



# A NEW LEAF

a literary publication of Marijuana Anonymous

**Vol. 37, No. 1 - January 2025**

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## Letter from A New Leaf Publications

### ***Welcome to the January 2025 Issue of A New Leaf!***

After many years of development, *Living Every Day with Hope* is now available as a paperback and eBook! At the Conference session this past weekend, the final version was approved for publication. You can purchase it now via Amazon for Kindle, and via other retailers in the near future.

The ANLP Department is in the process of redeveloping our online shop and how we make MA literature available affordably worldwide. We are also working with third-party printers who are based internationally and can print locally for members outside of the United States.

*Living Every Day with Hope* will continue to be available for free on the [MA website](#) and through the [Daily Dose](#) email.

This book has involved the efforts of countless MA members who have worked tirelessly over the years to bring this new piece of literature to fruition. Members have submitted reflections, reviewed submissions, discussed the book with their meetings and districts, met and voted to approve the book, and finalized the manuscript for publication. We dedicate this month's issue to each and every one of you who contributed to achieving this goal.

Find the Book Here: [ANLP12.org/books](http://ANLP12.org/books)

Yours in Service,  
ANLP Department

*Note that neither MA nor A New Leaf Publications neither endorses nor promotes any outside enterprise, including any of the above-listed vendors listed, and has no opinion on the views of any such outside organization or enterprise (MA Traditions 6 & 10).*



## My Marijuana Story

## *Written by Haley B.*

I didn't know what marijuana was until I was in high school. When I learned about it, I was completely against it for many reasons. For one, it was illegal and I was as straight-laced as a 14-year-old could possibly be. Two, it sounded terrifying to lose control of yourself with a drug. Third, I was convinced that it had the potential to become addictive, despite my classmates' claims that it was impossible. Fast forward to college, when I tried it for the first time. The first time made me feel nothing but paranoia, guilt, and shame. I ended up crying for hours. The next time I tried it, I felt all of the good things. Even still, I didn't get the hype. I didn't smoke marijuana again for years.

When the pandemic started in 2020, my mental health suffered. I was working as a nurse and it was terrifying, stressful, and depressing. My girlfriend (now wife) and I decided to take a trip to Washington DC to buy marijuana to help us decompress, because it wasn't legal for recreational use in Virginia at the time. The entire experience was thrilling for me. I had this person that I was madly in love with and she wanted to show me how "gifting" marijuana worked in DC. It was the exact kind of adventure that I wanted to have with her. We bought some vapes, took a few hits, and headed to the Metro. On the long escalator ride down, it hit me hard. At first, I was paranoid, thinking that I was going to fall down the escalator stairs. Then, the magic took over. I spent the Metro ride trying to act "normal," but I had a serious case of the giggles. We spent the rest of the weekend in the hotel room, getting high and eating. That was the first of many trips to DC with the primary purpose being to buy and smoke weed.

The addiction snuck up on me. I really loved how I felt when I smoked. I felt like it made everything lighter, more euphoric. My anxiety and depression were relieved. When I was high, I was the person that I always wanted to be – the young and carefree person that I had never been able to get in touch with. I really loved who I was when I was high. I started using it more and more on my days off from work. With each visit to DC, we'd buy larger amounts of marijuana to take home with us. It quickly became something that I tried to ration between trips.

After a while, I couldn't ration it anymore. I'd yearn for more trips to DC. I'd run out soon after a trip and I became obsessed with finding more. So, that's exactly what I did. I found "dispensaries" close to home that sold synthetic marijuana. That shit was potent and mind-blowing. At that point, my use started to become out of control. Soon, I was getting high and staying high all day. I started to become incredibly ashamed and embarrassed by what I was doing. I knew I shouldn't be using so much, but I thought I had been faced with too much pain, so I deserved to feel good. I often bounced back and forth between being the victim that deserved to be high, and being ashamed and concerned about my behavior. I was definitely embarrassed. I hid and lied about my use. I lost sight of who I was, what my values were.

Somewhere soon after my wife's first suicide attempt, the marijuana started to turn on me in new ways. I started using even larger amounts of marijuana than ever before to numb the incredible amount of pain and distress that came along with my wife's mental illness. I became an angry, resentful, and irritable person. I started getting physically sick from the amount of marijuana I was consuming. That didn't stop me, though. I continued on this way for another year and a half while trying to care for both my wife and our toddler son, all while neglecting myself.

During my last few months of use, all of the negative parts of smoking became incredibly amplified. It became clear how seriously addicted and dependent I had become on marijuana. I wanted to change, but I didn't know how. Each trip to the dispensary was "the last time." I tried to keep myself from going back by sucking on vapes that still had the tiniest amount of marijuana left in them. Each time, I ended up right back in line at the dispensary to buy more. I knew I needed help. I began working with my therapist to try to cut back on my use, but it still felt impossible. It wasn't long until I started lying to my therapist about the progress I was making to cut back on my use. Who had I become?

My wife and I planned a trip to Poland to visit her friends and family. With marijuana being illegal there, I knew that I needed to wean myself off before our trip. I tried to kick my motivation into high gear. Again, I was trying and trying to give marijuana up once and for all, but I just couldn't do it. I was so scared. I ended up cutting back on my use, but did not manage to quit prior to our trip. I went through detox for the entire two weeks that I was away. It turned a vacation that should have been wonderful into a total nightmare. I knew that I never wanted to go through the physical and emotional pain of quitting again. However, I was headed back to the US a week earlier than my wife and son, and I was confident that without the accountability from my wife, I would pick up as soon as I got back home. I knew I needed to find support in order to keep me sober.

When the plane touched down on US soil, I did the only thing that I could think to do. I did a Google search to try to find support from people that were experiencing the same struggle with marijuana that I had. That's when I found Marijuana Anonymous. Miraculously, there was a newcomer MA session later that day, just a few hours after I discovered MA even existed. I knew this had to be divine intervention. I attended the newcomer session and several meetings later that evening. It quickly became clear that I found the place and the people that I needed in order to help keep me going on my sobriety journey. I was home.

## ***A New Leaf's Purpose***

*A New Leaf* celebrates MA member creativity and seeks to publish the message of hope in recovery. With your many wonderful and creative submissions, ***A New Leaf continues to unify us in our shared experience as marijuana addicts.***

*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. MA is not affiliated with— and does not endorse or accept contributions from—any outside enterprise.*

### **ANLP Department**

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*Secretary:* Brian L.

*Content Editor:* Tiffany A.

*Design Editor:* Zach A.

*Creative Designer:* Jules M.\*

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# POETRY

## A Year's Journey

*Written by John C.*

Despondent, angry  
Hope waning  
"No one will care," I lie to myself

I reach out, mind already made up  
"Don't do it! I love you bro,"  
Doesn't matter; I don't feel it for myself

I partake, hoping to forget  
Only to remember  
How awful the fog can truly be

After a short time, I come back  
A little longer, I come to  
Yet more time, I come to believe

I learn to surrender  
I learn to trust  
I learn to believe

Believe in Creator  
Believe in myself  
Believe that the process works

A year passes  
A rollercoaster  
Of ups, downs, and all-arounds

And yet, I still surrender  
I still trust  
I still believe

This way of life works  
(As they say, if you work it)  
So I work it

Because I know  
Without a shadow of a doubt  
That I AM worth it

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**Good Morning**

## ***Written by Michael M.***

Good Morning!

I don't know what the day will bring...

I have no idea how today will end up...

I don't know about tomorrow either.

I'm not even sure that I am getting the past correct.

But I know that as long as I don't use, don't pick up -

That I'm so much better off than I used to be.

I know that if I'm not high AF all the time,

I have a really good shot at creating the life that I want.

I know that my personal suffering decreases; and

I feel better when I'm not constantly chasing a buzz.

I don't know what the future holds,

But I know that because I'm sober,

I feel more hopeful about mine.

I know that it's important to be present -

And that it was almost impossible for me to do that during active addiction.

I know that not using has made my days (my life) manageable.

I know that working a program has provided me with  
new tools and relationships previously unavailable to me.

So while the outside world may be uncertain,

I'm more grounded than ever because of recovery.

Because I feel better.

Because I have the tools.

And the clarity.

And the fellowship.

And the faith.

And the hope.

As long as I don't pick up.

Enjoy today :)

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## **Monthly Writing Workshops**

For more information about these workshops visit: [anewleafpublications.org/workshop/](http://anewleafpublications.org/workshop/)

*Please note - the start time for the workshop has moved back one hour*



Let us cherish, preserve,  
and carry the message  
and the gift of  
experience, strength, and hope  
to those marijuana addicts  
who are still suffering

## A NEW LEAF PUBLICATIONS CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOPS

1ST SATURDAY  
EACH MONTH

10 - 11:15 AM PACIFIC  
1 - 2:15 PM EASTERN  
5 - 6:15 PM UTC

TO JOIN US, EMAIL: [WRITE@ANLP12.ORG](mailto:WRITE@ANLP12.ORG)

# SHARE

Your contributions to MA literature, and sharing of experience, strength, and hope through submissions to A New Leaf and all other MA publications, serve as an inspiration.

*A New Leaf* celebrates creativity and invites members to share recovery-focused stories, poems, song lyrics, prayers, meditations, break up letters to "Mary Jane," inspirational quotes heard in a meeting, artwork, comics, illustrations, photos, and crosswords or puzzles. We seek to publish the message of hope in your journey.

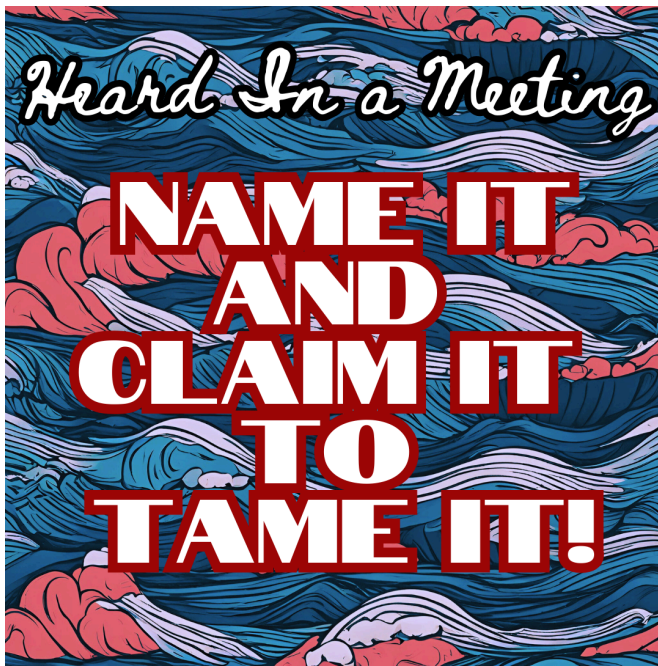
For a list of suggested prompts visit: [MA12.org/Prompts](https://MA12.org/Prompts)

Submit Your  
Content

Writing  
Prompts

**Want to share *A New Leaf* with others?**

Provide this link to sign-up: [MA12.org/New-Leaf](https://MA12.org/New-Leaf)



# INSPIRE

*Sharing program slogans, quotes, and words of wisdom heard in a meeting!*

We honor "what you see here, let it stay here," and anything included in this section of A New Leaf will always be shared anonymously.

Share your Favorite Sayings

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## Step, Tradition, Question, and Concept for the Month

### Step One

We admitted we were powerless over marijuana, that our lives had become unmanageable

In working the First Step, we were practicing the principle of Honesty.

### Tradition One

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon MA unity.

### Question One

Has using marijuana stopped being fun?

### Concept One

The Marijuana Anonymous Service Structure was created to give the groups the freedom to carry out our society's primary purpose of carrying the message to marijuana addicts.

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## Connected to the Consciousness

*Written by Anonymous*

Online meetings have worked very well for me. I live in a rural area with no in person meetings. They are a great way to learn about recovery from a vast variety of people.

My rock bottom was triggered by financial stress. The work in my area is seasonal and so I would go into the red regularly during the slow season. One year, I lost my job at the beginning of the season testing positive for THC. I had stopped using for over a month, anticipating the drug test, then I complacently used cannabis oil on my skin, not thinking that it would affect my test. It did, and I ended up in major debt that year. I was lucky that a

relative was able to bail me out. I felt like such a loser having to accept help. It wasn't even a good paying job and I really hated doing it, just like every other job I took. I couldn't figure out why I wasn't more successful.

During the pandemic, I would over drink at home, throw up while hoping I would die because I hated my life. This cycle repeated many times before I realized I needed to quit or I would die, probably by my own hand. I could not put my family through that pain. I was well acquainted with that type of pain since my father's passing when I was six years old.

I looked for help online and found Al-Anon. After a short time, it was clear that I needed to focus on getting myself sober. I found AA and jumped into the program with both feet. It took me about four months to put down the substances. I followed all the suggestions and was honest about using weed. My sponsor was adamant that I needed to quit that too which made me angry and quite irritable. That was my precious crutch I had relied on for the past twenty years for emotional pain relief. When I finally got thirty days free of alcohol, I was given a chip that had MA on it. Of course, I had to see what that was and found Marijuana Anonymous. I found my people!

Now, life is much more manageable. It is so much easier to stay sober than it is to get sober. Since getting sober, I have been able to get current with years of back taxes. I was able to take a course on cybersecurity. I was able to support my parent through their dementia and stroke as well as manage their health and finance administrations when they became unable to do it for themselves.

I have many coping strategies to deal with a mind that is prone to addiction. The main one is staying connected to the sober collective consciousness. Addiction is an insidious disease and so I remain vigilant against those thoughts that try to creep into my psyche. Some days, it feels like there is a war going on within, on one side addiction is fighting to get back, the other is fighting to stay sober.

I still face memory challenges and other cognitive dysfunctions that I am working to heal from due to the many years of using, on top of the adverse childhood effects I have to deal with. I'm still looking for a good job, meaning one that will cover all expenses which includes retirement, etc. Luckily, I still have a very supportive partner and own my tiny house and tiny plot of land.

Maintaining my sobriety is a daily task utilizing steps 10, 11 & 12. I have to make sure I don't get too hungry, angry, lonely or tired, or as they say in the program: H.A.L.T. Sometimes, I need more meetings to maintain sobriety. I can tell I need more meetings if I am thinking about picking up which still happens, especially when life gets stressful. I have practiced reaching out to others enough that it is much easier. It gives both myself and the person I am calling the opportunity to get out of our mental isolation and for a stronger connection.

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**Break up Letter with Marijuana**  
*Written by Claudia P.*



Dear Marijuana,

This letter is hard for me to write, but I need to say goodbye. You've been a big part of my life for the last ten years, but it's time for us to part ways. Our relationship has been tough and sometimes hurtful, but not all bad. You were there for me during some really hard times, offering comfort when I needed it most. Yet, you also caused me a lot of harm.

I remember when we first met; I was too young to understand why everyone liked you so much. It didn't take long for me to get it, though. It started like something I would do with friends to have fun, but it ended with me feeling destroyed and on my knees. You made me laugh and forget my troubles, and I'll keep those happy memories. But then, you became my way to escape reality and hide from my problems and duties. I used you to block out the pain, which stopped me from using that pain to grow and move on from those tough times. I chose to ignore my problems, and that worked for a while, but then I got stuck.

At first, I was the one choosing when I wanted you and I had power over you, I wasn't powerless back then, or at least I thought. Then, you started to control when I needed you, and it got to the point where I couldn't go more than an hour without you. You cut me off from everyone, even from myself. You made me paranoid, made me hate life, and made yourself all I could think about all the time. You've been the worst and most toxic relationship I've ever had.

Initially, the thought of living without you terrified me. I was sure I couldn't do it and believed I was too weak to face life's challenges without you holding my hand. This fear made me think you were something I had to accept as a permanent part of my life. But hitting rock bottom opened my eyes. The day I missed my exam, despite all the preparation and willingness to do it, because I couldn't leave my house and be away from you for that long, I realized how much control you had over my life. That moment of clarity showed me that I can no longer have you in my life and let you hold me back.

Your help was almost always fake, you increased my anxiety, my depression, and my hate for myself. You made me believe I needed you to cope, but in truth, you were just deepening the very problems I thought you were helping me escape. Every bit of relief you gave me was just a short break in a cycle of needing you more and more, which actually made my problems worse instead of helping me solve them.

Despite everything, I am thankful for the lessons learned. There were times you helped me, but I don't need you now. I'm doing better, finding new ways to handle pain and move forward when my thoughts overwhelm me. It's time for me to move on. Although you led me to some dark places, you also brought me to MA and NA, where I discovered a new way of living, met new friends to walk this path with, and connected with my Higher Power. Even if you broke me down, I thank you. You showed me I'm not alone and that there's a different way to live.

Goodbye, Marijuana. I'm finally ready to close this chapter and start anew, relying on my own resilience and the support of my Higher Power and those who truly care for me.

**Celebrating 314 Years of Sobriety!**

District 2 - San Francisco and East Bay, CA

John L. 12/15/1984 40 years  
Louise 12/3/1998 26 years

District 3 - San Francisco South Bay, CA

**Bens 12/27/2023 1 Year!**

District 4 - Western Washington State

Jamie P. 1/07/2015 10 years

District 5 - Orange County, CA

Amanda 12/17/2014 10 years

Bill G. 12/7/1993 31 years

Colin 12/3/2011 13 years

Gary R. 12/10/1990 34 years

**Holli R. 12/20/2023 1 year!**

**Lauren G. 12/30/2023 1 year!**

Lisa S. 12/7/1993 31 years

Mike McK. 12/19/2001 23 years

Natalie O. 12/23/2021 3 years

**Rebecca W. 12/29/2023 1 year!**

Russell T. 12/7/2019 5 years

District 7 - S. Los Angeles County, CA

Marcy E. 1/5/2013 12 years

District 8 - New York Metro

John L. 12/12/2018 6 years

Tiffany A. 12/12/2018 6 years

District 11 - Oregon and SW Washington

Bethany D. 12/19/2016 8 years

District 20 - San Diego, CA

Elizabeth M. 12/03/2022 2 years

Meredith W. 12/31/2023 1 year!

District 21 - Colorado

Mandy S. 12/04/2020 4 years

District 22 - New England States

Skylar B. 12/12/2012 12 years

District 24 - Alberta and British Columbia, Canada

Dan V. 11/26/2022 2 years

District 27 - Independent Meetings

Liz M. 12/30/2022 2 years

District 28 - MA Phone Meetings

Joe M. 12/17/2015 9 years

Also

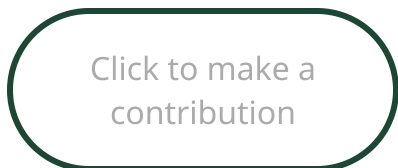
Dave C. 1/10/2005 20 years

*Vermont*

## Share your Sobriety Anniversary in A New Leaf!

We want to celebrate your year(s) of recovery! **If your sobriety birthday has occurred within the last two months, please submit it by the 1st of the month** you would like it published, with your Name, District or Location, Sobriety Date, Number of Years, and District or City to [anewleafpublications.org/birthday](http://anewleafpublications.org/birthday)

## Self-Supporting through our own Contributions...



The primary purpose of MA is to carry the message of recovery to the marijuana addict who still suffers. Therefore, this literary publication is free and available to distribute widely. When contributing, please consider the value MA adds to your life.

# Marijuana Anonymous Resources

## Meeting Finder

Marijuana Anonymous has 300+ weekly meetings that can be attended for free all over the world virtually and by phone, with in-person meetings available in some areas as well.

**Need support? [Contact us.](#)**

[Join a Meeting](#) →

## Speaker Tapes Podcast

Experience, strength, and hope on the go! Anywhere... Anytime... Available wherever you listen to podcasts...

*Any opinions expressed within these recordings are only those of the individuals sharing.*

[Listen](#) →

## MA's App

The Marijuana Anonymous App features our basic text *Life with Hope (2nd Ed.)*, *12-Step Workbook*, pamphlets, and sobriety counter.

*Please note the in-app meeting finder is unreliable, [refer to our website.](#)*

[Download the App](#) →

[Contact Us](#)

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