



# A NEW LEAF

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## Healing thru Helping with Marijuana Anonymous

by Eric Y.

I came to Marijuana Anonymous because I had ruined my life with my pot smoking and I needed help in stopping my insane addiction. I saw MA as a means to that end. I did not think that MA would serve in any other capacity in my life except to help me stop using drugs.

I am so glad to report, dear readers, that I was incredibly wrong. MA has started to fit me quite nicely, not unlike breaking in a new pair of jeans. And the gifts MA has given me far exceed sobriety.

My healing process started with going to meetings and getting honest with myself and others for the first time in my life. Going to meetings three or four times a week was something I was committed to.

My healing continued when I took coffee commitments at meetings. I saw that as a way to keep me coming to meetings even if I didn't want to. Taking commitments is kind of like cheating — but in the best possible way!

My personal evolution (or was that revolution?) continued when I finally got a

sponsor to help me work the steps. I am extremely choosy so it took me 10 months before I found a sponsor that I felt comfortable with. I do not recommend that others wait that long. It is just too damn hard to work this program on your own. You need help. We all need help; that is why we go to meetings.

It was this realization — that addicts can help other addicts — that became the final phase of my understanding of MA. And the final phase, for me, was being of service.

For so long in my sobriety I was very despondent over missed opportunities, missing brain cells, and entire years frittered away by my pot addiction. The only thing that gives my sobriety meaning to me is that I can help another addict with their problems and show them there are alternatives to the miserable excuse for a life that is drug addiction. If I can be of service, then all those years of drug abuse were not wasted. I did things in those years that I can draw on to help another addict keep sober.

In summation, I came to MA to stop smoking pot, and instead I found a way to turn defeats from my past into victories for my future and the future of others. △

*"I was very despondent over missed opportunities, missing brain cells, and entire years frittered away by my pot addiction."*

## A New Look for A NEW LEAF

We are pleased to present the latest edition of A NEW LEAF, and no doubt, you can already see some changes.

Because Marijuana Anonymous is growing and progressing, the editors and newly established New Leaf Editorial Board feel it is time for A NEW LEAF to carry MA's message to newcomers and oldtimers throughout the entire fellowship. Thus, A NEW LEAF is undergoing specific design and content changes in preparation of expanding its coverage and boosting circulation.

No longer will A NEW LEAF focus primarily on the Southern California area. Instead, these pages will report on the vast amount of experience, strength and hope present throughout all of MA. We believe that through our shared stories we all can play an important part in passing along the message of our 12 Step recovery program.

With this in mind, we ask for your support, and more importantly, your articles on recovery and service.

Sincerely,

Loren N. and Brian K.

Editors

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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 necessarily reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole.

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## A Collection of Views and Opinions from Around the Fellowship

This month's questions: *What is your recovery-based resolution for the new year? Why?*

### Van W. — 19 years

As this program and my God have taken me along this path of freedom from marijuana addiction, I find the road gets narrower, the paybacks quicker, the rewards greater. However, my character defects become more glaring, like headlights on a country road. So, I resolve to complete my eighth 4th Step, and continue in prayer and meditation to focus on the "only" of Step Eleven — rather than on my way, needs, will, wants. God willing, more growth will follow.

### Mike H. — 1 year

I have no resolution different from what I do on a daily basis — meditate, pray, take the steps, attend meetings and work with others. For me, everyday is like New Year's Day. I resolve to stay clean no matter what.

### Lynn W. — 1 yr. 4 mos.

I haven't actually made any resolutions for the new year. I am enjoying the recovery and growth that I've been able to achieve in the program thus far. I believe that as long as I stay close to my Higher Power and keep taking action when necessary, my recovery will continue and I will keep growing spiritually. I can only live one day at a time; and I can only stay clean and sober one day at a time; and the new year is just another day.

### Robert W. — 1 yr. 2 mos.

To continue to stay sober and to work harder on my recovery. Now that I have a year of sobriety under my belt I feel 1994 will be dedicated more to my recovery. I also will go to even more MA meetings (at least

five a week). I need to hit more meetings because I'm fearful of that comfort zone of sobriety and recovery. I just hope and pray that I stick around in '94. It was just amazing not to smoke pot or drink alcohol in '93. I just hope I can do the same thing in '94, one day at a time or even a minute at a time if I have to. Without MA I would be stoned right now.

### Joyce — 3 yrs. 4 mos.

I resolve to write my second 4th Step. It was suggested some time ago that this could be helpful to me. Other obligations gave me an excuse not to do it in 1993. As I seek to grow in my recovery, I accept that now's the time to get it together.

### Chris E. — 9 months

My New Year's resolution is to start counseling because I know I need outside help that would be objective and positive for my mental well-being. I don't know all the answers to life's problems.

### Joellen — 11 months

My '94 New Year's resolution is to work more on my recovery. The last two months I've been very busy, and even though I still went to meetings, I can feel my recovery fading. So, it's time to get back into action and learn more about "practicing these principles" in all my affairs.

### Andrea S. — 5 months

My New Year's resolution for '94 is recovery and sobriety one day at a time and one step at a time. I plan to continue to trust God, clean house and work with others. The reason why? Because without the program and my recovery I don't stand a chance of surviving the new year.

## The Roving Reporter



## Thought of the Month

*"Our very lives...depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs." - AA's Big Book, p. 20*

# Works If You Work It — Won't If You Don't

by Rob M.

**I** worked for 15 months. I really did. I had truly come to grips with the fact that I am an addict. I did the first three steps and found much to my astonishment and delight that I was gaining some genuine spirituality in my life. (A real miracle when I consider the negative feelings about God and religion with which I started.)

I encountered some grave emotional crises along the way and found that my limited faith in a Higher Power, combined with the love and support of my fellows was enough to get me through — clean and sober. I took on lots of commitments and tried to be of service. I did my inventory and shared it with my sponsor. I felt the wonderful sensation of having much of the guilt from the wreckage of my past lifted.

I became willing to give up my negative behaviors and asked God to take them away. Some of them were, others remained ("We are not saints..."). I had started to prepare for my amends, knowing that performing them would further advance my recovery. I was changing.

The obsession to use had been lifted and I was becoming a better person — and it was all based on that original admission of powerlessness and a cry to God for help.

A little while after my birthday, I got fired from my job. A short time after that, I had a relationship crumble.

My faith was not sufficient for me to trust in God's good intentions for me. I took back control. I took back my surrender. I stopped praying. I stopped going to meetings. I dumped my commitments. I didn't have time for any of that. My intentions were good but nonetheless, I found myself trying to manipulate people and situations over which I had no control. I had to fix and manage my life. I couldn't trust in my higher power or the program. My Situation was just too important and complex! I had to fix my life, contrary to the principles which the program had taught me. The biggest disaster, though, was my total disregard for the maintenance of my spiritual condition.

I feel now that it was only a matter of time until I turned back to drug abuse. By myself...I am powerless over drugs. I isolated myself from my fellows and my God. I didn't stand a chance.

My disease is progressive. It took me 20 years to find my first bottom. I found crack and my second bottom in two and a half months! I was killing myself and I knew it. Through lies and deception I found that I had shut myself off from the sunlight of the spirit and the help of my fellows.

Finally one night, in a state of complete demoralization, defeat, sickness and fear...I begged God for help. I knew from 15 months in the program what I had to do next. I had to take some action. With God's help (I found that once I had asked for it, I got it), I found the courage to admit to all of you what I had done. I feared what you would think of me and my behavior. That fear was unjustified.

I received an indescribable outpouring of love and caring support from ALL of you. It

pulled me up and set me free from the pit I had dug for myself.

Today I feel more in tune with the spirit of this program than ever before. I pray and meditate every day and night. I study the Big Book. I've restarted the Steps. While I remain without a job, I go to two, three or four meetings a day. I try to reach out and help other addicts with simple honesty. (I no longer try to impress you with profound and complex answers.) I call my sponsor every day and try to follow all his advice.

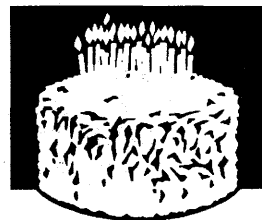
I'm more in touch with my Higher Power than ever before. Nothing has a higher priority in my life than my relationship with God. If I take care of that — He'll take care of my sobriety and everything else. All I have to do is resist the temptation to sit on my butt.

I have to take action...every day. I try to concentrate on what I need to do...today. I try not to worry about the outcome. I try to apply this principle not only to my recovery from my drug addiction, but to all aspects of my life.

Thank you Marijuana Anonymous from the depths of my soul. My Higher Power and all of you have saved my life. △

***"With God's help...I found the courage to admit to all of you what I had done. I feared what you would think of me and my behavior."***

## Congratulations to our members celebrbating their sober birthdays!



Paul R.	December 22	1 year
Rainbow Mikey	December 28	17 years
Renelde	January 1	1 year
Don H.	January 1	3 years
Tina K.	January 7	4 years
Paul S.	January 8	7 years
Don M.	January 8	1 year
Mike LB	January 10	6 years
Dante G.	January 13	2 years
Dave K.	January 15	5 years
Melody W.	January 16	5 years
Ken P.	January 19	4 years
Dave & Barbara G.	January 20	2 years
Todd M.	January 21	1 year
Joellen	January 26	1 year
Darlene S.	January 27	6 years
Jessica	January 28	2 years
Michael McK.	January 29	6 years

# District 6's Winter Golf Tournament Results

by Kathy C.

'Twas the day of the golf tournament  
and out on the green,

The excited M.A. golfers could be  
heard and be seen.

A fine mixture of men and one  
woman could be found,

The foursomes were ready for an  
action-filled round.

A photographer and a reporter  
showed up bright and early,

Hoping to catch on film a  
hole-in-one or a birdie.

The game unfolded with  
some exceptional shots,

Some very, very good — some  
unbelievably not!

As the winners placed first, second  
and third,

Sighs of relief and frustration were  
felt (and a few were heard).

Paul's 58 was the low  
winning score,  
Followed



by John G.'s 66...the two took the floor.

Third place was held by a golf circuit  
newcomer,

Dan R. won that trophy and he'll be  
back in the summer.

The lowest team score award went to  
a proud Rob M.,

And was also shared by the third  
place Dan.

A thanks to all golfers, for it was a  
day of delight;

And to all a Happy New Year  
with no slices to the right.

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And now here's a list of the  
scores recorded by the golfers who  
braved chilly temperatures to meet in  
fellowship:

Paul 58, John G. 66, Dan R. 68, Rob M.  
71, Loren N. 74, Steve G. 76, Ben K. 76,  
Tommaso 76, George B. 83, Brian A. 94,  
Kathy C. 96. △

## MA WORLDWIDE....

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(510) 287-8873

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P.O. Box 111341  
Campbell, CA 95011  
(408) 450-0796

DISTRICT 4 - SEATTLE  
(no address at this time)  
(206) 548-9034

DISTRICT 5 - ORANGE COUNTY  
358 S. Main #215  
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(714) 999-9409

DISTRICT 6 - LOS ANGELES (NORTH)  
P.O. Box 2433  
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(818) 566-3678

DISTRICT 7 - LOS ANGELES (SOUTH)  
P.O. Box 3012  
Culver City, CA 90231  
(213) 964-2370

DISTRICT 8 - NEW YORK  
(no address at this time)  
(212) 459-4423

DISTRICT 9 - SANTA CRUZ  
P.O. Box 1481  
Santa Cruz, CA 95601

NEW ZEALAND  
(no info at this time)

## Upcoming Events

### District Service Committee Meetings

District 5  
2nd Monday of Month - 7:30 p.m.  
REA Community Center  
Room 640  
661 Hamilton, Costa Mesa

District 6  
1st Thursday of Month - 7:30 p.m.  
(Ask your GSR for  
meeting location.)

District 7  
2nd Wednesday of Month  
7:30 p.m.  
(Call Teri A. for location.)  
(310) 823-3446

*No other events scheduled  
or reported.*

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