



# a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

November 2013

Vol. 23, No. 11

## Recovered through Recovery

I am a grateful recovering marijuana addict. Today, I am a living celebration of recovery; three years ago I was a homeless marijuana addict, who was destroying his life with weed and this is a bit of my story.

I found pot in middle school. The first time I got high it was love instantly. I never laughed as hard or felt as free as I did after the first time. I would spend over a decade romanticizing and justifying my love of weed despite my very livelihood. I quit many, many times. I didn't know it yet, but I was a functional pothead for years before San Francisco, which is where this story begins.

I told myself that I moved to San Francisco to go to grad school. It isn't a lie, but it also isn't surprising that I would eventually have a medicinal marijuana card. I took it as divine providence that I had moved from Tennessee to San Francisco and landed as a resident of 420 – literally – the international pot smoking time (4:20) was my address for six years.

I had enrolled as a student at a neo-hippy school where pot wasn't only accepted but celebrated - an indigenous legacy, the validity of alternative states of consciousness,

and even legally medicalized! I had arrived in a culture I had been waiting for, but now I had no idea what to do with all the rebellion that had fueled my pot habit throughout my adolescence. In an accepting, liberal culture my deep anger steadily and surely turned inward.

Continuing to smoke, despite multiple consequences, my life

*"In my search for freedom, I had built a prison from within."*

withdrew to me and my weed. Alone in my room, I would pee in bottles because making it to the bathroom, confronting my concerned roommate was more than I could handle. My world became very, very small, isolated, angry, and resentful. In my search for freedom, I had built a prison within. I was smoking my life away.

I remember my bottom well. Out of sheer desperation at not  
continued on pg 3

## MA To Go

Our Fellowship now has a recovery app: MA Mobile. The smartphone-tablet app is free and is available for Android in the Google Play Store, where it is easily found by searching for "Marijuana Anonymous." A version for iOS is currently in development.

The app features GPS-enabled meeting search, all MA literature, access to our online forum and MA Online (District 13) meetings, and a marijuana sobriety counter. Visit Google Play Store to read about additional features.



Scan to install for Android

**Wordplay** At a meeting last week I was the first to share, after the speaker, and this is what I shared: "Thank you for your share. Share is an interesting word. In the Sixties, I thought it meant the person who was married to Sonny Bono; in the Seventies, I thought it was something you bought in the stock market; in the Eighties and Nineties, I thought it was something you did with your lovers in a house until they died of AIDS; for the next decade I thought it was something you did with a needle, a bong, and a pipe. Then about three years ago, I started going to 12 Step meetings and learned it was something you did with your life so you could start living it, rather than finish ending it." Thank you for letting me share.

**Michael B.**

# 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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Send all articles, inquiries and correspondence to:  
anlp@marijuana-anonymous.org  
or submit online:  
www.marijuana-anonymous.org  
and click on the [newsletter](#) tab.

A New Leaf  
P.O. Box 6482  
Torrance, CA 90504

☞ IN SPIRIT OF SERVICE ☞

*A New Leaf Publications board announces the addition of its new secretary, Louise. Welcome aboard. The fellowship thanks you for your service.*

## Parting is Such Sweet Sorrow

### “GOOD-BYE MARIJUANA”

It's time for me to say good-bye. We go back so far – after all, I was only a kid when I met you. I didn't even like you at first, but you soon got a hold on me so strong that I totally lost control of all senses. You were always my first thought of the day and what I looked forward to most. I loved you more than anything or anyone. I figured out ways to find you – whatever it took. But I don't get much from you anymore, and you're no good to me.

You fooled me and pressured me to make bad decisions. You made me sleepy, numb and unclear in my thoughts. You turned me into a sneak and a liar, and took away my self-respect. You caused me to hate myself and convinced me that I'm too weak to ever leave you.

You took over my ability to be a good mother, wife and person. You made me push away my family, and stop kissing my husband. You made me lose out on the joys of raising our children, and created a fog so that I can't remember those precious moments. You caused my kids to need therapy in order to understand their childhood.

You made me injure those I love most. You made me break a trust with my husband, the man I love more than words can express. You caused him to pull away. You made me feel agitated when I couldn't have you and wasted hard-earned money.

You've ruined everything that I value, and now I see you for what you are – poison. Whenever you are around I am not myself. I want you out of my life, and I don't ever want any part of you again.

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### “HELLO SOBRIETY”

I've wanted to meet you for a long time – for as long as I can remember. I'm so jealous of everyone that knows you and I'd like to introduce myself to you. My dream is that we'll become best friends; that you'll be there for me when I lose sight, that you'll drive away the urges I have to use, and that you'll give me the strength and courage to stay sober.

You're the true friend I've needed since I was a teenager. You're the one who will give me a chance to lead a healthy, happy, long life. You're the one who will help me be a better wife, mother and friend. You'll help me be a good role model and to have patience with my children. You'll teach me that it's okay to feel pain, anger, sadness, fear and loneliness. You'll encourage me to cope with these feelings in a positive way because they're part of life and I can't avoid them. You'll allow me to feel true happiness, joy and love, to be present – and to remember.

You'll let me forgive myself and be able to hold my head up to feel worthy of others' love and praise. You'll take me away from a horrible life of isolation and bring me back to my family and my friends. You'll help me to be honest and genuine, and to regain the trust of my loved ones. With you along my side, I won't ever need to revert to destructive habits since you've opened my eyes to how great life can be without pot. It's so wonderful to finally meet you, and I can already see how much I've needed you in order to lead the good life that I so deserve.

**Andrea S.**



# MA World Services

United as one fellowship – 1989

XXV  
XII  
I

YEARS RECOVERING  
STEPS TAKEN  
PURPOSE FULFILLED

MAWS 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary PI Initiatives

# FAQ #1

**Tradition 5, Life with Hope:**

*Each group has but one primary purpose,  
to carry its message to the marijuana addict who still suffers.*

## 1. What are PI initiatives and why am I hearing about them now?

PI stands for Public Information, which is one proactive way that MA fulfills its primary purpose: to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. A motion to fund PI was passed by the MAWS conference body in 2012. With this initial budget, the PI committee can put our initiatives into action.

## 2. What are the current MAWS PI Initiatives?

The first, Celebrating our 25th Anniversary, is HUGE and we want to invite each and every member of our fellowship to get involved. The other two will require fundraising toward specific goals as detailed in this FAQ. Three PI initiatives are:

1. **Celebrate our 25th Anniversary:** We hope to make it known far and wide that MA is coming in to its 25th year as a unified fellowship. The MA World Services' 25th anniversary conference is being held in May, 2014 over the Memorial Day weekend in Los Angeles, CA. Two days later, the **NADCP Training Conference** starts in Anaheim, CA.
2. **NADCP Training Conference Booth:** We are working to ensure an MA presence at the NADCP Conference in May, 2014. The majority of this FAQ is dedicated to this initiative.
3. **Produce a MAWS 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Coin:** To celebrate 25 years of a unified MA Society carrying the message of recovery. It is also intended as a fundraiser for PI initiatives and MAWS. We are still gathering more information on the coin, with more info forthcoming.

## 3. What is the NADCP Training Conference?

### Why would we want to host a booth there?

NADCP stands for National Association of Drug Court Professionals. The NADCP organizes and facilitates the world's largest training conference on substance abuse, mental health, and the criminal justice system. Attendees of this conference have a direct impact on policy, diagnosis, and referrals.

This conference is attended by over 4,200 people. Attendees include drug court professionals, parole officers, policy leaders and administration officials. We want to make such people aware of the fact that MA not only exists, but has 25 years as a fellowship. AA, NA, and CA all host booths at this conference.

The next NADCP conference is being held two days after MAWS's 25th annual conference, in the same area, presenting an opportune time for us to present MA to this professional group.

For more information, visit the NADCP conference website at <http://www.nadcp.org/2014-call-for-papers>.

## 4. How much will the NADCP booth cost altogether?

The fee for this conference booth is \$1,400. We will have additional costs related to booth infrastructure and professional presentation bringing our total fundraising goal to \$2000.

## 5. That seems like a lot of money. Is it really worth it?

It is difficult to quantify the value of any given initiative. However, our presence at this particular conference will help increase awareness of the existence of MA at a national level and potentially help countless marijuana addicts find help in our fellowship in the years ahead.

## 6. What exactly is a “booth” at this conference? What does MA get with our registration?

We will have a 10x10 foot space for the duration of the four-day conference. However the actual value is our access to this professional body. We want to build relationships with people who are in direct contact with the addict in crisis who can benefit from our recovery program.

We also get MA meeting rooms, presenting an opportunity for any attendee of this conference to participate in an MA meeting. We will be listed in the conference schedule with other meetings, next to AA, NA, and CA. Included in the cost are five interchangeable conference passes that can be used over the course of the event. At any given time, up to five MA members will be able to staff the booth, attend the conference and carry the message. The five passes represent a \$2,500 value.

We will be distributing literature and will have our basic text and workbooks for sale at cost.

## 7. What is our deadline for funding the NADCP booth?

Registration opens sometime in December, 2013, and the \$1400 booth registration fee must be paid in full. As of October 1st we have \$1000 of our total \$2000 goal.

## 8. How does an individual, meeting or district donate funds for MAWS PI initiatives?

A check or money order can be sent addressed to “MAWS” to:

**MA World Services  
PO Box 7807  
Torrance, CA 90504-9207**

NOTE: Please be sure to include  
“**MAWS PI Initiatives**” in the memo so that we know  
how you intend to have your contribution allocated.

## 9. How do we know the funds we raise will be spent on these initiatives?

When money is donated to MAWS, you may state intent for the funds. But please note that this does not explicitly direct the use of the contribution.

While California law (where the MAWS corp. is registered) and the MAWS bylaws prevent the specific earmarking of funds, we want to know your intent with your contributions. We will make every effort to honor your requests, but by law we cannot guarantee up front how your contribution will be spent.

It is the group conscience of the MAWS 2013 Conference Body (consisting of trustees and delegates) that any donations received with the memo “MAWS PI Initiatives” will be added to the PI line item in the budget.

## 10. Additional Links and Information

- **MAWS Public Information Committee Contact | Ask questions | Get involved!**  
[PublicInformation@marijuana-anonymous.org](mailto:PublicInformation@marijuana-anonymous.org).
- **MAWS Public Information Forums | More detailed FAQ | 25th Anniversary community discussion**  
<https://www.marijuana-anonymous.org/forum/viewforum.php?f=47>  
<https://www.marijuana-anonymous.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=47&t=537>
- **2014 MAWS 25th Anniversary Conference**  
MA World Services' 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference will be hosted by District 7 over Memorial Day weekend at the Doheny Campus of Mount St. Mary's College in Los Angeles, CA,  
**May 23–26, 2014**. For more details, visit: <http://mawsconference.org/>
- **2014 NADCP 20th Annual Training Conference**  
This conference will be held in Anaheim, CA,  
**May 28–31, 2014**. For more details, visit: <http://www.nadcp.org/2014-call-for-papers>
- **Historical information on the NADCP conferences** (pages include video and photos)  
2013: <http://www.nadcp.org/2013-training-conference>  
2012: [http://www.nadcp.org/2012\\_NADCP\\_Training\\_Conference](http://www.nadcp.org/2012_NADCP_Training_Conference)

## Recovered thru Recovery

cont'd from pg. 1

being able to pay my rent again, and too shameful to ask my family for help again, I decided to rob a cannabis dispensary. CRAZY! I dressed in all black. I was motivated. I was going to have all the weed I wanted and rent to spare... because... I was a master thief? So it went as you might expect. Having no experience at stealing anything, ever, I was arrested running from the police, like a fool. Incomprehensible demoralization they call it; I lived it, and it was enough. I marked my first sobriety date on 1/1/11.

Relapse is a part of my story. After three months sober in recovery, with a sponsor, working the Steps, I had a bicycle accident that landed me in the ER. A combination of pain pills, living horizontal, and loneliness resulted in my choice to begin to smoke weed again. My roommate held me to my own commitment to leave my 420 residence if I started getting high again, so I kicked myself out of my own house. Losing my house broke my confidence so thoroughly that I truly decided to take the First Step and admit that I was powerless over marijuana. As I look back I had taken this Step over and over. Many life events had shaken me so violently that I would quit using, but after a few months, despite all my experience suggesting otherwise, I would smoke pot again.

These cycles defined my life until I began to work the 12 Steps. Marijuana had stopped working as a solution to the problem of living. I needed something better, something Other – Holy Other – a sufficient solution – a spiritual solution, and I found that solution in the program of 12 Step recovery.

After I got kicked out of my house, I found myself homeless.

All I knew was that I had to get back into recovery. I got a new sponsor and we began to meet weekly. Through his mentorship and guidance I embarked on a path of spiritual development. I was homeless for the first year in recovery; from house to house I leapt. I learned how to put my recovery – my spiritual practice – before everything else. My faith began to grow through

*“Marijuana had  
stopped working  
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Other - Holy  
Other...”*

dependence on God, rather than myself, and this dependence was so indispensable to my safety and sobriety that it was impossible to ignore. Every night I was cared for... some days I would have no idea where I would sleep but by the evening – a roof was provided. All I knew was to go to meetings and miraculously I would be cared for... and it worked.

As I look back over the last three years I have embarked on recovery I am astonished. I feel

like I've grown enough. I am a co-manager in a sober living home. I get to work with children as a substitute teacher. I sing in a choir, bike through the streets of San Francisco, dance, and date. I have an iPhone; many things have been added to my life.

I spent so much time smoking weed over the pain of failure and lost potential. I could live as a functioning addict for only so long before the pain of losing myself became overwhelming. In the end the pain that drove my addiction was over the difference between my ideal self, my perceived skill-set, etc, and my actual self or what actually was happening – which was me smoking pot and not using my skills. Now the distance between my skill-set and what actually happens is diminishing. Everyday my dreams are actualized bit by bit and I shed light on a fuller power and love that I always dreamt of living.

Mostly, I don't see my own growth; I see the growth of others. AND this I know, that the real treasure of recovery is found in the service. The 12 Steps encourage us with the insight that nothing will assure continuous long-term sobriety as much as helping the suffering addict. The power and inspiration of watching others recover from marijuana addiction is overwhelmingly beautiful. It is poetic – miraculous. I have literally watched the faces and bodies of addicts grow younger. Helping another addict recover is one of the heights of human experience; I pray you do not miss it.

I am just another addict. I am still learning to play the role I was assigned in life. I hope my message is not lost on you, and that one-day we will meet under the banner of Marijuana Anonymous.

**Adam H.**

# marijuana anonymous worldwide

For a complete listing of all meetings visit [www.marijuana-anonymous.org](http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org)

**MA World Services**  
 PO Box 7807 Torrance, CA 90504 800.766.6779  
[www.marijuana-anonymous.org](http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org)  
 email: [office@marijuana-anonymous.org](mailto:office@marijuana-anonymous.org)

**District 1 San Francisco**  
[www.ma-sf.org](http://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](http://www.ma-online.org)

**District 14 London, England**  
 07940.503438

**District 15 Long Island, NY**  
[www.ma-longisland.org](http://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](mailto:info@ma-kbh.dk)

**District 18 Sacramento, CA**  
[www.sacramentoma.org](http://www.sacramentoma.org) 916.341.9469

**District 19 Toronto, Canada**  
[www.matoronto.org](http://www.matoronto.org) 647.201.9161 or 416.999.2244

## Step Eleven

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.

## Tradition Eleven

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, film, and other public media. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all fellow MA members.

## ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

**How has your life become more manageable through working the 12 Steps? ?**

(Submit by December 17th, answers will be published in the January 2014 issue. )

## Birthdays

## Celebrating 178 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.

<b>District 1</b>			<b>District 8</b>			<b>District 15</b>		
Mike M.	7/7/11	1 yr.	Jonathan R.	9/8/04	9 yrs.	Adam K.	9/17/05	8 yrs.
<b>District 2</b>			Jordana	9/26/01	12 yrs.	Ellen	9/21/04	9 yrs.
Crescent	9/23/09	4 yrs.	<b>District 11</b>			Jeff J.	10/1/11	2 yrs.
Jonathan M.	9/25/01	12 yrs.	Jan D.	10/13/03	10 yrs.	<b>Miguel</b>	<b>9/3/12</b>	<b>1 yr.</b>
Meagan	10/15/11	2 yrs.	Jim S.	9/24/07	6 yrs.	Sam K.	9/24/09	4 yrs.
<b>Meg A.</b>	<b>10/25/12</b>	<b>1 yr.</b>	Mariska P.	9/30/87	26 yrs.			
Meg A.	10/25/96	17 yrs.	Susan C.	10/9/86	27 yrs.			
<b>District 5</b>								
Thievin' Dog	9/30/86	27 yrs.						

**KEEP  
COMING  
BACK!**

