



# a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

January 2014

Vol. 24, No. 1

## “Wow, I’m Still Here”

My latest sojourn with marijuana started in the early 21st century. This seems to be a long time ago said that way, but it isn’t. This second journey started shortly after I was diagnosed with glaucoma. A little light (a very dim bulb) went off in my head. “I can start smoking pot again (after 11 years of white knuckle sobriety) with the official sanction of the state of California.”

Of course, I had to look into this. Prescriptions seemed to be very easy to get. The only problem was that my job kept me from getting on the database of prescription pot smokers. So my only alternative was to buy off of the street, at street prices. Oh, well. I had a well-paying job that I liked so the price was not a showstopper. So, with the help of an agreeable connection, my second journey with pot was off.

Much to the delight and amazement, the weed I got then was WAY BETTER than the stuff I stopped smoking in the ‘90s. With my diagnosed illness and my connection, I was off to a beautiful life of pot-clouded ease. The pot seemed to work. The glaucoma eased off and I was off. And I was – off.

I didn’t realize it at the time, but I started to change. Relationships with my co-workers went down hill. My annual reviews at work went with my professional relationships. It got so bad at work that project managers and co-workers knew to not ask me any questions about

projects and other work related subjects because they never knew which way I would react. My only objective at work was to get home to my pipe and bag. No one would get in my way at 3:00 PM because I was on my way out and didn’t want to be stopped. My life narrowed to work, lunch, and my nightly dance with my bong.

*“My only objective at work was to get home to my pipe and bag.”*

This went on for almost 9 years. Wake up, go to work, get home and get high. The only break came with the weekends. Then, it was wake and bake and stay stoned all day. Laundry was a lot more fun stoned. This was my life. My pot use went from 3-5 grams a week to 2-4 grams a day.

Then one faithful March day, I slipped at work and sprained my wrist. The first thing the medical clinic wanted was a drug test. This was the first test I had to take that I knew I wasn’t going to pass. I didn’t. HR gave me 2 options; quit smoking and go to an outpatient

continued on pg 3

## “Just One Last...”

When a newcomer announces himself or herself at a meeting, I immediately feel a strong affinity with them. I know how hard it is for us to come to our first meeting. High or sober, forced or voluntary, it is THE most important first action we must take on our path to recovery.

When I was smoking, I was always on the verge of quitting. “Just one last 8th” I would tell myself. “I’m going to smoke this and then stop.” When the bag was empty, the will to not seek out that “one last eighth” again was not there. Sometime I would scrape the pipe for resin before I made the inevitable call.

When I started going to meetings. I felt hope as well as direction. Here were people who were recovering. If I just followed them, maybe I could make it.

For others I know this is harder. Asking for phone numbers or sponsors can be intimidating. That’s why I hope I provide a welcoming space for newcomers. I can do this most of all by accepting them. As I relate to them, I open my heart to allow my Higher Power to work through me and help them.

As I sit in a meeting and listen to others share, I become aware of how similar I am to my fellows and how much I need others to maintain my sobriety. I feel at peace as I notice the spiritual progress others are making by addressing their addiction and their character defects. Whether we face these things in a fearless manner or not, we can be conscious of each other and celebrate life and sobriety.

**Kevin E.**

# 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.

### District Bureau Chiefs

- District 1: Lori B.
- District 2: Tim V.
- District 3: Mark S.
- District 4: Thor H.
- District 5: John S.
- District 6: Rick
- District 7: Karen S.
- District 8: Nadia W.
- District 10: Carlos M.
- District 11: Susan C.
- District 12: Jim B.
- District 13: OPEN
- District 15: Joe J.
- District 18: OPEN

### ANLP Staff

- Office Manager: Tom W.
- Chairperson: John McC.
- Treasurer: Terry H.
- Secretary: Louise
- Publishing Editor: Steve R.
- Field Editor: Debra M.

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 ▲

*As a new year begins, consider turning over a different kind of new leaf. Volunteer to serve A New Leaf publications. Email us and we'll let you know about current service opportunities.*

## Letting Go

Letting go has been a major difficulty in my life. It may have started with letting go of my beloved marijuana, but that turned out to be just the tip of the iceberg.

Next, I think was my needing to let go of some contacts with people when the main contact centered around smoking pot and getting high together. This could be tricky due to having a history with some people that was more multifaceted and complex.

Then, I think there has been the ongoing battle to tame my "shortcomings". These "shortcomings" tend to be my deep-seated behavior patterns that are ultimately self destructive or negative in nature. Some of my older shortcomings that I have successfully overcome are: negative self-talk (from "I'm no good" to "I'm really just fine and okay" and another of "I'm the 'victim' in life" to "I'm not a 'victim' at all and I have powers and skills to deal with things in a positive fashion.")

Now, I'm struggling with letting go of my professional/work self-image/egoism. So I've been saying to myself: It's time to retire. It's overdue. Retiring is NOT dying! Everyone else who has retired is happy about it, saying things like: Everyday becomes SATURDAY! WOW! It's a beginning and not just an ending.

I can do the work that I like to do as a volunteer and it could be fun. There are many children in the world who need help. I would get to do my creative endeavors if I retire - my artistic things that I love and can barely get to while I'm on paid employment. Also, I could finally get to my exercise class, more meetings, more travel, more live music, and more fun.

So that's my current "Letting Go" struggle.

**Anonymous**

## "We Recover"

Cross addiction, like recovery, the program and every addiction were eye openers at my first meeting. I never thought about any of these things. I just knew I wanted freedom from marijuana. In fact one of my first thoughts was "great, I can still drink, I never abused alcohol." Cross addiction is a big part of my story of progress not perfection.

So once I began to understand what addiction was I began to see that alcohol had to go, too. This was a hard reality to accept. I had not really abused alcohol, I liked beer and seldom drank more than two or three. What harm was that? I quit drinking and changed my first recovery birthday. Life happened and when it overwhelmed me, instead of turning to recovery I chose to relapse. I gave up seven clean years hoping to reinvent my addiction. One thing I did was I gave myself permission to drink as much or even more than I wanted to. I gave myself permission to become an alcoholic.

This didn't take too long. I quit and relapsed for a year at a time over the next five years. Finally I was drinking 6-10 beers a day, smoking about a 1/2 oz of pot a week and doing cocaine on the weekends. One day I woke up to the paramedics knocking on my door. I was calling Kaiser to make a routine appointment but passed out when they put me on hold. They sent the paramedics. That was it, again I knew I had to quit. I knew what to do and where to go.

This time I found MA on-line. It was pretty new and I loved meeting people from all over the world. I really felt like I was home again. I got my life back and the promises were all coming true for me but  
continued on pg 3



# MA CONVENTION 2014

February 14-16 • Airtel Plaza Hotel • Van Nuys, California



\$125 until Jan 15  
\$140 until Feb 12  
\$165 at the door

- FRIDAY NIGHT RECEPTION WITH MASHED POTATO BAR
- SATURDAY & SUNDAY BREAKFAST BUFFETS
- SATURDAY FELLOWSHIP LUNCH
- SATURDAY NIGHT BANQUET
- HOSPITALITY SUITE
- WORKSHOPS
- MARATHON MA MEETINGS
- LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
- SATURDAY NIGHT DANCE/DJ
- MA FELLOWS FROM NEAR & FAR
- SOBRIETY COUNTDOWN
- DRAWINGS AND PRIZES

**Special hotel room rate of \$99 per night**  
(includes free parking with in and out privileges)\*

<http://goo.gl/ylljgl>  
or call 800-2-AIRTEL and ask for  
our special group code "M0214"  
Main hotel website --[www.airtelplaza.com](http://www.airtelplaza.com)

Questions? E-mail [maconvention2014@gmail.com](mailto:maconvention2014@gmail.com)

Your closest commercial airports will be LAX and Bob Hope (Burbank)

Visit [www.mawsonconvention.org](http://www.mawsonconvention.org) to register and get updated Convention details



\*Guests not registered at the hotel receive a reduced parking rate of \$6 per day (No in and out privileges)

## “We Recover”

cont'd from pg. 2

cross addiction was waiting. I had hurt my back and was given Vicodin for the pain. I knew it was addictive but soon discovered I liked taking 2 or 3 at a time. First it was once a month, that led to every weekend then on vacations as well until I was doing it every day. My life was no longer mine. It was very hard to decide to quit. But I did. Thank God I didn't revert to pot, alcohol and cocaine as well.

Here I am at another MA convention six months off Vicodin, eight years off pot and alcohol. This

is a bigger part of my life. I know a lot of these people, I've known some of them for over 20 years. My recovery isn't perfect, life isn't perfect. MA isn't perfect. People here see me for my successes not my failures. People in these rooms are real, understanding, and forgiving. People here all want to be the best they can be. Failure is a part of all of our lives but it is not who we are. Failure has given all of us the vision and strength to see that we can do better. And here today at this convention “We Recover.”

**Thomas**

## “Wow, I’m Still Here”

cont'd from pg. 1

program, or quit – quite a dilemma. I chose the outpatient path.

After it was explained to me what this program required, 90 days of random drug tests, lectures, group meetings, one on one counseling, and two 12-Step meetings a week with signatures, I thought this was going to be hard. But only 90 days. I could do that standing on my head. So my counselor suggested that I look into Marijuana Anonymous. She gave me a list of meetings, and I started on my road to recovery.

My first 4-5 weeks I spent in the background of the meetings. I didn't want to share, only wanted the signatures from the secretaries for my treatment. Then, my home group at the time asked me to take the coffee commitment. I did. Not wanting to let anyone down, I faithfully made coffee every Sunday. Got a lot of feedback (positive) the first two weeks that went to my head in a good way. Something clicked. My 90-day treatment ended, and I still returned to the Sunday meeting. I still made coffee every Sunday. My work relationships improved. I got a good review from my manager who noted that my attitude improved in the last 3 months and told me to keep it up. So, I did.

Now, I am in my 3rd year of sobriety. I took other commitments at the Sunday meeting and at a Thursday meeting also. I learned that I don't have to travel down this road of sobriety alone. There are others walking ahead, along, and behind me. There are tools to use to help me when I stumble. There are people to talk to and with to share my journey. I have matured, I have kept my sobriety, I have learned the root of my addiction, and I have grown.

**Louis W.**

# 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, CA90504 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**

[www.madistrict2.org](http://www.madistrict2.org) 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 310.494.0189

**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 503.567.9892

**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

## Birthdays

Celebrating 116 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 1**

Cheyney 12/24/00 13 yrs.

**District 5**

Colin 12/3/11 2 yrs.

Ehsan 11/20/11 2 yrs.

Gary R. 12/10/90 23 yrs.

Larry 11/28/99 14 yrs.

Lisa S. 12/7/93 20 yrs.

Robert M. 12/11/11 2 yrs.

**District 7**

Tom S. 12/8/12 1 yr.

**District 10**

Adam Q. 11/23/09 4 yrs.

Noelle A. 12/22/07 6yrs.

**District 11**

Andy D. 12/2/07 6 yrs.

Bethany D. 12/1/12 1 yr.

Cassi S. 12/9/97 16 yrs

Nikhil K. 12/13/12 1 yr.

**District 15**

George G. 12/1/08 5 yrs.

### Step One

We admitted we were powerless over marijuana, that our lives had become unmanageable.

### Tradition One

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on MA unity.

## ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

**How do you the difference between your will and your Higher Power's will?**

(Note: Submit by Monday, February 17th, answers will be published in the March 2014 issue.)

### 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