District 8 New York

PO Box 1244 Cooper Station New York, NY 10276 212.459.4423

District 10 LA County East

PO Box 94400 Pasadena, CA 91109 626.583.9582

District 11 Portland

PO Box 2012 Portland, OR 97208-2012 503.221.7007

District 12 North Bay, CA

PO Box 2842 Petaluma, CA 94952 415.419.3555 707.583.2326

District 13 MA Online

www.ma-online.org

District 14 London, England

07940.503438

District 15 Long Island, NY

www.ma-longisland.org 631-647-0768

District 16 Melbourne, Australia

24HR. info 0403 945 083 from overseas +61 403 945 083

District 17 Denmark

info@ma-kbh.dk

District 18 Sacramento, CA

www.sacramentoma.org 916.341.9469

District 19 Toronto, Canada

www.matoronto.org 647.201.9161 or 416.999.2244

Step Nine

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Tradition Nine

MA as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards and committees directly responsible to those they serve.

ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

How do MA Events help or enhance your recovery?

(Submit by October 17th, answers will be published in the November issue.)

Birthdays

Celebrating 243 years of sobriety!

Want your sobriety date published? Let your Bureau Chief know or see ANLP contact information on page 2. Bureau Chiefs are encouraged to submit Birthdays that, a) HAVE occurred, b) HAVE NOT been published and, c) are not older than 45 days.

District 2

Ari K.	7/23/96	17 yrs.
Clif	8/9/10	3 yrs.
Kevin V.	7/21/85	28 yrs.
Matt N.	7/25/11	2 yrs.
Monica	7/27/09	4 yrs.
Sheila	8/10/89	25 yrs.

District 4

Soren H.	7/7/11	2 yrs.
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District 5

Coleman G.	8/13/92	21 yrs.
David D.	8/22/09	4 yrs.
Doug	6/18/12	1 yr.
Monica	8/10/10	3 yrs.
Omeed	8/20/12	1 yr.
Paul Z.	8/21/11	2 yrs.
Sean L.	8/4/11	2 yrs.

District 6

Avi H.	7/17/05	8 yrs.
Jaeson K.	7/17/03	10 yrs.
Jamie Z.	7/18/05	8 yrs.
Josh B.	7/21/06	7 yrs.
Oscar M.	7/17/01	12 yrs.
Steve R.	7/21/06	7 yrs.

District 7

Gary K.	8/5/07	6 yrs.
Russel R.	7/27/12	1 yr.

District 8

Allison F.	7/21/09	4 yrs.
Bessie R.	8/8/12	1 yr.
Nadia W.	7/24/10	3 yrs.
Ray C.	7/14/12	1 yr.

KEEP COMING BACK!



District 10

Anthony	7/4/12	1 yr.
Carols M.	7/26/09	4 yrs.
George G.	7/7/94	19 yrs.
John M.	7/8/12	1 yr.
Kim "Van Dyke"	7/31/06	7 yrs.

District 11

Brenda G.	8/10/12	1 yr.
Mike W.	8/12/86	27 yrs.