



January 1999

Volume 9 - No. 1

# A NEW LEAF

A Publication of Marijuana Anonymous

\$12.00 -Year Subscription

## Meditation is Simple

By Susan B. District 11

Just like everything else in recovery- our program is not easy but it is simple- so is meditation. I have been meditating or attempting to meditate since before I got into recovery, and this article is simply my experience, strength, and hope. I believe meditation is about mindfulness, so that anytime I am fully in the present moment, doing whatever I'm doing with complete concentration, I am practicing a form of meditation. It is easiest for me to be completely mindful when I'm doing something I love, like drawing or painting or sculpting. I lose all sense of time. I don't regret the past or worry about the future. I am completely in the

moment. Of course, I can do this while I'm washing dishes, taking a walk, or talking on the phone with someone. Anytime I'm not in the past or the future, I'm in the present.

When I came into recovery, I had no idea how to live in the present moment. Working the 4th-9th steps helped me let go of my regrets about the past. The remaining steps help me let go of my fears about the future. Working the steps and "improving my conscious contact with my higher power" (step 11) has helped me learn to trust. I have heard it said that God is only in the present moment. Practicing the 11th

step through prayer and meditation helps me have a relationship with a higher power that I trust wants me to be happy, joyous, and free, and will help be in this endeavor if I keep the channel between us open. Meditation helps me stay conscious of my higher power.

I do try to do a formal meditation practice daily. I have an altar with crystals and a bowl of water and a candle. I light the candle and sit on my meditation bench and begin by saying some prayers, or by listing things I'm grateful for. Then I attempt to pay attention to my breath, or focus on a slogan like: "Let go and let God." Anytime I notice my mind (**con't on p2**)

## Life is a Miracle

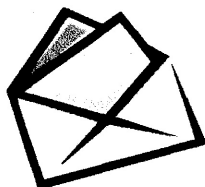
By Steve G. District 6

If you are in our program, you know how it was and you know what happened; so I want to share my gratitude and let you know how it is today. My higher power has provided me with willingness, open-mindedness, and

honesty in my life when I allow for it to be comfortable in my soul. As February 8th will mark my seven year birthday of consecutive days in recovery without marijuana, alcohol, or any other mind-altering sub-

stances (yes, the consecutive days are important) my list of gifts is amazing.

Firstly, you have provided me with you. You are all in my life today. Many of you held me in the early days when (**continued on page 2**)

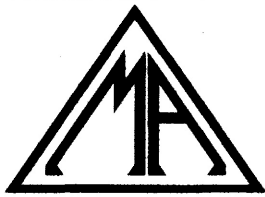


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A NEW LEAF

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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## Meditation is Simple (cont'd from page 1)

thinking about something, I look at the candle, or get back to my breath, or repeat the slogan. When I first began this, I used to get mad at myself for thinking- I may as well get mad at myself for breathing! I am human and I think a lot. Practice has taught me that being gentle with myself and reminding myself, oh yes I'm thinking again, that's what I do, but right now I want to focus on my breath, is more helpful than beating myself up for thinking.

Meditation is very simple. It's not easy because our mind will tell us that we can't do it, or we're not doing it right. But we learn in recovery that making the effort, progress not perfection, is all that's asked of us. I have found that taking time to sit and try to meditate improves my serenity immensely. And learning to be gentle with myself in meditation has carried over into other areas of my life, as well as with other people.

## Life is a Miracle (continued)

I was scared and would cry. Others comforted me when I became bitter and could no longer cry. Yet still later you came to me and mentored me with the challenge of service, giving, and consistency. Those were gods' ticket to the freedom of my emotions and the ability to cry with joy and celebration.

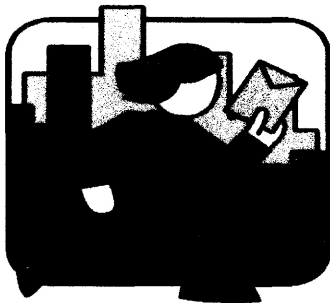
I have let god give me dear friends, a circle of men who are my brothers. My wife and best friend (she was working at an adolescent group home that we were doing a panel at and she walked through the room). We have been blessed with an amazing child who gets to know a healthy father in recovery. Fear of financial insecurity has been lifted (I know that is a big one for some of us). I have regained the trust and respect of my family and non-addict friends. God has gifted me with three sponsors in this time, all have helped the way god wanted me to receive them.

Bottom line is that life is a miracle as we approach this holiday season. Grasp for and champion the challenges of sober recovery in MA. When I have a positive attitude and do at least one thing for recovery everyday, MA has not let me down yet. If you are new to this scene, don't accept marijuana or alcohol into your body and you will stay clean and sober. Pizza, sex, the Dodgers, and even Pink Floyd are better when experienced sober. Ask for help and let us reach out and love you.

## Join the \$5/Month

District 11 is working diligently to organize a spectacular 1999 MAWS Conference. We have created the \$5/Month Club to raise funds for all expenses, with hopes of a surplus to create seed money for future conferences. Your membership in the \$5/Month Club, with your check payable to: Marijuana Anonymous, should be mailed to the 1999 Conference Treasurer, Susan B., 4012 S.E. Nehalem, Portland, OR 97202.

\*You can send more than \$5, and, as always, your donations are tax deductible\*



## MA Worldwide...

San Francisco (District 1) P.O. Box 460024 San Francisco, CA 94146 (415) 522-7373	L.A. County, North (District 6) P.O. Box 2433 Van Nuys, CA 91404 (818) 759-9194	Portland, Oregon (District 11) P.O. Box 14125 Portland, OR 97293 (503) 221-7007
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<http://www.marijuana-anonymous.org>

e-mail: [info@marijuana-anonymous.org](mailto:info@marijuana-anonymous.org)

## \*\*\*\*\* ★ Congratulations to Our Members ★ ★ Celebrating Their Sober Birthdays! ★ \*\*\*\*\*

### District 4

Larry W. 12/28/93 5 years

### District 5

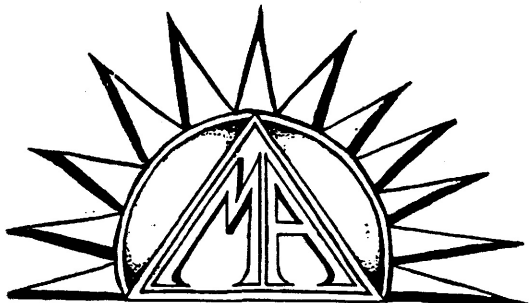
Sandy P. 1/3/94 5 years  
Susan "tracker" 1/15/96 3 years  
Mike LB 1/10/87 12 years  
Matt "cigar" 1/13/88 11 years  
Melody W. 1/16/89 10 years  
Dave G. 1/20/92 7 years  
Barbara G. 1/20/92 7 years

### District 6

Jacqie P. 1/2/94 5 years



Tim P.	1/2/94	5 years
Tina	1/7/90	9 years
Loren N.	1/14/90	9 years
Dave K.	1/15/89	10 years
Judy S.	1/16/95	4 years
Robin H.	1/16/95	4 years
Jo Ellen	1/26/93	6 years
June L.	1/29/95	4 years
<u>District 11</u>		
Debbie A.	1/2/97	2 years
Don M.	1/5/93	6 years
Jason S.	1/14/98	1 year!



**The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Marijuana Anonymous Convention  
"Stepping Into The Light"  
January 15-16-17, 1999  
Burbank, California**

**Tentative Agenda**

(Specific starting times subject to change)

**Friday January 15**

Registration opens-4pm  
Dinner on your own  
Opening meeting-7pm  
Meet and Greet Event-9pm  
Late Night meeting-11pm

**Saturday January 16**

Early meeting-7am  
Breakfast-8:30am  
Workshops and Meetings  
Banquet Dinner-6pm  
Speaker meeting-7:30pm  
Surprise entertainment-8:30pm  
Dance-10pm  
Late Night meeting-11pm

**Sunday January 17**

Early meeting-7am  
Breakfast-8:30am  
Workshops and Meetings  
Closing Ceremonies-11:30am  
Raffle

**Hotel Registration**

(Hotel is not included in registration costs-you must book your room separately)

**Burbank Airport Hilton 2500 Hollywood Way, Burbank, California (800) HILTONS** (Hotel is across the street from Burbank Airport)

Room Rates: \$89.00 per night plus tax-1 to 2 people per room. Add \$10.00 per night for each additional person up to 4 people per room.  
(\$109 per night plus tax for 4 people in a room)

Reservations must be made by December 15, 1998 to guarantee this rate.

*You must say that you are with the MA Convention to receive this rate.*

(You may stay Sunday night at the Convention rate if you wish!)

+++++  
**Convention Registration Order Form**

**Full Packages**

	Cost	# of tickets	Total
Before December 15-All events and food	\$70	_____	\$ _____
After December 15-All events and food	\$80	_____	\$ _____
At the Door-All events and food	\$90	_____	\$ _____

**Individual Events**

	Cost	# of tickets	Total
Friday-Opening meeting and Meet & Greet Event	FREE	_____	
Saturday-Workshops, Banquet, Speaker Meeting, Entertainment and Dance	\$50	_____	\$ _____
Saturday-Workshops, Speaker Meeting, Entertainment and Dance (NO FOOD)	\$15	_____	\$ _____
Saturday-Speaker Meeting, Entertainment and Dance Only (NO WORKSHOPS OR FOOD)	\$10	_____	\$ _____
Sunday-Workshops and Closing Ceremonies (NO FOOD)	FREE	_____	

Send order form and check for total amount payable to:

Total Registration Cost \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**MA Convention Fund**

P.O. Box 2912

Van Nuys, Ca 91404

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E mail address (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

(Your anonymity will be protected on all materials)

Banquet Dinner Choice: Chicken (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian Lasagne (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_

Will you need shuttle service from Burbank Airport? \_\_\_\_\_