



# a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

February 2014

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## A Good Decision

I still remember my first MA meeting. I can't say "I remember it like it was yesterday," because let's face it, at 3 days clean, I wouldn't remember yesterday like it was yesterday. What stands out 805 days later, are the emotions leading into the meeting and inspired by it. For that meeting changed everything. Had I not gone, I may not be here today at the 2013 MA Convention.

It was the Friday night meeting at the dry dock in San Francisco. I slipped in nervously, still generally paranoid about the world and my place in it. I'd entered an outpatient recover program 3 days earlier, committing to a 14 day intensive treatment regimen. After two in the hands of medical professionals, I figured I had learned enough about myself to be able to smoke the way I wanted. But then these professionals told

me I had a disease, addiction and the best cure was a 12-Step program. And here I had avoided MA to stay away from that God stuff.

So with an air of nervousness, I entered that fateful meeting room at the Dry Dock. I'd waited until 6:29 for a 6:30 meeting, to avoid the awkwardness of having an actual conversation with a stranger. So when I arrived to find only 3 other people sitting there, the panic rose. There was no sneaking away after this one but something, my Higher Power perhaps, didn't let me turn around. I sat down. That, in retrospect, was a good decision.

*"...when I arrived to find only 3 other people sitting there, the panic rose. There was no sneaking away..."*

As soon as the secretary finished with the introductions and once the shares began, I knew I had found a home. I had attended meetings of other fellowships the previous 2 days, and it hadn't

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## Uncomfortable

### Accountability

Fearless? Fear less and write more. Write more, and perhaps, right more.

"I don't like to write!" Why? 'Cause it just might make me accountable'. I'm afraid if I write it down its very presence on paper will cast an uncomfortable, almost suffocating permanence on me. Sounds like rule 62 – don't take your self too seriously.

At least two of my early 4th Steps had to be destroyed because of this fear. One was burned and the other made into prayer flags and cast upon the wind.

I still have 2 other written inventories. One is on a hard drive and the other is hand written. It is a buried treasure amidst boxes of "round to-its" in the garage.

I am only as sick as my secrets. I just do not have many anymore. The freedom that comes with a 5th Step experience of sharing with God, me, and another pothead can be extended at a meeting level to a group of potheads. This is a freedom that does away with fear and I know the freedom well.

Well, it would seem to follow that writing it down and publishing it can also make those broader connections.

My ego (Edging-God-Out) says no way. Too private, too personal, too crappy!

Who cares? Who is in charge? God. Mother-God in Her infinite wisdom gets to call the shots.

I get to let go. I get to show up. I get to listen. I get to tell the truth.

**Anonymous**

## A Run-in with My H-P

I was raised in a very conservative, Bible belt Christian household growing up and even was studying to be a minister in college. I lost contact with God when I started getting high and proudly proclaimed atheism in my stoned stupor. When I got sober (only 43 days ago as of writing this) and started coming to meetings I was intimidated by the thought of God. Slowly, I have started to accept that there is a Higher Power, and once I finish my First Step I will begin the acceptance process in more detail. It won't be the same God as before but that's another story.

The other day I was having one helluva day. The details aren't important as we've all had those days when stuff

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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.

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## Something to Sing About

Y a ever get the "woe is me's"? When I was deep into my addiction, self-pity was always a nice and tidy excuse for loading another bowl. Putting off "life" for yet one more day.

I'd lost family to booze. I'd lost family to drugs. Others still continue to wallow in denial and self-pity; and everybody knows that "misery loves company." Seemingly DNA-inspired, "substance-abuse-genes", coupled with childhood sexual abuse, felt like the perfect cocktail for excuse...nearly three decades of it. But then came a time when I was sick of being sick.

I began a self-imposed, "out-patient treatment" program, and I attended meetings, lots of meetings. I began reading again, something I had loved doing as a kid. Now I developed a voracious appetite for recovery literature. I devoured the "Big Book," several books by Emmet Fox (Sermon on the Mount), and, of course, our own wonderful book "A Life with Hope."

I was clean for six weeks before I was able to give away my stash and it was eight weeks before I passed my first "clean" UA, but I did it. Soon I discovered (through

painful realization) that once "dear friends" were nothing more than "drinking" and "smoking" buddies (Never forget, "misery loves company"), and I let them go.

M a r i j u a n a Anonymous encourages eventual service work: "It's harder to pick you off when travelling inside the herd." I gratefully heeded this advice, deepening my understanding of prayer and meditation.

When I first heard the words, "For a good life, don't blame or criticize,"

my jaw dropped. "Hell, that's all I do!" I stammered but not anymore. Sure, I have my good days and bad days, but I am forever grateful to be finally and truly living a life with hope.

I've successfully broken a "family tradition" of abuse. I've even started playing guitar and writing my own songs. I guess you can say I've finally got something to sing about!

**Duane H.**

*"...quitting weed  
was the easiest  
thing I ever did... I  
must have done it a  
hundred times."*

I had quit hard drugs and cigarettes. Five years later I was able to put away the pipe. (My sad joke at the time was, "quitting weed was the easiest thing I ever did...I must have done it a hundred times!) But this time it stuck. This time I was fully committed.

I set a schedule and I stuck to it. I started eating better and sleeping regular hours: a first for me!

☞ IN SPIRIT OF SERVICE ☞  
A New Leaf publications is grateful to **Debra M.** for her service as Field Editor. We wish her well. Her departure may be your call to serve. Contact ANLP. Step Up. Support the fellowship and your recovery as Field Editor for ANL.

**A Good Decision**

cont'd from pg. 1

clicked. I had steadfastly focused on the differences, refusing to accept that I shared this same disease of addiction. But I couldn't do that here. As soon as the other guys (all 4 of us were men) began to share, I heard MY story coming out of someone else's mouth. Other people, it turned out, also couldn't stop smoking weed even though they wanted to. Other people shared the same fears and immobility to make progress in their lives. I wasn't the only person whose life had been decimated by their addiction to marijuana.

Of the 4 people at the meeting, 3 are at this convention, over two years later. And I am still in contact with the 4th individual whom I consider a friend and mentor. By the end of that night, the secretary had agreed to take me on as a sponsee, and he is still my sponsor to this day. He guided me through the 12 Steps, and after I'd finished my 5th Step, I began sponsoring people on my own. I now reap the rewards of sponsoring men, taking them through the Steps. It all started that Friday night.

Looking back, it's clear to me that my Higher Power put me in that room at the Dry Docks 805 days ago. I didn't chicken out. I went in, and there I found a kinship I never knew existed with other marijuana addicts like myself. I found a sponsor who would take me through the Steps, leading to growth and change I never thought possible. Had I not attended that meeting, with those 4 men, I may have done my 14-day program and tried to go back to smoking like I had wanted to. Had I chosen that path, I certainly would not have reaped the rewards of recovery the past two years has brought.

**Jeff P.**

**A Run-in with My H-P**

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just hits the fan. I wanted to get high. I was in my children's closet crying my eyes out - like, really sobbing like I haven't in many, many years. I had heard of these moments coming during the early days of sobriety but I didn't know it hit you like a truck. During that

*"...put in the  
footwork, and your  
Higher Power does  
the rest."*

moment - when I felt completely lost, hopeless, and like no one knew what I was feeling - my sponsor called.

We talked - he listened, and understood. About 30 minutes later my head was back on my shoulders and I realized I had just had a run in with my Higher Power. It works if you work it. A fellow addict once told me that you have to put in the footwork, and your Higher Power does the rest. I've been putting in the footwork - and that was my Higher Power . . . doing the rest.

**Marc B.**

**The 12 Steps of MA**

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. ▲



**MA CONVENTION 2014**

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

Still time to make your plans and be there!

Email your questions to [maconvention2014@gmail.com](mailto:maconvention2014@gmail.com)  
or visit [www.mwasconvention.org](http://www.mwasconvention.org)

# marijuana anonymous worldwide

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

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### District 19 Toronto, Canada

www.matoronto.org 647.201.9161 or 416.999.2244

## Birthdays

Celebrating  
**339** 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

Gene B. 12/15/10 3 yrs.

### District 2

Chris M. 12/25/06 7 yrs.

Jean W. 12/24/03 10 yrs.

Jeff P. 12/1/10 3 yrs.

John L. 12/15/84 29 yrs.

Jonni L. 12/30/07 6 yrs.

Louise R. 12/3/98 15 yrs.

Sandy C. 12/21/11 2 yrs.

Tim K. 12/25/07 6 yrs.

### District 5

**Craig** 1/10/13 1 yr.

Hillary 1/1/09 5 yrs.

**John H.** 1/10/13 1 yr.

John S. 1/5/07 7 yrs.

Jon C. 1/7/07 7 yrs.

Layne 1/18/10 4 yrs.

Melody C. 1/16/89 25 yrs.

Tony R. 1/1/04 10 yrs.

### District 6

**Shawna T.** 10/2/12 1 yr.

*Special Note: The January issue went to print in early December due to the holidays. So ANL is playing a little birthday catch-up.*

### District 7

Alicia F. 1/5/01 13 yrs.

Debra M. 1/3/95 19 yrs.

Greg. G. 1/7/03 11 yrs.

Jeff M. 12/5/95 17 yrs.

**Jim C.** 1/8/13 1 yr.

Karen S. 12/28/07 6 yrs.

Liz M. 12/11/01 11 yrs.

### Marcy E.

1/7/13 1 yr.

Melle

1/7/04 10 yrs.

Mike M.

1/3/10 4 yrs.

### District 8

#### Carl

1/7/13 1 yr.

Deidre

1/1/12 2 yrs.

Eva

1/2/13 1 yr.

**Kari**

1/18/13 1 yr.

### District 10

#### Aidan R.

1/21/13 1 yr.

Conrad G.

1/8/01 12 yrs.

Dan E.

1/13/08 5 yrs.

#### Nate

1/7/13 1 yr.

Rachel K.

1/15/02 11 yrs.

Robert F.

1/17/12 2 yrs.

Sarah A.

12/11/06 7 yrs.

### District 11

Casey B.

1/2/12 2 yrs.

John C.

1/1/99 15 yrs.

Thomas T.

1/15/12 2 yrs.

### District 13

Dave K.

1/17/12 2 yrs.

### District 15

#### Andrea

12/24/12 1 yr.

Chris S.

12/26/11 2 yrs.

Jimmy B.

12/19/10 3 yrs.

Joe J.

1/4/09 5 yrs.

Lou

12/25/03 10 yrs.

Marilyn

12/17/04 9 yrs.

Micah

12/28/87 26 yrs.

## 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 our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

## ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

**How has looking at your part in your relationships helped you solve your living problems?**

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