



# a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

June 2014

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## El Mata Caballo

In Venezuela, The Spider Wasp is called Mata Caballo, or horse-killer. Spider Wasps hunt a single spider, paralyze it with a venomous sting, and keep it alive as a host for their larvae. The wasp drags the spider to its burrow, where a single egg is laid on its abdomen, and the nest or burrow is closed and camouflaged, so it is not disturbed. When the wasp larva hatches, it begins to feed on the still-living spider, breaking through the spider's protected abdomen with its mandibles. After consuming the edible parts of the spider, it spins a cocoon, hibernates, and breaks free to hunt again. On the Schmidt Sting Pain index, the Spider Wasp is rated as the second most intense, one researcher describing it as "blinding, fierce, and shockingly electric - a running hair dryer that has been dropped into your bubble bath."

Marijuana was the Spider Wasp and I was its host. I invited it in as a sacrament, a doorway to my soul, a way to see beyond this computerized and competitive military industrial complex and to find something spiritual—but marijuana turned on me. It stung me hard in the abdomen, injecting its larva inside my body and paralyzing me beyond my control. It waited for the right moment, when my spirit was no longer in control and my intellect was weak and craving, and it stung me. The pain went far beyond the Schmidt scale. Never  
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## I Didn't Know What Sobriety Was

I'm Joe, grateful marijuana addict. I identify myself this way because my sobriety depends on it. If I lose hold of this gratitude and fall back into the "stinking thinking" of self-will, my sobriety will be lost.

I used marijuana addictively for many years and over this time the drug got more and more powerful. My dependency on pot grew to its limit about ten years ago. I began to smoke it if and when at all possible. I tried to "shape" my world in a manner such that I could use at any time I wanted. An enormous amount of wreckage in my life was caused by this "shaping." I pushed away friends and family; my wife of 34 years had enough and left me. I had shaped it just about perfectly!

For the next two years I did major cannabis research, growing it, baking it, eating it, smoking it, smoking me. This is what I found... "MY ROCK BOTTOM"

My wife, Sue, told me that I was a drug addict and that she could not live with one. I knew she was right but rejected this anyway. Who was she? Who was she to say what "she could live with?" A while later she tried again, this time she offered a solution that I believed saved my life. "Why don't you check out a Marijuana Anonymous meeting?" Thank you!  
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## MA Daily Meditation Book

We're looking for YOUR writing to fill a year's worth of daily meditations focused on recovery from marijuana addiction. The writings should be approximately 250 to 500 words and focused on MA recovery.

### *What would you want to read on your sobriety birthday?*

Send your submission and we'll print it on YOUR recovery birthday. If you feel so moved, send in more than one. Looking for inspiration? Take a look at daily meditation books from other fellowships. Find an inspiring quote to kickstart your creativity. Be on the lookout for samples in upcoming issues. In fact, see an example in this month's issue on page 2.

Go for it... write yours today.

Send submissions to: [smilingheart9@yahoo.com](mailto:smilingheart9@yahoo.com).

## 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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or submit online:  
www.marijuana-anonymous.org  
and click on the [newsletter](#) tab.

A New Leaf  
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### A Tip of the Hat



A New Leaf Publications welcomes aboard its new Chair, Alan B., Treasurer, Chrysanthemum H., and Field Editor, Ron H. There are still ways for you to serve ANLP. If interested in a service position, email us today.

## Gears

### A Daily Meditation Submission

*We come to learn that our "first instincts" are often bad indicators of the proper path. We find that if we give top priority to spiritual growth, it is less likely that self-will and character defects will pull us down.*

-- Life With Hope, p. 60

Most of us in recovery have heard about The Committee. It's the constant stream of voices running in our head, giving us advice and/or a hard time. I prefer, though, to think in terms of thought-gears running in my head: The little ones almost never stop turning, but it's the big ones that'll get you.

I think First Gear is that constant stream of thoughts and stories running in our heads – and not all negative, either. Sometimes I have thoughts of "I'm a loser" when thinking about success or "I'm a pervert" when feeling attracted to somebody, but I also think "I'm going to be rich and famous!" whenever I get paid for work.

Second Gear is when these thoughts become loud, and I start to feed attention into them. Third Gear is when I start to truly believe them, and even my body reacts to them with fear, anxiety or anger. Fourth Gear is when they've taken over my actions and feelings completely – I don't even notice them anymore – and Fifth Gear is pretty much full freakout mode ... or relapse.

Stopping that First Gear is experiencing the calm, centered mind. It's pretty much the whole point of meditation. But I think it's more practical and important to simply notice that gear is turning, and not let the Second Gear get into gear. We can say, "Oh, I hear that little voice telling me I'm a loser; I remember that voice!" And then we can let it go and move on. Noticing the First Gear and not engaging the Second Gear, while taking action anyway, can also be called facing fears. When the Second Gear starts going and I start buying into the story, that fear can cause paralysis. "Wait, if I really am a loser, should I even be trying this?"

Taking care of myself is important. I have to watch that HALT stuff, lest my defenses come down and those gears start turning out of control.

Sometimes, First Gear can be an indicator that I have something deeper to work on. I can engage with it as a helper, turning on the light inside, looking around in the dark corners, and seeing what's in there. If we can get this down, maybe we can even be grateful for the "problem" of our little thought-gears.

*Today, I will notice my inner voices but not let them control me. I will accept them, be grateful for them, and ask if they have something to teach me. I will seek, through prayer and meditation, the True Inner Voice I call my Higher Power.*

**Paul G.**

**Mata Caballo** cont'd from pg. 1

mind that it stopped working, never mind that I would smoke myself sober. I didn't even like it anymore, yet I couldn't quit. I promised myself for years that I would quit, only to buy more. The paranoia set in and I would check my apartment building, sure that my boss was coming to visit to check on me, or that my neighbor had called the police and they would bust down the door at any instant. I thought helicopters were following me.

Every time I smoked, two trains of thoughts would attack me. One being self-loathing -- thinking how much time and talent was wasted, how much money had gone up in smoke. The other was suicide, that since I was already killing myself slowly and watching the larvae eat me alive, I might as well end it quickly, and I had even made a plan. It was dark inside my little burrow. Then there were the seizures. I would smoke a small pinner, walk down to the beach to watch UFC with the bros, barely finish a half glass of beer, and face plant off the bar stool. My friends said, "You need to see a doctor," but I dared not, because I didn't want to know what he would say. My friends said, "You need to get some help," but I dared not because I was paralyzed. Then there were the withdrawal and detox symptoms from those times I white-knuckled three or four days of sobriety. "See I can quit," I'd tell myself.

Sometimes I think Hell *can* be on Earth. I was alone in my burrow, paralyzed. If you walked by it from the outside you wouldn't notice because I was still functional—the wasp had camouflaged its kill. I watched this thing eat away at me from the insides for years and there

was nothing I could do about it. Too bad the little spiders in Venezuela cannot cry out to God and ask for help; because if I hadn't, that damn weed would have eaten me alive and left me for dead.

**Nicholas M.**

**Didn't Know** cont'd from pg. 1

I've been clean from marijuana and all mind-altering substances for more than 3 years now. I say "clean" and not sober because my sobriety is a process. I'm learning what it is. I used to think that if I didn't smoke for a few hours or if I didn't drink for a day that I was sober. These days, I research sobriety by attending 3 or more meetings a week, working the 12 Steps with my sponsor, working the Steps with others and carrying out my commitments. "Cleaning house, trusting God and helping others" is the most fulfilling thing I get to do in my life today. The results of these actions are not in my hands; they are in the hands of my Higher Power, whom I call God.

God has made my life much better than I could have dreamed. My marriage has been saved. We share a wonderful life together. I am connected to my family and friends like never before. I am able to love and accept love, and able to be there no matter what.

I am so grateful for all who have helped me in Marijuana Anonymous, the ones who were there when I came in, as well as the newcomers who share their stories that I may learn more of "what sobriety is."

**Joe**

**ROVING  
REPORTER  
ASKS...**

What shortcomings have been diminished or removed from your life through Step work?

(Note: Submit by Tuesday, July 15th, answers will be published in the August 2014 issue.)

**Step Six**

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

**Tradition Six**

MA groups ought never endorse, finance, or lend the MA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

*The spiritual principle of Step Six is willingness... to become entirely ready to let go of the defects of character that were blocking our relationship with a Higher Power.*

Life With Hope, p.25

# marijuana anonymous worldwide

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

**MA World Services**

PO Box 7807 Torrance, CA 90504 800.766.6779  
www.marijuana-anonymous.org  
email: office@marijuana-anonymous.org

**District 1 San Francisco**

www.ma-sf.org 415.325.4785

**District 2 East Bay**

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 626.869.6210

**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 or 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

## Birthdays

Celebrating  
**210**  
years of sobriety!

**District 2**

Noemi	5/9/10	4 yrs.
Susan C.	5/15/06	8 yrs.
Suki	5/26/95	19 yrs.

**District 4**

Jason M.	5/1/09	5 yrs.
Ken R.	5/1/11	3 yrs.

**District 5**

Gary	5/8/07	7 yrs.
Jamie	4/26/11	3 yrs.
Lyman	4/27/10	4 yrs.
Mary C.	5/10/10	4 yrs.
Sasha	4/12/13	1 yr.
Trevor	4/24/13	1 yr.

**District 6**

**District 7**

Alan B.	5/1/97	17 yrs.
Keith G.	3/27/95	19 yrs.
Mark H.	4/8/93	21 yrs.

**District 8**

Erica R.*	3/31/02	11 yrs.
<b>Jeff A.</b>	<b>4/22/13</b>	<b>1 yr.</b>
Karen N.	4/29/11	3 yrs.
Mark R.	4/1/05	9 yrs.

**District 11**

Craig S.	5/26/87	27 yrs.
<b>Judy T.</b>	<b>5/14/13</b>	<b>1 yr.</b>
Lael P.	5/18/11	3 yrs.
<b>Lisa G.</b>	<b>5/16/13</b>	<b>1 yr.</b>
Mike B.	4/18/94	20 yrs.
<b>Sheila B.</b>	<b>5/23/13</b>	<b>1 yr.</b>

**District 13**

Maurice R.	4/17/06	8 yrs.
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**District 15**

Artie	4/18/11	3 yrs.
Drew	5/4/10	4 yrs.
<b>Ira</b>	<b>5/13/13</b>	<b>1 yr.</b>
<b>Steven</b>	<b>4/27/13</b>	<b>1 yr.</b>

**KEEP  
COMING  
BACK!**



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.

**Help Someone Get  
in the Boat!**

**ARTICLES WANTED**

**a new  
leaf**

Share Your  
Experience,  
Strength & Hope

*"How did you escape the  
Lotus Eaters?"*

Your stories are a valuable addition to the diversity, mission and vision of our fellowship. Share yours today.