

# A NEW LEAF

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## One Journal Entry At a Time

By Lynne E., District 8

After more than one year of pot-free living, I found that I wasn't very comfortable with myself. I wasn't getting stoned, but I wasn't getting better either. With my new support system of the MA fellowship, close friends and family, and a good therapist, I decided that I had to learn to be free of drug behavior, just as I learned to be free of drugs. My abstinence started when I quit smoking, but my sobriety started when I took a look at the steps and choose how I would "work it to make it work."

I created a journal called Recovery. Each day I noted the date, wrote out the step I was working on, and made my entry as to how taking that step was helping me become more sober. I decided to learn what "one step at a time" really meant.

These daily entries became shares with myself, recordings of how I was doing, documenting my daily growth.

Step One—admitting that I was powerless over marijuana and that my life had become unmanageable—was done long before I started my journal, so I began with Step Two. The following notes are samples of my entries, small parts of a larger whole. I share these words to illustrate the founding of

my step work. I hope they stand as I build my recovery around them.

Step Two—came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

June 11. I cannot do this all by myself, that is why therapy, that is why MA, that is why Higher Power.

*Thanks for all the wonders and the wackiness. It's really not such a bad place.*

I am in recovery. I am learning how to be a better me. I am learning that one day at a time does mean something, it means slow down, take a deep breath, think, act.

June 12. There is some sanity in my life, some loneliness and some sadness, some love, some pain, and some deep regrets. I ask my Higher Power to help me through these days and nights here on Earth. Every day's asking is a day that I can receive. I do believe, I believe I do.

June 13. God, help me live this moment here and now. I know now, and I remember the past,

but I cannot know the future. I have the power to steer things in a right direction, with the thoughtfulness of God when I'm in a tight space. I can  
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## A New Experience

by Phil W., District 1

At the 1997 MAWS World Service Conference, the delegates voted to "farm out" the 800 number phone line.

District 1 was assigned the July/August period. In those nine weeks, nine people volunteered to take the phone messages and to respond to requests needing direct contact. Each volunteer took the name, address, and other data. Some of it was pretty garbled, but they did the best they could. They passed the

information along to me, and I did the mailings. It was easier to handle the mailings from one spot than to pass that around. Besides, I am a control freak, and this lets me do my thing without standing on top of others. During this period 150 informational packets were sent and numerous phone calls were responded to.

New members were encouraged to volunteer. These are people who  
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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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Published by

**A NEW LEAF Editorial Board****Rob M.**, chairman**Loren N.**, treasurer**Ilene M.**, secretary

Send all articles, inquiries, and  
 correspondence to:

**A NEW LEAF**

P.O. Box 4314

North Hollywood, CA 91617

Email #1: ANewLeaf98@aol.com

Email #2: ANuLeaf@aol.com

Editorial Phone No.

**(818) 353-5537**

Fax No.

**(818) 990-2980**

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# Roving Reporter

by **Mary M., District 4**

## Q: What do you like and dislike about meetings?

*Wes E. (11 months)*

I like the topics, I like the similarities, I like learning new people's stories. I like to hear people that have never been to an MA meeting. I dislike that there aren't more of these meetings.

*Ryan B. (2 years, 9 months)*

I really enjoy the sense of peace and serenity I get while at MA meetings. I feel relaxed and at ease with myself. At the same time, I always hear something new that carries weight and meaning. There are not many things to dislike at MA meetings. Sometimes I wish meetings could keep going and going and not end after an hour and a half. Also I don't really enjoy it when speakers end on a negative note. It does help me realize where I am, however, and where I'd rather not be.

*Baiba L. (2 years, 2 months)*

I like hearing my story told through other's voices. There isn't anything I don't like.

*Steve W. (2 months)*

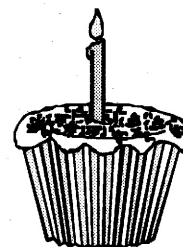
This is only my second meeting, but so far I like it a lot! Everyone is very friendly, and I felt right at home instantly. The only things I wish are that there were more meetings around here and that I could smoke cigarettes. (But hey, I can make it through an hour and a half.) Also, I wish there was an MA book available for me to purchase. [Editors' Note: By now, Steve W. probably knows about Life With Hope, the Marijuana Anonymous book with our 12 Steps and 12 Traditions.]

*Bill (8 years, 11 months)*

Like: Meeting new folks and old friends. Dislike: Pointless "drug-a-logues" during meetings, and seeing good people relapse.

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## Congratulations to our members celebrating their sober birthdays!

**District 1**

Jake A.	Nov 8	2 yrs
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**District 3**

Joe H.	Nov 13	1 yr!
Tami S.	Nov 15	1 yr!
Stephanie P.	Nov 17	1 yr!
Robert S.	Dec 12	1 yr!

**District 4**

Marc Mc.	Dec 12	13 yrs
Larry	Dec 28	4 yrs

**District 5**

Lisa S.	Dec 7	4 yrs
Gary R.	Dec 10	7 yrs
Larry	Dec 13	1 yr!
Mary K.	Dec 17	3 yrs

**District 6**

Mike H.	Dec 7	5 yrs
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**District 7**

Ben K.	Nov 21	8 yrs
Jeff M.	Dec 6	1 yr!
Terry R.	Dec 11	1 yr!

**District 8**

Eddie A.	Nov 25	5 yrs
Dave T.	Dec 9	3 yrs

**District 10**

David P.	Dec 7	6 yrs
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**District 11**

Nancy T.	Nov 21	1 yr!
Stephen P.	Nov 26	2 yrs
Sid L.	Nov 30	10 yrs

# One Journal Entry At a Time

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make the rage go away. Breath in good, breath out anger.

June 16. ...we worked hard at turning on my rage. I remember God and peace and calm. I said what was in my heart, and I knew that was all I could say—the truth. We accept or reject what we will. I have authority over my feelings and reactions. I can accept or reject what I will.

June 20. This is what this work is about; every day a thought, every day a good word, every day an excellent adventure!

June 22. I've thanked God lots today, but that doesn't mean that the day is over or that the thank-you's are all used up. Thanks again and again. I call on the Spirit, and that Spirit calls on me. I like that arrangement. Count me into life.

June 23. Take a risk to get to the truth. God is there to guide me along. Believe it, live it.

June 25. I believe that my Higher Power shows up to remind me that it's worth it. Even with the hard times and the harsh ugly reality of life, I know that it's really not that bad.

July 1. I do believe that a Power greater than me can restore me to a place that isn't too reactive, not too crazy—a place that's honest and kind. I do believe that I have a future, that I have good love around me, that I can grow up and out of my old habits.

July 2. While I get more and more restored to sanity, I get more and more in touch with my emotions and the world around me. It's a pretty good place.

July 6. A year ago, I would never have believed so strongly in this Power, but every day it becomes clearer to me that accepting this Power makes my life a little easier

every day. I accept this as the truth, and things go well.

Step Three—made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understand God.

July 7. I am as whole as I can be right now, and my God is with me. Thanks for all the wonders and the wackiness; it's really not such a bad place. After all, it's really just about the way you view it. I choose a sober vision today, which makes me feel not only sober, but also warm and loved. Thanks again and again.

So that's how I do it. Thanks for listening. I hope these excerpts from my step work will be helpful to someone else, as others' words have inspired me. The journal continues as I continue my sobriety, one entry at a time. ☉

## Roving Reporter

*Continued from page 2*

**Diane B. (9 months)**

The people are friendly and open. They tell my story again and again. I like seeing and hearing from new people—it helps me stay clean and sober and to work on myself, my character defects, to know myself better and my higher power.

**Courtney M. (2 years, 8 months)**

I love MA meetings because they saved my life. I'm very grateful for MA. Thanks!

**Tahnya B. (2 years, 7 months)**

I am very glad that there is an organization such as MA, because it has helped me a great deal and the people I've met at the meeting have been great! Sometimes I have trouble with certain women who bring their children to the meetings and don't parent them well. I am a

mother, but I'm a firm believer that if you bring your children, you are completely responsible for them.

**Carsten P. (10 months)**

I like the specific subject; dealing with marijuana mainly. I like that the meetings are less crowded than other 12 Step meetings. I dislike seeing so many people ordered to attend meetings by the courts, socializing and disrupting the order in meetings. I dislike loud children coming and disrupting the atmosphere at meetings.

**Dave M. (5 months)**

I like the group of people that come to this type of meeting. The people that go to an AA type of meeting I find very boring. But people here are lively and energetic. The bad thing is it's only an hour and a half.

**Lee S. (10 months)**

I can share my improvement with the group and get positive support. Be truthful and emotional. Area for improvement—for some meetings to add a column to their sign-in sheet titled "want to share?" The secretary makes sure that those who say yes get to share.

**David (6 months)**

I like the potheads being there, getting honest about their experiences. I like the fellowship and the sense of humor. I love the support. I dislike the fluorescent lights.

**Sheri G. (5 months)**

So far I like everything about MA, I'm even in a step study.

**Ben H. (1 month)**

Well it's my first one, but so far I really like it. Very sarcastic group. My kind of people, funny too. I'll be back.

*Editors' Note: The sobriety count in any Roving Reporter reflects when the question was asked, not when it is printed in A New Leaf. ☉*

## A New Experience

Continued from page 1

want to get involved but are afraid to because of long commitments. They did just great, and came through with flying colors.

While most of the messages were serious calls for help, others were funny—at least at first—and then they became a bore. Like the obviously stoned guy who wanted to know what we did with all the marijuana that we collected from the newcomers and the uncounted number of callers who wanted to know if they could score some dope at a meeting. These calls were the type that I might have made at one time.

The lesson learned is that we are indeed very fortunate to live in a place where MA exists. There are many people out there that are looking for help and its just not immediately available to them.

If what we have seen during our brief period of service is any indication of what is to come, then there should be new meetings starting up all over the country. I know—don't count your chickens before they hatch, but that's how I feel.

What am I trying to say? This new experience that I previously looked at with jaded eyes has turned into a great learning adventure. For the newcomer, this is a good way to get some service experience under your belt, and for us older members it's a trip back to the beginning. So if you want to help in a very large way, jump on the wagon and share the wealth. ☀

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## Don't quit. Surrender.

## Quote of the Month

*Until we admitted our powerlessness, denial kept us from realizing how unmanageable our lives had become.... We had tried everything over the years to change reality, to no avail. In MA we at last found the courage to face the truth. We stopped practicing denial and became willing to face our disease. Having come to this moment of clarity, we could not afford any reservations about being powerless over our disease.*

—Life With Hope, Step One [page 3]

## MA WORLDWIDE...

**SAN FRANCISCO**  
(District 1)  
P.O. Box 460024  
San Francisco, CA 94146  
(415) 522-7373

**EAST BAY (District 2)**  
P.O. Box 8354  
Berkeley, CA 94707  
(510) 287-8873

**SOUTH BAY (District 3)**  
P.O. Box 111341  
Campbell, CA 95011  
(408) 450-0796

**SEATTLE (District 4)**  
P.O. Box 1509  
539 Queen Anne Ave. N  
Seattle, WA 98109  
(206) 548-9034

**SANTA CRUZ (District 9)**  
P.O. Box 3196  
Santa Cruz, CA 95063  
(408) 427-4088

**L.A. COUNTY, NORTH**  
(District 6)  
P.O. Box 2433  
Van Nuys, CA 91404  
(818) 759-9194

**L.A. COUNTY, SOUTH**  
(District 7)  
P.O. Box 3012  
Culver City, CA 90231  
(213) 964-2370

**L.A. COUNTY, EAST**  
(District 10)  
P.O. Box 94400  
Pasadena, CA 91109  
(909) 787-6020  
(626) 583-9582

**ORANGE COUNTY**  
(District 5)  
358 S. Main #215  
Orange, CA 92668  
(714) 999-9409

**NEW YORK (District 8)**  
P.O. Box 507  
New York, NY 10276  
(212) 459-4423

**PORTLAND, OREGON**  
(District 11)  
P.O. Box 14125  
Portland, OR 97293  
(503) 221-7007

**HUMBOLDT, CA AREA**  
(707) 443-5928

**EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA**  
**CHAPTER**  
P.O. Box 194  
Sadsburyville, PA 19369  
(610) 622-9243

**NEW ZEALAND**  
MA Service Centre  
P.O. Box 74-386  
Newmarket  
Auckland 3, New Zealand  
(09) 846-6822

## WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

P.O. Box 2912, Van Nuys, CA 91404 • (800) 766-6779  
Marijuana Anonymous World Wide Web  
<http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org>  
email: [info@marijuana-anonymous.org](mailto:info@marijuana-anonymous.org)