

A NEW LEAF

January 1996
Volume 6 - Number 1

A Publication of Marijuana Anonymous

EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA!

LIFE WITH HOPE OUR BOOK IS HERE !!!

from the MA World Service Publications Coordinator

Picture, if you will... It's a dark, foggy night. In the distance, we hear the sound of a horse galloping. The sound comes nearer. Out of the gloom, we see a man in a tri-cornered hat riding furiously, his ponytail flying in the wind. He cries out, "The Book is coming! The Book is coming!"

Ladies and Gentlemen... (drum roll please): We are proud to announce that, after many years in the making, "Life With Hope, A Return to Living Through

the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Marijuana Anonymous" will be on sale for the first time ever at this year's MA Convention in Santa Monica (which just happens to have "Life With Hope" as its theme this year - is that a coincidence or what?) After that, it will be available for sale to the districts in bulk and then on an individual basis.

The first 500 copies (First Printing, First Edition) will be hot off the press on January the 10th and will be sold for \$5.00 each at the Convention.

(What a deal!) After that, the book can be ordered for \$5.00 per copy, PLUS postage, from World Services. Ordering in bulk will save postage. After the districts have placed their orders, individual copies will be available on a first come, first served basis. Hey, you out there in addict-land, buy that "soon to be rare" First Edition and check out those typos! You may be the first to find one. This could be your big chance. So buy it now and read it fast. If you find any mistakes... call your sponsor! R

Balance Me

by Dave K., District 6

I made a commitment to the Editors of *A New Leaf* to try and write an inspirational article for the first newsletter of 1996. After considerable thought (and knowing I should live up to my word) it came to me, very simply..... it's all about *balance*.

We identify as "addicts." It's a serious label, one that we ought not use inappropriately or take lightly. When I first started coming to meetings and really began to break off my relationship with marijuana, I started to sense a

tremendous void in my life, in my soul, and in my everyday happenings. As marijuana began to lose its hold on me, I began to have a clearer understanding of how much an addict I really am! (But during my using, I would have sworn to you that I knew what was I was all about! Oh, how much I've learned!)

With the marijuana gone, but my personality traits and the way in which I dealt with life the same and unchanged, I began to turn to other behaviors and "stuff" to fill the void. I

was cross-addicting to other things because I hadn't changed inside. At one point I thought, I might as well just be smoking pot and getting high. Right? WRONG! At least, being clean and sober, I was clear and coherent enough to realize that I WAS substituting. I learned that addiction is a personality disorder. It's not as simple as a single substance or issue. I learned that cross-addiction was actually very common and perhaps

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A Collection of Views and Opinions from Around the Fellowship

"If you could make a New Year's resolution for MA... what would it be?"



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.

Editors
Rob M.
Ilene M.

District 1 Bureau Chief: Gayle
District 2 Bureau Chief: Sheila F.
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District 5 Bureau Chiefs: Az A.
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District 9 Bureau Chief: Bernie G.
District 10 Bureau Chief: Bill H.

Published by
A New Leaf Editorial Board

Patricia G., chairman
Loren N., treasurer
Carol Mc.

Send all articles, inquiries, and correspondence to:

A NEW LEAF
P.O. Box 4314
North Hollywood, CA 91607

E-mail: ANuLeaf@aol.com

Fax No.
(818) 990-2980

Editorial Phone Nos.
(818) 505-1408
(818) 763-4767

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Flyin' Brian 2,995 days

For me: To keep coming back and to continue to make positive progress. For MA: To make meetings longer by 30 minutes so that more people can share!

Mike H. 3 years

That we continue to vigorously carry the message and be vigilant in the practice of the Twelve Traditions.

Bonnie 2 yrs, 10 mos

For MA: as much focus on recovery as on fellowship. (Not that I'm taking others' inventory or anything...) For me: completing my Step work, learning better boundaries, keeping my commitment to recovery.

Molly M. 2 yrs, 6 mos

Rather than making specific resolutions that we may or may not keep, perhaps it would be better to simply resolve to grow closer to our Higher Power. All the good stuff would follow...

Brett P. 380 days

Not to have any more New Years resolutions! (Total setup!) I think I'll just focus on my own spiritual growth. And, to keep what's said "in the rooms" in the rooms.

Carol S. 4 yrs, 9 mos

To wish MA's Higher Power a Happy New Year and to give up smoking cigarettes!

Jonathan R. 3 yrs, 10 mos

1. To stay patient, loving, and tolerant with all of us imperfect human beings. 2. To keep growing.

Kim 78 days

For me regarding MA: to not only be sober, but to work the Steps. For me personally: To be more patient and tolerant in all my endeavors.

Jim L. 6 yrs, 3 mos

More participation at MA events through out the fellowship.

Gary 20 months

For MA: Continue to stress the importance of working a program

with another person. And for myself: To finish my inventory!

Jason M. 211 days

That MA as a whole stick to the principle of what we're supposed to be about instead of getting into personalities.

Captain Kurt 3 yrs, 9 mos

To get out of the way and let MA go where our Higher Power directs it.

The Roving Reporter

Congratulations to our members celebrating their sober birthdays!



Lisa S.	Dec 7	2 yrs
Gary R.	Dec 10	5 yrs
John L.	Dec 15	11 yrs
Rita M.	Dec 23	32 yrs
Steve S.	Dec 24	1 yr!
Ellie	Jan 1	1 yr!
Don H.	Jan 1	5 yrs
Brad C.	Jan 1	4 yrs
Susan C.	Jan 2	12 yrs
Tina S.	Jan 7	6 yrs
Mike L.B.	Jan 10	9 yrs
Neil L.	Jan 10	4 yrs
Mimi	Jan 11	10 yrs

Dan L.	Jan 12	3 yrs
Loren N.	Jan 14	6 yrs
Dave K.	Jan 15	7 yrs
Judy S.	Jan 16	1 yr!
Melody W.	Jan 16	7 yrs
David S.	Jan 16	4 yrs
John M.	Jan 18	5 yrs
Dave G.	Jan 20	4
Barbara G.	Jan 20	4
Joellen F.	Jan 26	3 yrs
Mike Mc K.	Jan 29	8 yrs

Balance Me

Continued from page 1

normal in terms of the entire recovery process. I learned that I needed to face my fears and uncomfortable feelings so they wouldn't control my life.

So, what would be a healthy change? A realistic change? An attainable change? What I needed was balance in my life! Real health in one's life is all about balance. But for an obsessive, compulsive addict, balance is a tough one! It's like moving mountains!

Our daily lives are consistently and constantly demanding on us in various ways and situations. Shouldn't we be flexible and limber so that we can deal with a whole array of problems? Sure we should. Just as with my disease, I found that I am faced not with one issue but many. A flat tire, the laundry, walking the dog, paying the bills, going to meetings, writing letters, dating, helping newcomers and old friends, yard-work, school, work, play, etc., etc., etc. Letting just one thing go can

screw up the whole system! Yet, focusing too hard on any one issue can prevent me from staying aware of the whole big picture and dealing with everything else.

As a recovering addict, it is vital that I try to take a balanced approach when I consider my personal goals and desires. Balance can be the treatment that counteracts the wreckage of our lives as addicts. It makes it possible for us to recover and grow healthier. Yes, I still frequently obsess on some thing or some issue, but the feeling loses its intensity more quickly these days. I realize sooner what I need to do. Balance. It's very difficult for an addict who commonly fixates on people, places, and things. I can try too hard or I can back off all together. I can isolate or I can spend all my time trying to help others. Balance... I've found it to be vital to my strength and recovery nowadays.

These days, my life is full and

varied. I'm involved in lots of interests, activities, and organizations. And my participation is *real*; it's a far cry from the delusional fantasies I had when I was using, always thinking I would be a part of something BIG someday - but feeling alone and lost the whole time. Nowadays, when I throw in my little "two-cents," I realize I am making a huge and real contribution. I want to continue to give more, though, because I've learned it's one of the healthiest ways I can grow - as long as my motives are to truly promote the goodness of another, and nothing else. Getting sober was actually just one of the first things I needed to do with my life, not the only thing. With a balanced approach I can achieve the life I always wanted.

Good luck to all. I pray that we all have a well balanced, growth-enduring 1996. By the way, has everyone heard David Bowie's new album?!? It's SMOKIN'!! R

Hangin' Out, Not Hangin' Over !

by Lance D., District 6 Events Chair

Well, 1995 went out with a bang! First, let's talk about the Christmas Day event held by our District in North Hollywood. It was a "pot luck" (no pun intended!). We had a wonderful turnout and a ton o' food! There was more than we could eat: ham, turkey with stuffing, a whole slew of side dishes, and some killer desserts! Big thanks to all the people that helped get it organized, publicized, and eaten.

Now on to the "Year End Bash" on Dec 30th. It was a "Come Dressed in Your Best" event. It was also a pot luck. There was a raffle, and Karaoke. All the attendees give their thanks to Kurt and Lynn for allowing a really great

event to take place in their home. The turn out was great! The place was packed. There was a \$5 suggested donation, making it a much-needed fund-raiser for the District. Nearly everyone contributed but nobody was turned away. And we raised over \$200 for the District! Patrick, Mike C., and Sammie were the lucky raffle winners. Everyone had a blast. The fellowship was warm and the people looked hot (if I do say so myself). When I left at 12:30, there were still 20 people partying in the Karaoke Room. For all I know, they're still there.

We put together events like this so that MA members can learn to have

fun, free from marijuana. Having a great time clean and sober is something that newcomers learn and that members with some time practice enthusiastically. Life doesn't end when you get clean; it starts! So, when future events come along, please take an active part in your recovery and get involved. We can live the lives that we only dreamed about when we were practicing our disease. R

Thought For The Month

"Man's main task in life is to give birth to himself."

Erich Fromm

Gratitude Month and the Twelfth Step


Sometimes, when we're wondering what we can do for the marijuana addict who still suffers, we forget that one of the easiest ways we can help is to be generous when the basket is passed for the Seventh Tradition. At some meetings, it's said: "Well, we made the rent!" as though that were all that we needed to do to be self-supporting. "Fully self-supporting" means that the meeting pays its rent, buys its chips, either pays for or donates enough money to its district to pay for literature and newsletters (depending on which district or outlying area you live in, that printed matter costs somewhere between five and twenty five cents apiece), AND makes a big enough donation to the district to support the district's expenses and still leave it with enough funds to be able to donate to World Services.

What does the district pay for? It pays for its phone bill and voice mail service;

typesets, copies, and distributes its meeting schedules; pays to print all that literature mentioned above; writes letters to hospitals, recovery centers, and doctors so addicts can find us (every one of those letters needs a stamp); "fronts" for the chips so the meetings can buy chips as needed; creates starter packages for local meetings, including the first set of chips and literature for each; pays for any bank service charges; and still needs to keep a prudent reserve on hand.

What does World Services pay for? It pays for the 800 number phone bill, voice mail service, and the quarterly conference call between the trustees so they can get the business of MA done. World Services pays for the office manager who distributes and/or answers the mail, sends out starter kits and literature to new meetings out of district areas, and keeps in contact by mail, phone, and e-mail with those "orphan" meetings. It pays for travel (only) for its trustees to meet once

a year at the business Conference c MA. It pays for an accountant to do the tax returns. (We may be non-profit but we still have to file tax returns.) World Services pays for typesetting and distributing the International Directory and master copies of all the MA pamphlets and committee manuals. It pays for printing the "MA Service Manual" and now "Life With Hope."

So remember these things during January, Gratitude Month. You can do Twelfth Step work even if you haven't even finished your First Step! MA is at a difficult crossroad right now. We're expanding like crazy, and don't have the funds to do what's needed. We have inquiries not only from the US, but also from other countries. We need money for postage, paper, envelopes, starter kits, literature - you name it, we need it. Feeling grateful? Let's show it! 

Bulletin Board

Snow Camping!

District 5 is hosting a campout in the snow! (Well, there should be snow...) On Jan. 5-7 at Stone Creek Campground near Idyllwild. There will be hiking, stargazing, and a fireside meeting. Cost is \$7/day/car. Reservations are recommended. Call (800) 444-7275. Directions can be had by calling Rob M. at (818)505-1408. Look for the pirate flag!!

Internet

You can find MA's Web page at <http://www.primenet.com/~bundle>. We've had over 2000 visitors in our first month!!!

Having an Event?

Do you (your meeting/your district) have any announcements you'd like to make? Send to The Bulletin Board, c/o A NEW LEAF, P.O. Box 4314, North Hollywood, CA 91607

Office Manager Search

World Services is accepting applications for the paid position of World Service Office Manager. Interested parties should send resumes to the World Service Post Office Box (shown in the MA Worldwide box).

MA WORLDWIDE...

DISTRICT 1 - SAN FRANCISCO

P.O.Box 194252
San Francisco, CA 94119
(415) 522-7373

DISTRICT 2 - EAST BAY

P.O.Box 8354
Berkeley, CA 94707
(510) 287-8873

DISTRICT 3 - SOUTH BAY

P.O. Box 111341
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(408) 450-0796

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(206) 548-9034

DISTRICT 5 - ORANGE COUNTY

358 S. Main #215
Orange, CA 92668
(714) 999-9409

DISTRICT 6 - L.A.COUNTY (NORTH)

P.O.Box 2433
Van Nuys, CA 91404
(818) 759-9194

DISTRICT 7 - L.A.COUNTY (SOUTH)

P.O.Box 3012
Culver City, CA 90231
(213) 964-2370

DISTRICT 8 - NEW YORK

(212) 459-4423

DISTRICT 9 - SANTA CRUZ

P.O.Box 1481
Santa Cruz, CA 95061
(408) 427-4088

DISTRICT 10 - L.A.COUNTY (EAST)

P.O.Box 94400
Pasadena, CA 91109
(818) 583-9582

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

P.O. Box 2912, Van Nuys, CA 91404 (800)766-6779