



a new leaf

a publication of marijuana anonymous

October 2014

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Clean and Sober Since December 3, 1998

I can trace my problems back to the beginning, in early childhood. I am an abuse survivor. I grew up terrorized. I felt I was responsible for bad things. I felt like I could never be good enough, like nobody wanted me, nobody loved me.

I grew up in a neglectful family. My mother was very angry and would take out her anger on us. I am afraid of anger. I don't want anyone to be angry with me for fear of rejection. I became very timid and shy; I barely spoke above a whisper. My father was away from home much of the time due to his work. I grew up feeling rejected, unworthy and unloved. I was sad most of the time. I thought it was the normal way to be.

**“I thought
it was the
normal way
to be.”**

I started smoking pot after I graduated from college and continued to smoke throughout most of my adult life. It was a way to be accepted, be part of the group, be “cool”, at least that's what I thought at first. I had always felt like an outsider and this was a way that I could be included. Soon it became a way of escape from all the demons in my mind. I felt nothing but blackness, there was no joy in life. It worsened my depression to a point where I became suicidal. When I became suicidal, I was admitted to the hospital for detox and then I attended an intensive outpatient program. Also, I began seeing a psychiatrist and I have continued to see him every week for my depression.

I started attending MA meetings in my city every week. At first I was afraid that I would be rejected because I thought the people would all be “fully recovered potheads” and perfect. When I attended my first meeting, I saw that everyone was just like me!

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Swept Up to Higher Ground by Higher Power's Fast-Moving Current (continued from September)

During my 30 years of using, I seemed to need no more than 4 large tokes per day, but absolutely daily, to stay in the mood I wanted. I didn't realize that it really wasn't about the amount used, which in some stories was quite copious, but it was about the insidious effects of addiction. “Addiction... hmmm...” I hadn't really considered this to be a problem, or even a word to describe my situation. Yet, I had noticed in the last several months that I just wanted to toke my way through the days without any particular “reason”... just had to. I even recently began rising during the night to have a toke, which I felt odd about. Like, why? Was my need for mood regulation escalating at last? Could I not make it

**“I just wanted
to toke my
way through
my days...”**

till dawn's “wake n' bake” time? I felt weird and afraid about this, and noticed I was up to 5 or 6 tokes a day.

Anyway, after discovering MA that night and reading all 12 issues for each year of “A New Leaf” since 2010, I finally went to bed. Still, I had no intention of quitting, nor any guilt, shame, shock, or remorse, despite all the liberating self-recognition I'd had from my hours of reading and the very strange new feeling in my body and spirit.

NEXT DAY

I woke up as usual, with no dreams of course, intending to continue my using lifestyle, but... without any sense of a big “should-not-smoke-weed” looming over my soul, I simply could not resume my

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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/anl

and click on the [newsletter](#) tab.

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Ten Toes Too Many

*I am standing near the edge
of the long undisturbed
pool of you
wanting, longing to dip in a toe
or ten
feel the cool familiar liquid of you
hydrate my thirsty landscape.*

*The appeal of my own reflection
on your serene surface
is a live animation canvas
where I can create the story of
what I want to see happen
and let the fantasies I'm most
partial to play on repeat.*

*But to dip in even one toe
will lead to ten
because none will tolerate being
left behind.*

*With ten toes in, my balance
goes
and I'm all in, beneath your
surface.*

*No longer on the shore with
enough distance for clear
perspective.*

*Serene and still has become
disrupted and disturbed.
What seemed solid, stable
becomes transparent, an illusion.*

*My feet find no bottom to stand
on
my arms get tired
its dark, and I'm swimming
alone.*

*Once again
I find my way back to the edge
pull myself out, soaked and
exhausted
determined to remember
the familiarity of this ending.*

D'Jessica W.

In September

ROVING REPORTER

**ASKED... What do you do
for fun in recovery?**

- Ice-skating
- Bowling
- Croquet
- Bocce Ball
- Read
- Go to gym
- Meditate
- Go dancing
- Play pinball
- Fellowship
- Major league baseball games
- Season pass at amusement park (as a newcomer)
- Do all the things I used to do only not stoned.
- Connect with other people- don't isolate.

Tim V.

When I entered recovery, I felt alone and isolated. I was so happy to find a group of people with similar feeling and trying to find recovery. It was even better to find out that we could have fun together as a group. One of the first things that I did was to attend an MA Convention. It was powerful to be together with so many potheads in recovery. I appreciated being able to attend workshops and lectures and learn more about recovery. I love going to the Saturday night dinner and dance! In my district we have a pot-less potluck on birthday chip night. Having fellowship this way is an excellent opportunity to get to know others in recovery. In addition to this we also have district-wide campfire meetings and picnic meetings; frequent holiday parties; yard sales; bowling, frisbee-golf, coin-rolling parties and many other fellowship opportunities. I attend many of these events and appreciate the fact that it is possible to have clean and sober fun together.

Louise R.

Swept Up to Higher Ground

cont'd from pg. 1

lifestyle of 30 years! Shocking, unexpected. I felt the strong presence of my Higher Power, which had been creeping back into my awareness ever since my neighbor's slip.

I'd not fully realized that the strong inner connectedness to "Higher Power," which I've always called "Inner Self" or "Spirit," had become very dim over the years. And though I had begun to notice this marked diminishment in the last few years, I really, really, didn't want to admit it. Didn't think the

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diminished contact was due to marijuana use, yet at rare times I let myself venture into wondering if this might be true. But I was averse to "putting this together" or connecting the dots to my prolonged use. OMG, then I might feel like I must quit. That would've been surely enough to drive me to smoke!

Well, at this moment, on this particular morning, on that day 112 days ago, I felt stopped in my tracks by the presence of HP. Yet I still thought, "Well, why NOT light up as usual?" I still saw no reason not to. I hadn't yet come to believe

the part in the MA stories where life in recovery becomes undeniably better than before. "Life on Life's term's?" Never considered it. That would come later in my recovery.

So, I mentally located my pipe and stash, as I usually did soon after arising, and to this day I don't know if I loaded the pipe or not, but I didn't pick up. Didn't smoke. I just could not continue this lifestyle one more day. It seemed as if my soul and Higher Power had said, "Enough." And I have not smoked and have rarely craved MJ to this day!

3 AND A HALF MONTHS LATER

Again that unmistakable feeling descends upon me as I write here. It is not I writing but Higher Power in me. I'm almost overcome with gratitude for the plentiful gifts that MA, the fellowship, the many meetings, my sponsor, and working the Steps have given me to this point. For months I've wanted to share this story, and give all credit to "A New Leaf" newsletter for my entry into sobriety. Though it was clearly a convergence of many factors, all orchestrated by my Higher Power, as I now see in retrospect. Of course recovery has been extremely challenging for me at times, and also full of very unanticipated, remarkable, exciting rewards.

So, thank you MA and all involved, all the dedicated souls here, for pointing the way to a new life – my new life. Finally I have the opportunity to not laugh in derision, but to know the truth of the oft-heard phrase, "Keep coming back, it works if you work it!" It has been a pleasure to offer my story here. I hope to write more about this unique-but-shared journey as time goes by.

Trula B.**Clean and Sober Since '98**

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and everyone was so nice! At first, when I listened to the promises, when they said "we will love you until you love yourself"; I thought, "yeah, right no one is going to love me; I am so unlovable, so unworthy." Imagine my surprise when I found out that they did love me! I was welcomed with open arms.

I met my sponsor within 3 months of attending MA. We worked through the steps, which was so helpful to me. I was able to realize that a lot of the concepts that I had accepted as facts were based upon my misinterpretation of childhood beliefs. My fears of childhood had stayed with me and I hadn't been able to discard them. I came to understand a lot about myself and what behaviors I had that led to addiction.

Now when I have a problem that baffles me, I go through the steps to find a solution. I make a gratitude list every day; this helps me focus on the positive things in my life. I have participated in MA by doing service; service helps me reach out to others.

One of the first things I learned about in recovery was a Higher Power. When I was growing up, I was taught that God was loving, forgiving, and accepting. I liked the idea of a Higher Power because it was a spiritual concept instead of a religious concept. I learned to turn my problems over to my HP and I learned to accept my HP into my life. By having a HP, I have experienced love, acceptance, and serenity. I have learned to live each day to its fullest.

Recovery has changed my life; I never knew I could be so happy, free and joyful. Life is good; dreams come true! **Anonymous**

marijuana anonymous worldwide

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

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District 10 LA County East

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PO Box 2012 Portland, OR 97208-2012 503.567.9892

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District 14 London, England

<http://www.marijuana-anonymous.co.uk> 24hr Helpline 07940.503438

District 15 Long Island, NY

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

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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 216 years of sobriety!

District 1

District 2

John B.	9/4/10	4 yrs.
Jonathon M.	9/16/01	13 yrs.
Sally	9/17/04	10 yrs.

District 3

District 4

Duncan M.	9/11/06	8 yrs.
Lanier B.	9/2/12	2 yrs.

District 5

Cassie	9/13/09	5 yrs.
Coleman G.	8/13/92	22 yrs.
Dave D.	8/22/09	5 yrs.
Lisa T.	8/21/90	24 yrs.
Mari	9/3/11	3 yrs.
Monica	8/10/10	4 yrs.
Omeed	8/20/12	2 yrs.
Paul Z.	8/21/11	3 yrs.
Terry H.	9/8/96	18 yrs.

District 6

LB	9/20/05	9 yrs.
Spencer M.	9/20/08	6 yrs.
Steve C.	9/10/11	3 yrs.

District 7

Craig J.	9/23/96	18 yrs.
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District 8

Allison F.	7/29/09	5 yrs.
Evan F.	9/15/03	11 yrs.

Hal S.	9/1/13	1 yr.
Jackson J.	8/9/12	2 yrs.
Jerry F.	9/18/13	1 yr.
Jonathon R.	9/8/04	10 yrs.
Jordan F.	9/6/13	1 yr.

District 10

Fred	8/9/12	2 yrs.
Julia	9/4/13	1 yr.

District 11

Bill C.	9/15/12	2 yrs.
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District 12

District 13

Cathy E.	8/26/11	3 yrs.
James R.	8/21/00	14 yrs.
Tara C.	9/1/13	1 yr.
Tina M.	9/12/11	3 yrs.

District 14

District 15

District 16

District 17

District 18

District 19



KEEP COMING BACK!

ANL wants to publish your sobriety anniversary. 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.

ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

What tools do you use when you think about relapsing?

(Note: Submit by November 15th, answers will be published in the December 2014 issue.)

STEP TEN

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

TRADITION TEN

Marijuana Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues, hence the MA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.