



a new leaf

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Beyond the Fantasy of Functionality

I was an absolute slave to marijuana. Nothing else—school, work, friends, family or intimate relationships—were as important as catching my next buzz. For many years, I was fully aware of my powerlessness over pot. Various people in my life—boyfriends, friends, family—called me out on how detrimentally my

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marijuana use was affecting my life and relationships. I agreed that it was a problem, but I felt completely powerless to do anything about it. Sometimes I would try, but towards the end, I had given up hope that I could ever quit, so I just tried to stay high as much as possible so I wouldn't have to think about the

consequences. Eventually I wasn't even getting high anymore; I was just maintaining what felt like “normalcy.”

From my studies of Chinese medicine, I have an understanding that smoking pot causes damage to the body, mind and spirit. From my studies I believe that marijuana creates heat in the blood, causing restlessness, agitation and anxiety, perpetuating the addictive cycle, and causing dampness in the body, thus creating a fog-like state of consciousness. Over time, I believe, the “heat” causes damage to the “kidney essence”, draining ones' life-force. Ignorance really is bliss—I used to obsess over how much damage I was doing. A lot of the time I couldn't even enjoy getting high. I could actually physically gauge how much damage I had done to my lungs and kidneys by taking my pulse and looking at the cracks in my tongue (signs of heat).

It was very painful and tiresome to leading a double life—I portrayed the role of “healer” on the outside, while inside I was a sick and suffering addict. Among my social circle of musicians, smoking pot was more acceptable. I told myself that it enhanced my creativity. Yet the more I smoked, the more the drive to play music evaporated.

I tried almost EVERYTHING to get sober—hypnosis, herbs, acupuncture, EFT, Rational Recovery, hiding my stash, giving it away, making myself promises,

continued on pg. 2

Grateful Today

I grew up with an alcoholic mother and no father. My uncle turned me on to pot when I was nine years old because he thought it might help with my hyperactivity disorder. I started using seriously when I was 13 years old. It was my favorite drug, but I used other drugs during my teenage years.

When I was fifteen a neighbor called Protective Services because my sister's boyfriend was chasing me with a baseball bat through the neighborhood. I told what was going on in my home and I was allowed to go live with my grandmother.

I lived with her until I was 17 when an officer stopped me and found marijuana in my backpack. I had to go before the judge and plead guilty. Because I was a minor I was offered a deal, go to fire camp instead of juvenile hall. I was in fire camp for two years during which time I got my GED and learned conservation skills.

After completing the program, I went to my first group home in Long Beach. Because I was still using pot and other drugs and alcohol I was moved to a sober living group home. I was required to attend AA meetings, but it didn't really mean anything to me at the time because I wasn't quitting because I wanted to be sober, I was doing it because I was force to go. I lived there for four years, but I was still using

continued on pg. 3

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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Beyond the Fantasy of Funtionality

cont'd from pg. 1

New Year's Resolutions, yoga retreats—everything except a 12 Step program. Actually, that's not entirely true—I did go to a couple of MA meetings six years before actually getting sober, and

*I realized that
marijuana
was the most
important thing
in my life.*

I decided that I didn't have the time for it, and it wasn't for me. The whole God thing freaked me out, and I thought it was a cult for powerless people.

I was living Step One on a daily basis for many years---fully aware of my powerlessness, and watching my life become unmanageable. I had no concept of trust or faith in a power greater than myself, and certainly no concept that this power could actually help me get sober. There were people in my life who were sober through AA—and they seemed like happy, well-adjusted (not cult-indoctrinated or brain-washed) people, but I figured I was different. HA!

Having lived with an honest desire to quit pot since 2001, ten years later, in the beginning of 2011, I made a decision that this

would be the year! I did a yoga retreat, and managed one month off pot and alcohol. After a couple of "celebratory" drinks on my birthday, within an hour I was high again. I tried to stop smoking pot while drinking, but whenever I drank, I found a way to get high. Towards the end of 2011, I had another month off pot and alcohol—and this time a glass of red wine led me straight to pot.

At this point I began to look at myself deeply—and I realized that my relationship with marijuana was the most important thing in my life—an on-again-off-again relationship with "another pot addict" that brought me to my bottom. I had enough spiritual awareness to realize that I was only capable of attracting partners who were at the same energetic vibration that I was stuck in--other addicts. And there was no way in hell I would want to date me!!

Around this time, I went on a date with a very handsome guy who seemed to really have it all together—we really clicked, and I was excited. And then he mentioned that he was sober. I told him about my pot addiction, and he said he struggled with that too (he got sober in AA, and had never heard of MA). While we both quickly realized that we couldn't date each other, he brought me to my first AA meeting.

From that meeting, I went to another AA meeting on my own two days later. I was so desperate for a solution, so I listened to the stories, and tried to take it all in. The Steps on the wall were a blur, and the whole thing seemed like such a big project. After that meeting, I knew I had to reconnect

cont'd on pg. 3

Beyond the Fantasy of Functionality

cont'd from pg. 2

with MA and plunge right in. It was very intimidating at first—I came in during the holiday season—into rooms that were either empty because of the holidays, or packed with people who all seemed to know each other. Those early days were dark and lonely.

I kept coming back, even though I wasn't quite ready to quit. The year was coming to a close, and the pressure was building all around me, with a family feud ready to erupt. I knew I had to have all of my wits about me. My sobriety date is 1/1/12—I found my way to a woman's brunch meeting on that day. I was so excited to be with such a great group of women. The talk about make-up, shopping and spirituality after the meeting was encouraging—these were women with common interests that I could actually see myself becoming friends with (and I have)—it wasn't all so glum!

I made a decision to go to 90 meetings in 90 days, found a sponsor, and I began working the steps. I heard it said that I should chase my sobriety as hard as I chased my stash, so I did. Working my program became the number one focus in my life. I stopped dating and stopped drinking. I didn't want to stop drinking, but I knew from my own experience one drink usually led me straight to a joint. And on my very first day of sobriety, I heard a share from someone who had two years of sobriety—before going out on red wine. I also heard the best reason ever for not drinking—to be able to do service for MA. If drinking is really “no big deal”, then what's the big deal?

I started doing service, going out to fellowship after meetings, and suddenly I had a rich new social life. Pretty soon, the desire to smoke pot completely vanished!! This was the first miracle of recovery. I do not take this for granted. Through many ups and downs, I am still here, one day at a time. I work The Steps. I call fellows when I am struggling. I work with sponsees and I do service. Through working The Steps with my sponsor, I have delved into the deep recesses of myself, examining and relinquishing resentments and character defects. I've made amends to several people in my life and also to myself. I have learned that marijuana was my strategy for not knowing how to live in this world—I created a fog around me so that I wouldn't have to feel my feelings or make myself vulnerable to others. My life has blossomed and gotten larger in many ways. Being an active member Marijuana Anonymous has truly given me a life beyond my wildest dreams.

Deirdre**Grateful Today**

cont'd from pg. 1

secretly. I graduated from there and went to live in the South Bay. I started hanging around with some bad characters.

When I was 33 I met the girl that was to become my future partner. She was also a pothead and we had a great time getting high together. She had epilepsy and thought pot helped her seizures, but sadly she just got crazier and crazier. Eventually, through a lot of family circumstances, it became obvious that she needed to get sober. I kept smoking until I started having health issues myself.

One night I found myself on the kitchen floor. I couldn't move. I thought I was having a heart attack. The paramedics were called. I had gangrene in my gallbladder. Thank God I got there in time because if it had burst it, I would have been deathly ill. I knew I had the problem for a long time, but I always just smoked another joint and ignored it. After the hospital I decided it was time to get sober. I quit smoking and all other mind-altering drugs and stayed that way for some time.

Eventually my family and I decided to go to an MA meeting. Here I found a sponsor and began to work The Steps. After about a year I made the mistake of hanging out with one of my old smoking buddies. He was smoking while I was there and without thinking it through I took a hit off his joint. I immediately called my family. I felt bad. I knew I had to start all over again and get back on my path, which I did. Now I am happy to say that I have more than eighteen months sober. I have two meeting commitments and have worked the steps with my sponsor. My life is better, my health is better and I am glad I made the decision to be sober. I am grateful for the life I have today.

David A.

*...these were
women with
common
interests that I
could actually
see myself
becoming friends
with (and I
have)...*

marijuana anonymous worldwide

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

MA World Services

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www.ma-sf.org 415.325.4785

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www.madistrict2.org 510.287.8873

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PO Box 551 Saratoga, CA 95071 408.450.0796

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District 7 LA County South

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District 8 New York

PO Box 1244 Cooper Station New York, NY 10276 212.459.4423

District 10 LA County East

email info@madistrict10.org or call 626.869.6210

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PO Box 2012 Portland, OR 97208-2012 503.567.9892

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District 13 MA Online

www.ma-online.org

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

District 20 San Diego, CA

www.ma-sandiego.org

Birthdays

Celebrating **114**
years of sobriety!

District 1

Chrysanthemum H. 5/6/01 14 yrs.
Ivan V. 5/12/14 1 yr.
Jimmy M. 5/4/14 1 yr.
Paul P. 4/16/09 6 yrs.

District 2

Noemi 5/9/10 5 yrs.
Susan C. 5/15/06 9 yrs.

District 4

Erica M. 4/22/14 1 yr.
Jason M. 5/1/09 6 yrs.
Ken R. 5/1/11 4 yrs.
Melanie B. 4/24/12 3 yrs.

District 5

Corey D. 4/24/14 1 yr.
Gary L. 5/8/07 8 yrs.
Gary W. 4/9/12 3 yrs.
Laura 4/20/04 11yrs.
Lyman 4/27/10 5 yrs.
Mary C. 5/10/10 5 yrs.
Trevor 4/24/13 2 yrs.

District 7

Alan B. 5/1/97 18 yrs.
Cheryl B. 4/21/14 1 yr.
Howard T. 3/29/14 1 yr.

District 13

Athena L. 4/30/12 3 yrs.
Megan T. 6/6/14 1 yr.

District 19

Michael O. 6/7/10 5 yrs.

ROVING REPORTER ASKS...

Which of the Twelve Steps did
you find the most helpful?

... and RR desires to
print your response too!

(Submit by July 15th, your answers will be
published in the August 2015 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.

